

## Feeding the City: Social Welfare, Food Supply and Urban Markets in Lyon, France.

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‘I am asking you for authorization to sell vegetables at the markets. My husband is not working and finds no work in the factory [and] here I am with three children who are very young. My husband, since he is a foreigner, can not find work in the factory and does not get unemployment benefits, so Mr Mayor please have the goodness to give me a reply as soon as possible so I can work to earn something to give my children something to eat...’.

Letter from Mme Courouzain addressed to the Mayor of  
Lyon, 16 June 1905<sup>1</sup>

Prior to the establishment of *sécurité sociale* in France, many workers and families had little to fall back on when unemployment or sickness plagued them. In the light of her husband’s unemployment, Madame Courouzain was obliged to look for work to support her family. Many French women found themselves in similar situations in the first half of the twentieth century: with families to support, they had been largely marginalized within the labour market due to the economic crisis, and had few means of income. Markets offered an important resource for these women.

This paper looks at the role of markets as institutions of social assistance in the first half of the twentieth century. The history of social security and the welfare state in France has been thoroughly explored from a political and economic perspective. Most research tends to focus on the end of the nineteenth century and the post-World War II era, while the period from World War I through to the inter-war years tends to get left out of the picture. It is precisely this period that reveals some of the more innovative initiatives made by local government in the face of adversity. This was also a period in which the Left made headway in popular politics and the question of welfare was high on the agenda. Markets serve as apposite examples for exploring the bureaucratic, moral and social sides of this period of change. The concept of social assistance and charity will be explored from the perspectives of both institutions (the role of local government) and individuals (spontaneous acts of generosity). The role of the market in ensuring the city’s food supply will also be addressed.

While politicians and intellectuals battled over the moral and economic balance sheets of national social security, local government dealt with the social reality of the economic crisis of the 1930s. World War I left France with a serious shortage of men of working age, with many war veterans, and women who suddenly became the heads of households. The shock of war and the need to provide for one's family led many individuals to seek alternative economic activities, since industry, agriculture, and artisan work were experiencing a severe depression. A high unemployment rate made this task particularly difficult. The complex and often challenging task of securing an economical, consistent, and safe food supply was the chore of the Service des Subsistances, a division of the town hall. Through tight regulations and constant monitoring, Lyon's markets provided work, subsistence, and places of community to the city's citizens in times of distress.

Personal acts of kindness and various forms of charity have always existed in France, yet state-run social assistance was a long time in the making.<sup>2</sup> Many have argued that the need for social security was created by the rise of the working class in France.<sup>3</sup> However, the steady increase of *mutuelles* (mutual societies) during the nineteenth century demonstrated that there was a need and demand for a unified programme of social assistance.<sup>4</sup> As Marcel Mauss warned in *The Gift*, written during the 1940s, the period in which social security was being developed in France, both communism, on one hand, and excessive corporatism, on the other, had their pitfalls. Mauss saw communism as a loss of individualism, whereas the individual should depend upon him or herself and not upon others.<sup>5</sup> The role of the individual should not be lost in an over-generous state system. The warning about corporatism spoke directly to the trend of corporate associations (*mutuelles*) taking over the role the state should have assumed by providing unemployment funds.<sup>6</sup> In both cases, Mauss warned against a loss of the power of mutuality. The debate over state-run social assistance was hotly contested at the end of the nineteenth century, but a long tradition of resistance to social protection delayed the passing of legislation. As Timothy Smith argues, the English Poor Laws were often cited to demonstrate the potentially devastating impact a state-imposed poor tax could have on a country.<sup>7</sup> There was a fear that legal charity would institutionalize pauperism and create a stigmatized class or group that would be cut off from society. The question of charity also played an important role in the social security debate. There were those who believed that charity must remain spontaneous and voluntary: 'Charity knows no rule, no limit; it surpasses all obligations. Its beauty is its liberty'.<sup>8</sup> In addition, charity had traditionally been a major function of the Church, and the idea of making charity an obligation was strongly opposed.

Although laws were proposed and small advances were made, Republican reformers would not win the battle for social security until after World War II. A fully-fledged social security system did not take root until 1945, with the introduction of *securité*

*sociale*, and the creation of the *Assedic* and unemployment insurance in 1958. The ‘Ordonance du 4 octobre de 1945’ clearly expresses the French state’s desire to create solidarity and to protect the individual through an institutionalization of social security:

Social security is the guarantee given to everyone that in all circumstances they will have the means necessary to assure their subsistence and that of their family in decent conditions. Its justification lies in a basic worry of social justice: it responds to the preoccupation of ridding workers of the incertitude of tomorrow, this constant uncertainty which creates a feeling of inferiority. It is the real and deep basis for class distinction between those who are sure of themselves and their future and the workers who weigh, at all moments, the threat of misery.<sup>9</sup>

Yet, prior to 1945, the responsibility for the welfare of citizens was increasingly placed upon municipalities. This is where Lyon’s markets came into play.

The Lyon municipal government sought out alternative solutions for protecting the welfare of its citizens. It was the municipal government’s duty to ensure that the basic needs of the town’s citizens were met. A secure food supply was one of the administration’s main preoccupations; getting produce to market and ensuring fair prices and safe alimentation were amongst its most important duties. It is generally agreed that a hungry population is not a happy population. In addition to the obvious practical function of markets as sources for provisioning, local government during this period began to treat them as a form of social aid, granting permission to sell on markets to the needy.

The historical literature on markets in France is surprisingly limited.<sup>10</sup> On one hand, what has been written about markets in France generally does not address the modern or contemporary period. There is little or no mention of the market’s function as an informal institution of public aid. On the other hand, markets are rarely mentioned in the abundant literature on the history of charity and social security in France. Perhaps this is why I was surprised to come across documents in the Archives Municipales de Lyon that made it quite explicit that the municipal government used markets, in part, as institutions of social aid, prior to the development of a central state-run social security system. Investigating this secondary function of markets seemed likely to help better understand attitudes towards charity and public aid in everyday life in the first half of the twentieth century.

The archival documents led to natural opening questions: who was allowed to sell, and what was the state’s role in regulating markets? Starting out on the market was not as easy as one might imagine: not just anyone who wished to become a vendor could do so. Reading through the archived letters, it becomes clear that state control played a role in

the selective reintegration into society of economically marginalized citizens through the granting of market permits.

When applying for a permit, it was not enough to be needy and motivated to work; a number of requisites and imposed regulations applied to the granting of market permits. As was often the case, the state defined and decided who the needy were and who deserved to be helped. This can be seen as part of the legacy of earlier and private forms of social assistance, in which it was necessary to demonstrate one's suffering to those in charge of handing out charity. In addition, citizenship was essential in order to qualify for assistance. As Robert Castel suggests in his monograph on social assistance in France, *Les métamorphoses de la question sociale*, 'assistance gives preference to members of the group and rejects foreigners...'.<sup>11</sup> In inter-war France this was particularly evident. In nearly all periods of hardship, those considered citizens of the city were privileged and those seen as foreigners or outsiders were excluded or even driven away. In the 1930s, 600,000 of the 2,000,000 foreign workers who came to France after World War I were expelled. The French were not spared the hardships of the economic crisis either: by 1936 close to 1,000,000 French were unemployed.<sup>12</sup> In this unstable economic environment, in which day labour predominated, open-air markets offered an attractive opportunity to earn one's living. For this reason, market permits were in high demand. Local authorities had to create criteria and set limitations for the granting of permits.

Through the local government's permit-granting policy, markets became a form of semi-institutionalized social assistance at the beginning of the twentieth century. During the inter-war years market permits were granted on a much more restricted basis, with citizenship, local residence and economic status as the main criteria. In order to receive a market permit, it was necessary for prospective candidates to make a written request directly to the municipality through the Service des Subsistances. This request consisted of an application form and a letter explaining the reasons why the individual should be granted permission: there had to be valid economic, health or social grounds.<sup>13</sup> The application form from 1935 included the following questions: 'nationality, civil state, profession, petitioners income and people living under the same roof (wife, husband, children, etc.), number and age of children, other dependants, illnesses, health problems or war wounds, for which the petitioner had to leave his profession and is asking to sell on the market'.<sup>14</sup> Those in economic difficulty were likely to be granted a permit, and, in extreme cases, petitioners could request to have the license fee waived. For this reason, most of the petitioners focused on the hardship in their lives (economic distress, family to support, health problems, etc.) in order to win a favourable response. Women and war veterans were amongst the most frequent petitioners in the inter-war years; these were people who found it difficult to find work on the job market because of age, gender, or physical disabilities, or people who found it necessary to supplement their limited

pensions or other fixed incomes. Although the state had put provisions into place for children and the elderly who were sick, this was often not enough to help these people stay above the level of subsistence.<sup>15</sup> In many letters of request, petitioners mentioned that they were the recipients of state aid. Widowed or abandoned wives often requested market permits because they suddenly found themselves as their family's sole wage earners. Women have also traditionally sought work at markets selling vegetables from their market plots, as a means of economic independence and as a supplement to the family's income.<sup>16</sup>

Individual motivations aside, letters from petitioners demonstrate that markets were viewed, by both the municipal administration and citizens, as an opportunity to make a living for those who might not otherwise have access to work or a regular income. Once a request was made, the police or city hall followed up to check that the personal information was correct. From the marginalia on these documents, it would seem that it was quite a common practice for applicants to falsify their personal information, family status, or financial situation in an attempt to gain access to the markets. Tax evasion and fear of an unfavourable response were often motivations for the prevarication, demonstrating the worth of a market permit.

The disadvantaged were not the only people seeking permits to sell on the markets; a place on the market was seen as an excellent business opportunity by many craftspeople and small business owners looking to expand their distribution. During the interwar years, the city limited the presence of those who already had work or a regular income, reserving openings for those who could demonstrate that they were in economic difficulty. When M. Machuron made a request in 1939 to sell sausages and cured meats at the city's open-air markets, he received a letter of rejection from the Subsistances stating that his request had been declined because he had other means by which to support himself, and that 'these authorizations, of which the number is limited, are only in fact given to people who are truly in need and who cannot survive in any other way'.<sup>17</sup> Petitioners who already owned a shop or business or who had other forms of income were not granted permission to sell at the city's markets. It is probable that this limitation was set because the local administration realized that markets had potential as an institution of social welfare.

At the market citizens came first in every sense. In a reply to an unsuccessful non-resident petitioner dated 24 March 1939, the president of the Subsistances stated that: 'As demonstrated in the following, my administration has not hesitated, since the beginning of the economic crisis, to give permits to sell at the markets a character of assistance through work, and has reserved this for French citizens and, in particular, unemployed Lyonnais...'.<sup>18</sup> The number of places on the market was limited and demand was high;

therefore, the municipality put restrictions in place to ensure that the citizens of Lyon were the first to benefit from this resource. Social assistance based on domicile was quite common. The idea of creating work as a form of aid, while excluding foreigners and those without a fixed place of residence, has a long history in French systems of charity and social assistance.<sup>19</sup> The restrictions mentioned in the above quotation unveil the political policy behind markets as institutions. In keeping with larger national trends, strong racial and nationalistic tones were clearly part of this discourse.

Although many foreigners had stands at the market, during the inter-war period citizenship became an increasingly important requisite. Beginning in 1932, foreigners were granted access to the city's markets only if the number of foreign vendors did not reach more than 50% of the total number. From the start of the Second World War, this rule was changed and foreigners were systematically refused permits. Even with this restriction in place and with careful policing, there were still a number of French vendors who complained about the presence of foreigners at Lyon's open-air markets. These complaints can be interpreted as part of a general increase in suspicion towards foreigners and as a symptom of growing nationalist sentiments during this period. The local administration kept careful track of who was selling on the city's markets: the market census clearly indicates the number of foreign vendors on the *marché forain* (clothing and household goods market) and the *marché alimentaire* (food market). The 1940 market census indicates that the number of foreigners with permits for the *marché alimentaire* was 9.11% and for the *marché forain* 6.86%, proving that foreigners posed no real threat in terms of numbers. Foreigners often served as scapegoats in times of hardship, and the situation at the markets in Lyon was no exception.

M. Perez, a Spanish national, made a request for a permit to sell fruit and vegetables at the Quai Saint-Antoine market in July 1950, stating that due to his poor health he had been forced to sell his *épicerie* (grocery) in Lyon after fourteen years of business. Although petitioners whom the government considered to be people with disabilities were usually granted permission to sell at markets, M. Perez was refused on the basis of his nationality. The president of the Substances replied that the limited number of permits and high demand did not allow the administration to grant permits to foreigners.<sup>20</sup> Even if a foreigner had resided in France for nearly a lifetime, was married to a French national and had French children, as in the case of M. Perez, permission was still not granted. Citizenship became a formal requisite that could not be waived, even in the case of the extremely needy.

A number of foreign petitioners cited their service in the French army and made declarations of loyalty to the French state in their requests, to no avail. It was not enough to be loyal and patriotic. One simply had to be French. This was the case for M. Korn, a

Polish national who had served as a volunteer in the French army in the First World War, who made a request for a market permit in July 1948. In his petition, M. Korn stated that he had never been unemployed (*un chômeur*), but due to his poor health and age he was unable to find work. His son, born in France, was to depart for his military service, leaving him with no means of support. After many appeals on the part of the petitioner, the final rejection from the mayor of Lyon suggested that the only way that M. Korn's application would be successful was if the petitioner requested naturalization: 'M. Korn, having been a volunteer in the armed service, should make a request for naturalization, which would allow him to sell on the market'.<sup>21</sup> There was no way around the nationality requisite. Market permits were decidedly precious commodities to be reserved for improving the well-being of French nationals before all others. In this sense, the market became a discriminatory institution of social assistance, particularly after the First World War.

The residency requisite officially excluded the participation of migrant vendors. It would seem that the local government wanted to protect a consistent commercial fabric in the market. This demonstrates a disdain for, if not a fear of, those who did not have a fixed address and those who plied their trade from place to place. People who can not be easily located are difficult to control. Despite the fact that many vendors, particularly at the *marchés forains*, were essentially nomadic salespeople, the administration discouraged transients, and residency remained an important key to participation. This contradicts the traditional form of the market: vendors and craftspeople who travelled from town to town. The *foire* (fair) was one exception; seasonal fairs have a long tradition in Lyon and have an entirely different set of municipal regulations. Vendors' permits were granted much more liberally for these special occasions, when people would come from all over the region to sell their goods.

Granting market permits was not the only function of the Service des Subsistances. Municipal governments have traditionally run all aspects of markets in France. Before the imposition of modern forms of food distribution (central markets, modern shipping, refrigeration and supermarket chain distribution), municipal governments had to control and co-ordinate the arrival of the city's food supply at a *marché gare* (a central market where food was usually delivered by train or boat from other regions), or to the city's many markets directly from producers in the outlying countryside. An essential role of local government was to assure the basic needs of its citizens – one of the most vital requirements being alimentation. Prior to 1952, the Service des Subsistances was the office in charge of ensuring Lyon's food supply. It had the important responsibility of ensuring that the city did not go hungry, or suffer from poor alimentation or inflated prices. The Service des Subsistances was in charge of the daily running of the city's seventeen markets. Although *épiceries* and other small local shops were also important for feeding the city, markets remained the most viable opportunity for citizens to procure

foodstuffs at low prices. In addition, the city's shops stocked their stores from the farmers and produce resellers at the city's wholesale market and the neighbouring Quai Saint-Antoine market.

Through protectionist laws, the city ensured that markets remained competitive. Issues of competition, black-market trade and price fixing were also domains of municipal intervention. In response to a petition in which a greengrocer suggested that the role of farmers who sell at the market be limited, to ensure greater profitability for market vendors, the head of the Service des Subsistances put the profit-minded vendor in his place:

At a time when it is increasingly necessary to bring down the cost of living, it does not seem like a good idea to me to take away from housewives the most advantageous method of provisioning. It is not the resellers who are indispensable to the supplying of the city, but rather the products brought by the cultivators and sold directly, by them, without an intermediary.<sup>22</sup>

In a period of extremely high inflation, local government saw markets as one of the main hopes for bringing down the cost of living. The Service des Subsistances took a stand for the citizens' best interests at the expense of profiteering price-fixers, middle-men and illegal vendors.

Notwithstanding official rules and regulations, markets have always been difficult spaces to control. Within the market, informal vendors and those looking for charity appropriated their own space. The restrictive granting of market permits was the municipal government's main tool for imposing authority and deciding who had access to these public spaces. Although most market management was about containment, inspectors also policed markets, making sure that vendors had their permits and protecting against fraud and unhygienic practices. French cities developed well-defined market regulations and by-laws, yet there were always those who subverted the official control of these transient spaces.

Vendors with permits wrote letters to the Subsistances to complain about *vente à la sauvette* (setting up shop and then fleeing when the authorities came to check permits); this was a common grievance. In response to one complaint about a repeating offender, the authorities admitted their difficulty in controlling the situation: 'We can only chase after him at the market and give him verbal warnings each time we are able to catch him in the act, which is not always easy'.<sup>23</sup> Other complaints included unauthorized seasonal sales. For example, young men would come to the market with carts of garlic in the spring and position themselves between the stalls with their wares held in their hands. When the market inspector passed, they would gather up their goods and run away into

the crowd.<sup>24</sup> Understandably, official vendors wanted to protect their interest, but it seemed that the authorities could do little to control the situation.

Despite attempts to control commercial exchanges at the market, there have always been individuals who have expressed their agency in spite of the authorities, and used the market as a means towards their own personal gain. Markets are a case in which an informal economy flourishes next to a structured formal economy.<sup>25</sup> The municipal government's policies tried to contain the chaos of the market, rather than control it from within through severe policing and the constant implementing of regulations. Markets are inherently difficult to control. As Clifford Geertz suggests, exchange is the most powerful organizing force in social life and it would seem that the economic function of the market, not the authorities, is what maintains order in an institution which seems often to waver towards disorder.<sup>26</sup> The official municipal rules provided the framework for the daily running of the market, but what happened within that structure ran according to rules of its own, which were generally left to work themselves out by the people involved in daily practices. This also held true for unofficial forms of charity.

In addition to unauthorized commercial practices, the impoverished, the homeless, and people with mental illnesses positioned themselves between market stands and on street corners to ask for alms. This perhaps evokes images of the market's carnivalesque atmosphere, much like the market scenes painted by Bruegel, yet the presence of people from the fringes of society is age-old and can tell us a great deal about attitudes towards charity. Authorities generally chose to turn a blind eye, and these marginal individuals were accepted as a set part of the market landscape: they usually occupied the same physical position each day and developed relationships with regular market-goers and vendors. This was a situation that, at times, the city administration tried to address, but usually with few results. A letter of complaint written in the summer of 1929 grumbled politely about the infestation of illegal vendors and people asking for charity: 'It is my pleasure to ask you if the head of the police would not mind getting involved in stopping people from setting up stands near the food market, on the pretext of selling songs, postcards or laces, but who do nothing but beg, looking to bother those who pass by'.<sup>27</sup> Much like commercial activity, official and unofficial forms of charity found their way into the market. By granting market permits the government was giving citizens an opportunity to help themselves. However, the above letter of complaint reveals that helping oneself is part of human nature and often takes place whether permission is granted or not.

The role of food and charity was important at the market. Food is one of the most basic human needs and rights. As many anthropological studies have shown, the sharing of food is perhaps one of the most intimate forms of cohesion at a community level.<sup>28</sup>

Religious and private charities wrote letters requesting permission to collect food for the poor. Many soup kitchens, like the one run by the Oeuvre de la Xavière, would collect vegetables and meat to make soup for the unemployed.<sup>29</sup> Many people were perhaps hesitant to give money to people asking for alms but it would have been hard to resist the request for food. The gift of food may be the most caring and essential gift a person can give to a fellow human in need.

As Mary Douglas states in her foreword to Mauss' *The Gift*, 'Charity is meant to be a free gift, a voluntary, unrequited surrender of resources'.<sup>30</sup> Douglas goes on to problematize the idea of charity by stating that a free gift is based on misunderstanding, and that all gifts entail a reciprocal relationship between the benefactor and the beneficiary. This, perhaps, has been an issue that has plagued all forms of charity and, later on, social assistance. Despite the complex motivations and emotions behind the acts of giving and receiving alms, in the case of markets in Lyon it could be argued that the act of giving aid helped to reconnect people into a community structure (with both negative and positive results).

Before a modern state-run system really took root, local government took a paternalistic stance towards its citizens with creative attempts to ease economic suffering during the crisis following the First World War. The case of markets is just one way in which the town hall sought to give citizens an opportunity to make their own living and participate fully in the daily activities of their community. As Giovanna Procacci suggests, reinsertion into the labour market and local action for the social integration of the marginalized are essential ingredients for a balanced political economy of welfare: '... social exclusion gave rise to micro-politics that promoted actions of a local character ...',<sup>31</sup>

Markets offered an important opportunity for many to work for themselves, and to reintegrate economically into society after periods of unemployment or personal distress. Work as a key to social integration was a central factor in eliminating marginality, and markets, as local institutions, brought inclusion to the community level.<sup>32</sup> Social assistance, welfare, and charity gradually became institutionalized and depersonalized; the act of helping others had less and less to do with direct contact between people. As Marcel Mauss comments, 'The unreciprocated gift still makes the person who has accepted it inferior, particularly when it has been accepted with no thought of returning it'.<sup>33</sup> In contrast to early trends in social assistance in France, up until the 1950s, markets, besides giving people the potential to be self-sufficient, offered spaces in which community members could come face-to-face with the needy. Charity and solidarity could be expressed at the same time.

Markets in Lyon in the early twentieth century can be seen as windows onto the *question sociale* that was being hotly debated in political circles at the time. Markets were forms of aid through work, organized by the municipal government and controlled by a permit-granting process. At the same time, markets continued to be places of spontaneous charity and commercial activity, where people could give what they wanted (through alms) or take what they could (often through petty theft or informal commerce). People needing aid could seek it out at the market. Markets were institutions that offered assistance, but those seeking aid had actively to take part in the everyday life of the city and its basic needs and functions. Contemporaneously, it was the job of the Service des Subsistances to assure the city's food supply through Lyon's markets. Subsistence meant having physical and economic access to food.

With baskets bursting and money in their pockets, market-goers surely found it difficult to refuse the needy who reached out to them for alms. If the labour market is the answer to the social question of welfare, it is perhaps the open-air market that could serve as the case study *par excellence*: markets in the early twentieth century offered self-employment, which gave agency to its actors, and put marginalized individuals in contact with society at the local level. Markets have always been places where disparity is lived and becomes part of the social conscience. Within a historical context, these timeless municipal institutions can also be seen as places of opportunity and hope.

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<sup>1</sup> 'Je vient vous demander l'autorisation pour vendre sur les marchés de légumes mon mari ne travaillant pas ne trouvant pas de travail dans les usines [et] me voila avec trois enfants en bas ages, mon mari vu qu'il est étranger il n'a pas de travail dans l'usine et il ne touche pas de chômages, alors M. le Maire ayez la bonté de me donner une réponse au plutôt pour pouvoir travailler pour gagner quelque chose pour donner a manger a mes enfants [sic].' Author's translation. Please note that the original text in French was riddled with errors, but it was probably written by Mme Courouzain. This gives the reader an idea of the petitioner's social class and background. Many letters were written by notaries because the petitioners were probably illiterate. Archives Municipales de Lyon (AMLyon), 0793WP0451.

<sup>2</sup> The aim of this paper is not to provide a comprehensive history of social security in France. For further reading see P. Baldwin, *The Politics of Social Solidarity: Class Bases of the European Welfare State, 1875-1975* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990); R. Castel, *Les métamorphoses de la question sociale: Une chronique du salariat* (Paris: Fayard, 1995); and P. V. Dutton, *Origins of the French Welfare State: The Struggle for Social Reform in France 1914-1947* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

<sup>3</sup> J. Magniadas, 'Histoire de la Sécurité Sociale,' paper given at the Institut CGT d'histoire sociale, 9 Oct. 2003, p. 3.

<sup>4</sup> Philip Nord argues that there was a developing welfare state even during the Belle Epoque: P. Nord, 'The Welfare State in France', *French Historical Studies*, 18:3 (1994), p. 832.

<sup>5</sup> M. Mauss, *The Gift*, trans. W. D. Halls (1950; London: Routledge, 1990), p. 88.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 87. This refers to the role of *mutuelles*, French mutual aid societies (1898-1939), which gave individuals an opportunity to participate in unemployment and health insurance as well as pension plans through a private organization.

<sup>7</sup> T. B. Smith, 'The Ideology of Charity, the Image of the English Poor Law, and Debates over the Right to Assistance in France, 1830-1905', *Historical Journal*, 40:4 (1997) pp. 997-1032.

<sup>8</sup> Victor Cousin, quoted in Smith, p. 1002.

<sup>9</sup> 'La sécurité sociale est la garantie donnée à chacun qu'en toutes circonstances il disposera des moyens nécessaires pour assurer sa subsistance et celle de sa famille dans des conditions décentes. Trouvant sa justification dans un souci élémentaire de justice sociale, elle répond à la préoccupation de débarrasser les travailleurs de l'incertitude du lendemain, de cette incertitude constante qui crée chez eux un sentiment d'infériorité et qui est la base réelle et profonde de la distinction des classes entre les possédants sûrs d'eux-mêmes et de leur avenir et les travailleurs sur qui pèse, à tout moment, la menace de la misère.' Author's translation. Sécurité Sociale, 'Présentation de la Sécurité Sociale', <<http://www.securite-sociale.fr/presentation/presentation.htm#1830>>, accessed 30 Mar. 2004.

<sup>10</sup> Examples from the meagre bibliography on the history of French markets: R. Sedillot, *Histoire des marchands et des marchés* (Paris: Fayard, 1964); D. Margairz, *Foires et marchés dans la France preindustrielle* (Paris: Editions de l'Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales, 1988); and A. Clément, *Nourrir le peuple. Entre Etat et marché XVIe-XIXe siècles. Contribution à l'histoire intellectuelle de l'approvisionnement alimentaire*. (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1999). See also Fernand Braudel, *Civilization and Capitalism, 15th-18th Century, Vol. 1: The Structure of Everyday Life*, trans. Siân Reynolds (New York: Harper & Row, 1981), a short section on the history of markets in Europe at pp. 501-3.

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<sup>11</sup> 'l'assistance s'attache de préférence aux membres du groupe et rejette les étrangers...', Robert Castel, *Les métamorphoses de la question sociale* (Paris: Fayard, 1995), p. 43.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., p. 348.

<sup>13</sup> When reading through these applications, the educational level of the applicants is usually quite apparent: some had to seek the aid of a notary for letter writing and many only had basic writing skills. This suggests that most market vendors came from a working-class background or had little access to more than basic education.

<sup>14</sup> 'nationalité, état civil, profession, moyens d'existence du pétitionnaire et des personnes vivant sous le même toit (femme, mari, enfants, etc.), nombre et âge des enfants, autres charges, maladies, infirmités ou blessures de guerre, pour quelles raisons le pétitionnaire abandonner-t-il sa profession et demande-t-il à vendre sur les marchés.' AMLyon, 0793WP045 1, Bulletin de renseignements des Services des Subsistances, 1935.

<sup>15</sup> 'La loi du 27 juin, 1904, Service départemental d'aide sociale à l'enfance', and 'La loi du 14 juillet 1905, l'assistance aux vieillards infirmes et incurables'.

<sup>16</sup> For women's roles in traditional and contemporary markets, see L. J. Seligman, *Women Traders in Cross-Cultural Perspective: Mediating Identities, Marketing Wares* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001).

<sup>17</sup> 'ces autorisations dont le nombre est maintenant limité, ne sont en effet accordées qu'aux personnes se trouvant dans une situation vraiment digne d'intérêt et qui ne peuvent subvenir d'une autre façon aux besoins de leur existence.' AMLyon, 0793WP045 1, Letter of reply from the Service des Subsistances, 16 Aug. 1939.

<sup>18</sup> 'Il résulte de l'exposé qui précède que mon Administration n'a pas hésité, dès le début de la crise économique, à donner aux permissions de vente sur les marchés un caractère d'assistance par le travail, et à réserver celles-ci aux français et, en particulier, aux chômeurs lyonnais...' AMLyon, 0793WP045 1, Letter of reply from the Service des Subsistances, 16 Aug. 1939.

<sup>19</sup> Castel, pp. 52-6.

<sup>20</sup> AMLyon, 0793WP045 1, Letter of reply from the Service des Subsistances, 20 Jul. 1950.

<sup>21</sup> 'M. Korn étant engagé volontaire devrait faire une demande de naturalisation ce qui permettrait de l'admettre sur les marchés dès qu'il aurait eu satisfaction.' AMLyon, 0793WP045 1, Letter from the Mayor of Lyon to M. Korn, 4 Aug. 1948.

<sup>22</sup> 'A l'heure où de plus en plus il est nécessaire que le coût de la vie diminue, il ne semble pas opportun d'enlever aux ménagères le moyen de s'approvisionner dans des conditions avantageuses. Ce ne sont pas les revendeurs qui sont indispensables au ravitaillement de la ville, mais bien les produits apportés par les cultivateurs et vendus directement, si possible, par lui-même, sans avoir recours à un intermédiaire.' AMLyon, 0793WP045 1, Letter from the director of the Service des Subsistances to M. Fleytoux, 22 Oct. 1931.

<sup>23</sup> 'Nous ne pouvons que lui faire la chasse sur les marchés et lui dresser des procès-verbaux chaque fois que nous réussissons à le prendre sur le fait, ce qui n'est pas toujours facile.' Ibid.

<sup>24</sup> AMLyon, 0793WP045 1, Letter of complaint addressed to the director of the Subsistances, 22 Sept. 1926.

<sup>25</sup> See M. Peraldi (ed.), *La fin des norias? Réseaux migrants dans les économies marchandes en Méditerranée* (Paris: Maisonneuve & Larose, 2002).

<sup>26</sup> C. Geertz, 'Suk: The Bazaar Economy in Sefrou' in C. Geertz, H. Geertz and L. Rosen, *Meaning and Order in Moroccan Society* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978), p. 197.

<sup>27</sup> 'J'ai l'honneur de vous demander s'il ne conviendrait pas d'intervenir auprès de M. le Secrétaire Général pour la police pour empêcher l'installation, à proximité des marchés

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d'alimentation de personnes qui, sous prétexte de vendre des chansons, des cartes postales ou des lacets, ne font pas autre chose que de mendier, en cherchant à apitoyer les passants.' AMLyon, 0793WP045 1, Letter from the Director of the Subsistances to the General Secretary of the police, 5 July 1929.

<sup>28</sup> C. M. Counihan, *The Anthropology of Food and Body: Gender, Meaning and Power* (London: Routledge, 1999), p. 13.

<sup>29</sup> AMLyon, 0793WP045 1, Letter from the Oeuvre de la Xavière to the Subsistances, 17 July 1937.

<sup>30</sup> M. Douglas, 'Foreword: No Free Gifts' in Mauss, p. ix.

<sup>31</sup> G. Procacci, 'L'ethos del Welfare', *Parolechiave*, 28 (2002), p. 184: '... l'esclusione sociale ha dato vita a micro-politiche che promuovono azioni a carattere locale...'

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 186.

<sup>33</sup> Mauss, p. 83.