

A Cultural Geography of Civic Pride in Nottingham

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Abstract

This thesis examines how people perceive, express, contest and mobilise civic pride in the city of Nottingham. Through interviews, participant observation and secondary resource analysis, I explore what people involved in the civic life of the city are proud of about Nottingham, what they consider the city's (civic) identity to be and what it means to promote, defend and practice civic pride. Civic pride has been under-examined in geography and needs better theoretical and empirical insight. I show how civic pride can be thought of as a composite and holistic urban ethos that represents what people feel about the city they live in, what people value and take pride in, and the range of practices and behaviours that people develop to celebrate and protect the city's identity and autonomy. Civic pride ties together the local, the emotional and the political, and forms a range of discourses and narratives that help produce, mediate, reflect and at times conceal structures of power, identity and inequality. I claim that Nottingham is a friendly, bolshie, East Midlands city; a city with many people who are passionate about Nottingham and civic pride, but who are also uncertain about Nottingham's identity and aspirations as a city. The findings complement existing debates about cities by showing how civic pride connects with issues of urban regeneration, neoliberalism, localism, social identity and social justice. But I also challenge current literature by offering a more critical and nuanced examination of civic pride, grounded in an understanding of emotions and emotional geographies, that reshapes some of these debates and advances of our understanding of the interface between people, place and politics.

Table of Contents

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	III
ABSTRACT.....	IV
LIST OF FIGURES.....	VII
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION.....	1
THESIS OUTLINE	15
CHAPTER 2: CIVIC PRIDE – THE PRIDE OF BELONGING	19
CHAPTER 3: PRIDE/SHAME, URBAN REGENERATION AND THE NEW LOCALISM..	57
CHAPTER 4: METHODOLOGY	71
INTRODUCTION TO CHAPTERS 5 AND 6	97
CHAPTER 5: NOTTINGHAM – A FRIENDLY CITY	99
PARTICIPANT OBSERVATION 1: HERITAGE OPEN DAYS – REFLECTIONS OF A TOUR OF THE COUNCIL HOUSE AND NOTTINGHAM CASTLE.....	128
CHAPTER 6: NOTTINGHAM – A BOLSHIE CITY.....	132
PARTICIPANT OBSERVATION 2: ‘NOTORIOUS NOTTINGHAM’ – THE CIVIC SOCIETY’S CHRISTMAS LECTURE	165
CHAPTER 7: NOTTINGHAM AT THE CROSSROADS – THE REGIONAL GEOGRAPHY OF CIVIC PRIDE.....	170
PARTICIPANT OBSERVATION 3: THE GRAND OPENING CEREMONY OF THE NOTTINGHAM GOOSE FAIR	206
CHAPTER 8: REDEFINING CIVIC PRIDE WITHIN AND BEYOND NOTTINGHAM.....	210
CHAPTER 9: CONCLUSION.....	235

REFERENCES	246
APPENDIX 1: PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET (SAMPLE).....	257
APPENDIX 2: PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM (SAMPLE).....	258
APPENDIX 3: PARTICIPANT LIST WITH GIVEN PSEUDONYMS.....	259

List of Figures

FIGURE 1 - MAP OF NOTTINGHAM AND THE EAST MIDLANDS.....	89
FIGURE 2 - MAP OF THE NOTTINGHAM URBAN AREA	93
FIGURE 3 - BRIEF SUMMARY OF FINDINGS.....	98
FIGURE 4 - UNEMPLOYMENT FIGURES BY ETHNIC GROUP FOR 2014	123
FIGURE 5 - MAP OF MUNICIPAL BOUNDARIES AROUND NOTTINGHAM	192

Chapter 1: Introduction

Cities have a profound impact on many people's lives. They are where many people live and work, and where people develop lasting connections. The places that people choose to live in, or where they end up living in, and the communities that people belong to, can be integral to people's sense of identity and wellbeing. Through time and through *taking time* to participate in the public life of the city, people can come to feel highly attached to their city and identify with it as their own. However people form these connections in different ways and develop different sorts of values and aspirations for their city and local community.

Cities represent sites of difference and diversity. But the collective power and identity of a city is shaped by its citizens, its local government, its economy and its unique history and culture. Taken together, these features make up a city's civic identity. In Britain, cities have been undergoing considerable change in recent years and are facing a range of civic challenges: from changing governance regimes, to fluctuating patterns of growth and decline in industry, manufacturing and services, increasing suburbanisation and urban sprawl, market instability, increasing levels of migration and increasing social and cultural diversity. In an era of advanced globalisation, with greater fluidity of movement of people and things, and revolutionary changes in technology that have reshaped how people live and interact with each other, it could be argued that local civic identities are gradually becoming more complex, more diverse and more disjointed – and for many people perhaps less important to their lives. But while some people fear that globalisation and technology are undermining the 'localness' of places – and with that their civic identity and heritage, others continue to promote and defend where they live, and continue to honour the virtues of local citizenship. Beyond making sure that cities provide individuals and communities with a decent quality of life, good quality services and a range of social, cultural and political freedoms, many civic-minded people have come to see it as their duty, their calling, and their passion, to ensure that places remain unique, that local people and businesses thrive, and that a city's freedoms and powers to be but itself and nowhere else are honoured and maintained.

Geographers have had a long-standing interest in urban identities and the ways in which people engage with civic life in cities (Amin 2008; Hall 1997; Watson 2006). This has often connected with broader theories of place, and how places form and represent different meanings, identities and experiences for people (Harvey 1996; Thrift 2008). The identities people forge in places and the experiences and memories people take from them are often based in and coloured by certain emotional connections and associations – connections and associations that can profoundly shape and reflect people’s values and wellbeing. One positive kind of emotional connection or association might be a feeling of pride for a place. Pride is a complex emotion, but one which generally describes a feeling of self-worth and self-esteem about one’s identity, status or achievements (Smith 1998; Tracy et al 2010). Cities can be sources of pride if they inspire a feeling of (collective) self-worth and (collective) self-esteem among the people that live there, or if the city has a strong local heritage and culture that people value. People may also be proud of their city if it is successful at something or is praised by others. Over time, people can come to feel highly attached and loyal to where they live, and feel a strong sense of pride for, and duty towards, the people living there. Despite long-standing interests in questions of identity, belonging and place in geography however, the notion that people are, or can be, proud of where they live has not always been acknowledged or explored in any great detail, and as a result there has been a lack of both theoretical and empirical work on the subject of pride within geography and the social sciences (Wind-Cowie and Gregory 2011; Wood 2006).

Having a sense of pride about where one lives is sometimes referred to as ‘civic pride’. A term possibly more familiar to scholars of urban history and architecture than geography, civic pride means being proud of and taking pride in where one lives, and represents the different ways local communities promote and defend their identity, culture and independence (Shapely 2011; Wind-Cowie-Gregory 2011). Many people of course may not feel proud of where they live, or only feel proud about certain aspects of where they live. Some people might have negative feelings about where they live (and feel ashamed of living there), or feel uncertain or indifferent. Normally it is when people live somewhere for a long time, develop lasting connections to a place, and develop a sense of loyalty to a place that a sense of civic pride is fostered. Civic pride tends to therefore be a rather gradual, incremental phenomenon; it builds through time, and strengthens at certain moments – perhaps in celebration of something, or when a city’s reputation is under threat and needs salvaging. Civic pride also arises and develops *between* cities, particularly

if people believe 'their' city is better than the next, or if one city triumphs over another. Geographers often stress that all forms of identity and belonging are not pre-given, neutral or static phenomena – but are spatially and relationally produced. It seems critical therefore to think about how civic pride emerges not simply through the connections people make with (and within) the city, but also out of the connections made with (and against) other cities and other communities – places where people may feel they do not belong, or do not have a sense of civic pride (Massey 1994).

This latter point resonates with the argument that – historically – warfare, rivalry and competition have been integral to the formation and evolution of cities and civic identities, and have helped reproduce and reinforce boundaries of power and difference (Mumford 1961; Briggs 1963; Purvis 2009). In the perpetual struggle for autonomy, resources and status, civic pride has operated within a framework of difference, division and distinction between places; of places defending and promoting that which is local and that which is determined locally. As such, like forms of nationalism, there can be a somewhat competitive, territorial, even parochial nature to civic pride that, while collective in spirit, can at times manifest itself in rather arrogant, defensive and antagonistic ways; in ways that may exclude or undermine other people and places.

While civic pride resonates with a number of debates about identity and belonging, we might also talk about civic pride as something that relates to and helps encourage citizenly action and behaviour. Civic pride, in this sense, represents a kind of 'pride in being a citizen'; a pride that comes with feeling connected to and participating in one's city or local area (Wind-Cowie and Gregory 2011). The actions or practices which represent or emanate from this kind of civic pride may include, among other things, voting in local elections, participating in local affairs, or engaging in the social life of the city. Other, similar, terms might adequately describe this spirit of civic engagement in the city (local citizenship, civic duty, community spirit – for instance), although perhaps what sets civic pride apart from these terms is its more demonstrative and self-empowering nature; it is something which people often express or display explicitly to others and do so *as a matter of pride*. As I go on to describe, this is where civic pride begins to tie together the local, the emotional and the political.

Notwithstanding pride's more negative tendencies towards competitiveness, territorialism and parochialism, civic pride represents, in the main, a positive and productive feeling and value that is integral to the healthy functioning of cities and civic cultures. However, as Jupp (2008: 334) and others have discussed (e.g. Fortier 2005; Thrift 2004), 'emotional modes of politics' are not always necessarily positive or transformational for one's local area or community; they may form mechanisms of control, or help reproduce a range of inequalities. Advocating the idea that people need to 'show more civic pride' in a city, for instance, could be used as an excuse by local governments to withdraw public services and reduce welfare – by asking citizens themselves to take more ownership over their lives and be more responsible for themselves and their communities. Civic pride may also be promoted in such a way as to paint an exclusively positive and virtuous image of a city that purposively (or unwittingly) hides or conceals local inequalities and injustices and creates certain false (superficial) images of places. Or, as I have already suggested, it may reflect a rather inward-looking (parochial) kind of attitude that is negative about other people and other places. We need to be aware therefore of both the positive and negative ways in which civic pride gets produced and mobilised, and the different kinds of power relations and ideological agendas which accompany and shape civic pride.

Geographers have often been aware of how the local, the emotional and the political operate together to produce particular spatial outcomes – particularly in the context of cities. This awareness has been built on the back of a much longer history of thought on the role of the 'passions' and the 'virtues' within classical philosophy, and how (urban) citizenship is codified, practiced and performed at the local scale (Cunningham 2011). But geographers' interest in the emotions (and more specifically the geography of emotions) has historically been a somewhat partial and limited affair. As many have noted in recent years, there has been a historic tendency within geography to ignore or marginalise emotions as though they are not the 'real stuff' of geography, and have little impact on the structures and systems in and through which people live their lives (Anderson and Smith 2001; Thrift 2008). More often than not, geographers, particularly one could argue urban geographers, have tended to focus on more structural, 'factual' and (disembodied) material concerns, whilst ignoring or leaving out emotional and affective concerns (Thrift 2004). At a basic level, this emotional deficit might ignore the fact that people perceive, experience and interact with places through the feelings they have about them (for example people feel drawn to places that they love or are proud of, and avoid places they

hate or are fearful of); and that life – local, urban or otherwise – is a quintessentially *embodied* (psychic) process and experience. Such a deficit within geography also might steer attention away from how forms and structures of power are communicated, produced or mediated through emotional discourses – how for example governments and politicians ‘add feeling’ to what they communicate and stand for in order to persuade citizens of their passion or integrity, or when a new policy or law needs selling or publicising (Thrift 2008). Attempting to counter this trend, the advance of interest and research in emotional geographies has been considerable in the past decade (Bondi et al 2007; Ho 2009; Thrift 2004); although, as is typical of any new sub-genre of a discipline, there is a large degree of debate and disagreement about what emotions and emotional geographies are – not least in terms of the difference between ‘emotion’ and ‘affect’ (see: Pile 2010). There also seems a more general divide in geography between those who have more or less embraced emotional or affective concerns in their work (typically geographers who have been influenced by feminist theory, psychoanalysis and post-structuralism) and those who have not.

The Civic in the City

While emotions have not always been an explicit concern of geographers and geographical work, the ‘civic’ has quite often been central to geography. One could argue geography was historically, and perhaps always has been, a civic type of discipline; a form of public scholarship that emerged formally during the 18th and 19th centuries that contributed to and was a product of the Enlightenment (Johnston 2013). But again, geographers treat the term civic in different ways and with different degrees of analytical insight (Amin 2008; Askins et al 2011; Levine 2013). The word civic comes from the latin ‘civis’, and simply denotes something that is ‘of the city’ or ‘of one’s fellow citizens’. Usually it is expressed in relation to local government and the political life of the city, although its broader meaning and usage would suggest it relates to anything to do with place, community and citizenship. While we might typically talk about geographically based civics and civic communities (local neighbourhoods, towns, cities, or even wider regional or national communities), there are a range of other types of civic community to consider – for example ones based in political, cultural or ethnic ties. Different civic communities may express or enact their civiness, or civic pride, in a range of ways and contribute to other

(wider) civics in the city and beyond. This means that the activities of local government represent one (albeit important) kind of civicness operating within and across multiple civics (or multiple constructions of the civic) within the city (Askins et al 2011; Naughton 2014). A key intervention I make in this thesis is that exploring the geographies of civic pride and civic culture requires recognising *the socially constructed and plural nature* of civic communities and identities, whilst at the same time understanding what kinds of civics tend to prevail or become dominant, and which do not.

In a British context, civic pride is undoubtedly a term that many people associate with the Victorian period, and the rise of the industrial city (Briggs 1963; Shapely 2011). Images of town halls, lord mayors, opening ceremonies and civic parades colour much of what know and associate with this period, and in turn this has helped shape what we (in Britain at least) have come to know about and associate with civic pride. Moreover, the Victorian city has often been championed as a model of civic pride and civic culture – a model which, some people feel, British cities today should aspire to and emulate (Hunt 2004). By no coincidence then, this is also the period which much of the (rather disparate) literature on civic pride within British geography and urban studies tends to focus on (Briggs 1963; Hearn 2003; Llywelyn 2011).

While many academics and politicians continue to evoke a rather nostalgic image of the Victorian city as the height of modern civic pride, the wider literature would suggest it is a term that tends to get associated with particular cities at particular points in time – often during periods of significant change and growth (Ellis 2003; Hunt 2004; Purvis 2009). One might think of the cities of Ancient Greece and the birth of the classical city (the polis) for instance as the first significant expression(s) of civic pride (the city-state, the agora, the temples, the amphitheatres, the city walls, the birth of ‘civic republicanism’ etc). This period effectively laid the foundations for how civic life would be built, structured and governed in many Western cities. One might then think of the development of the Medieval trading ports and towns, the Italian city-states, the cities of the industrial revolution in the 18th and 19th centuries (particularly industrial cities in northern England), cities that redeveloped and transformed after World War II, and now the post-industrial cities of the late 20th and early 21st centuries. These different eras of urban history constitute what Derek Heater (1990) calls periods of ‘heightened consciousness’ in matters of citizenship and civic life, which together paint an historical collage – or genealogy – of

how civic cultures have evolved and changed through different geographical and historical contexts.

Because of this rich historicity associated with civic pride, and as because of the way cities have integrated into the modern nation-state form (and, crucially, into a more *global* society), civic pride is often imagined in a state of loss or decline. On the one hand, there is a perception that civic pride has been gradually undermined because cities are no longer the islands of autonomy they once were. National governments now assume considerable control and influence over local decision-making and local government budgets, while the economies of cities (in Britain at least) have become increasingly tied to the uncertainties of national and global markets, migration patterns and political decisions that are beyond their direct control. On the other hand, there is a perception that civic pride matters less to people now because people move more frequently and are less rooted in one place or community; more people are experiencing life in multiple places throughout their life. With the aid of technology, people can also communicate more easily with people in other places and distance themselves socially from their immediate surroundings (McClay and McAlister 2014). Appeals to civic pride can therefore often seem like a way of looking back, of returning to a lost ideal (Llywelyn 2011). I want to claim in this thesis that we might want to take this concern seriously, but also question and re-examine it, and think about how much this longing for a lost ideal highlights and masks a number of other issues.

Understanding Civic Pride in the 21st Century

Whether or not the true spirit of civic pride has been lost to a bygone era, civic pride and debates about its role in cities have (re)surfaced in recent decades. For example, civic pride has been a notable feature of British post-industrialism and urban regeneration strategies over the past 20 or 30 so years. In attempts to recover the losses suffered from deindustrialisation and economic restructuring during the 1970s and 80s, civic pride has been frequently championed by local governments to encourage urban investment and help improve the image and reputation of cities (Hall 1997; Boyle 1999). This has involved new types of marketing and branding campaigns to help sell the city and sell certain narratives of post-industrial transformation and rejuvenation (Hall 1997; Harvey 1989; Tallon 2010). These developments have generated critical debate among geographers

about the commodification of civic pride and its strategic role within 'neoliberal urbanism' (the charge typically being that local governments often construct a highly commercial or superficial image of civic pride for marketing purposes, rather than a more 'authentic', locally meaningful type of civic pride). Some studies however show that these processes are often interacting with, rather than necessarily destroying or undermining, the more locally embedded nature of civic pride and civic identity, and that the local and the global are scales in productive tension with each other (McClay and McAlister 2014; Boyle and Hughes 1994). I would argue such critiques of the neoliberal city, though useful in many ways, have perhaps focused too heavily on repudiating civic pride's 'authenticity' and its role within neoliberal transformations, to the neglect of more grounded, empirical analyses of what civic pride is and how people perceive and experience it.

Meanwhile, since the Conservative–Liberal Democrat Coalition came to power in 2010, we have also witnessed the rise of discourses like localism and the 'Big Society', which have both directly and indirectly brought civic pride back into the political spotlight. In the twin contexts of government austerity on the one hand, and a largely Conservative-driven agenda about reforming (what is seen to be) the over-centralised approach to local government in the UK on the other, localism and the Big Society have been two key concepts and policy frameworks within which discourses of civic pride have (re)emerged. In the lead up to and following the Localism Act of 2011, the localism agenda has produced a raft of policies, laws, fiscal changes, cuts and political discourses that, in various ways, have played on the theme of civic pride, in a wider attempt to help rebuild and strengthen local autonomy and local democracy. Much criticism has accompanied this drive for localism and the Big Society because it has emerged at a time of austerity; critics see it as a ploy by central government to further shrink the already shrinking welfare budget and weaken local government spending power (Clarke and Cochrane 2013). Although localism and the Big Society might have merit in principle, many feel that because of austerity (and the wider downturn in the economy, post-2008) these agendas are being undermined and economic inequalities are rising as a result – issues which geographers, amongst others, have been anxious to raise (Featherstone et al 2012; North 2012; Westwood 2011).

Connected to this is the evolving shape of the UK's regional geography, and the dynamics around shifting regional economies and identities. The 'region', as a kind of more expansive scaling of the 'local', is an important issue for civic pride, because, as I have

intimated already, urban identities are often nestled within and shaped by wider regional processes. Although regional development agencies and regional assemblies have not been entirely successful in recent years in the UK in changing the shape of local governance, regions and regional identities remain politically and culturally important to people and continue to generate debate (Jones and Paasi 2013; Bonnett and Alexander 2013). Geographers have considered what the implications of regionalism might be for democratic accountability in local areas, and whether we might be witnessing the emergence of new or the rediscovery of old regional alliances between cities and towns (see for example: Bennett 2013; Hardill et al 2006). Such debates have important implications for civic pride, particularly in terms of the political scale of civic pride, and how civic pride becomes defined through different regional hierarchies and governing structures. To date, however, it seems that few efforts have been made by geographers to fully explore this relationship between civic pride and regional geography and critically understand what is at stake for cities and regions (though see for example: Ehland 2007).

Another area in which civic pride has surfaced in recent years has been in the context of multiculturalism and growing fears over 'community cohesion'. In a climate of bubbling social unrest and dissatisfaction over the economy, and at a time when heated debates on immigration and integration continue to grab the headlines, national and local governments have to be anxious to promote more positive values, such as tolerance and respect, and to celebrate British diversity (Wind-Cowie and Gregory 2011; Fortier 2005; Jones 2013). Drives towards building better community cohesion in local areas, 'integration' rather than 'multiculturalism', making cities 'friendly' to immigrants and disadvantaged communities – such agendas (such rhetoric, perhaps) have become key issues for many local councils, particularly after Ted Cante's (2001) influential report on community cohesion was released in the aftermath of the Northern Riots in 2001. These issues have led to much debate around what British identity is, what British values are, and how much local identities feed into this wider community cohesion agenda (Wind-Cowie and Gregory 2011). Civic pride, in this context, has been championed as a value or a vehicle through which communities might set aside differences and find common ground, in an attempt to try and reinforce the idea that cities and towns are *proud* of their cultural diversity, rather than ashamed or fearful of it (Jones 2013). Indeed if different communities can live harmoniously in cities, and acknowledge the *plural* nature of civic identities, then values such as civic pride can form a basis for a more progressive urban

politics. But how much hope do people have for this kind of progressive urban politics? And is civic pride a discourse of hope rather than a realistic goal, something crow-barred in by national and local government to mask or steer attention away from underlying inequalities in places? As debates about urban regeneration, localism, regionalism and multiculturalism take hold and signal the possible re-emergence of civic pride in British cities, we need to take a step back and consider how and why civic pride emerges in particular places at particular times, and in particular ways; and examine how civic pride can both reveal and mask a range of values and interests.

How Might We (Re)Conceptualise Civic Pride?

There are a number of areas in which I think civic pride needs to be better conceptualised and understood. From reading a range of literature about civic pride and civic cultures more broadly, both within geography and other social sciences, my first contention is that civic pride often surfaces across a number of debates about cities and local governments, but is rarely the focus of attention and analysis. As I have already suggested, perhaps this is the result of an historic lack of engagement with emotions within geography. It may also be a semantic or terminological issue – a consequence of geographers using similar terms and ideas such as ‘community spirit’, ‘civic boosterism’, ‘sense of belonging’, ‘place identity’ and so on. While there may be similarities between civic pride and these terms, as I have already indicated, such conflation might prevent geographers from considering the underlying meanings and nuances of civic pride, and the political implications of why civic pride, in particular, is often used and mobilised by local governments and civic organisations in the city. As a consequence of this lack of critical engagement with the term, many studies – especially, I would argue, a lot of urban geography from the 1990s and early 2000s – often describe civic pride in relatively simplistic, ‘un-emotional’ and rather taken-for-granted ways, almost as though civic pride does not need to be accounted for or explained properly. There are exceptions of course, where geographers and other writers have examined civic pride more seriously and sensitively as an object of concern (e.g. Armstrong and Hognested 2003; Shapely 2011; Wind-Cowie and Gregory 2011). But it would be a stretch to say there is a definitive ‘civic pride literature’ that has rigorously analysed the concept and tracked its meaning through time.

The second issue with current literature on civic pride, and following on from this first point, is that academics and policy-makers often assume that civic pride simply ‘happens’ – that it follows naturally as a result of cities achieving something or beating its nearest rival. Local governments in particular often act on the premise that developing, say, a new public building or regeneration programme for a city, or erecting a statue of a local hero, will increase civic pride in a city and therefore increase citizen engagement (Boyle 1999). But this a ‘black box’ approach to civic pride that fails to ask any questions about the underlying processes of *why* people feel proud of their cities, what factors shape and determine it, and what the consequences of this are.

A third issue is that while geographers and other critical urban scholars have long argued that cities should be understood as fundamentally ‘contested’ spaces – sites of political struggle and inequality – the way *civic* identities are written about too often gives the impression that they are homogeneous and coherent, as though a city’s history, culture and political identity can be distilled into one kind of narrative or image. This may be problematic if and when this fails to acknowledge how the civic might also be something which is socially produced, contested and locally fragmented (Newman 2013; Llywelyn 2011). Conversely, however, I think there is also a tendency to under-examine how more singular urban and civic identities are constructed and mobilised in the context of civic pride and how local populations deal with their own stereotypes, myths and legends (Lindner 2006; Stobart 2004). We need to understand better the subjective and locally situated nature of civic pride and evaluate how people, groups and institutions perceive and experience civic pride in different ways (for instance – what do people agree and disagree on? Are stereotypes necessarily a bad thing, or can they be productive for civic pride?). This is as much an empirical point – that current literature too often lacks first-hand accounts of civic pride, which may itself suggest that researching civic pride presents a number of methodological challenges.

For all these reasons, this thesis attempts to examine civic pride in ways that have not been done before. My case study for this research is the city of Nottingham in the East Midlands region of England. This is my home city and where I grew up, and for a variety of reasons is somewhere I am proud to hail from. While this personal, emotional connection fed my initial interest for the research, choosing Nottingham to investigate civic pride was a strategic and practical decision – I knew the city well, it was a relatively short journey

from my current home in Leeds, and I already had some useful ‘civic pride contacts’ to pursue for interviews. On another level, I thought that choosing Nottingham would to some degree challenge urban geography/urban studies literature that tends to focus on larger, more nationally and internationally prominent cities, at the expense of smaller and medium sized cities (cf. Bell and Jayne 2006). This relative lack of studies on small and medium sized cities in geography is problematic in a number of ways, not least because it can generate certain ‘big city’ ideas and assumptions that fail to resonate in, nor are relevant for, smaller places. Also, by side-lining smaller cities, we (geographers) might ignore or under-examine a range of important scalar and hierarchical issues – particularly for instance the influence of inter-urban competition and inter-urban comparison, and their effect upon how people perceive and experience civic pride and civic identity (for example, it could be argued that many smaller cities and towns shape their sense of identity in relation to, and often expressly against, larger cities). The premise here is that civic pride in London, say, would be different to civic pride in Manchester; or that civic pride in Leeds, would have a different set of characteristics to civic pride in Huddersfield (how far this is true depends on one’s perspective, as I show). The fact is, place matters when it comes to civic pride, in all sorts of ways. In light of this, Nottingham represents a good example of a medium-sized (‘second tier’) city that sits at the crossroads of a number urban and regional hierarchies. Not least this is true in terms of Nottingham’s location within the East Midlands – a region which despite its relative size and prosperity, has been a somewhat underrepresented region in the national imagination and in academic studies (Hardill et al 2006; Stobart 2004).

Aims and Objectives:

The two overall aims of this thesis are:

- 1) To examine what civic pride is and how people perceive, express and contest civic pride in the city of Nottingham through qualitative methods and analysis.
- 2) To evaluate what the key emotional, political, economic and cultural meanings and consequences of civic pride are, and situate my findings within current debates within geography. In theoretical terms, I aim to contribute to the discipline by

bringing urban, cultural and emotional geographies together to develop a critical, thought-provoking analysis of civic pride that advances our understanding of the relationship between people, place and politics.

What Might a Study about the Geography of Civic Pride Ultimately Tell Us?

Aside from the fact that civic pride is a relatively under-examined construct in geography, civic pride is worthy of consideration for several broader reasons that are critical to this thesis' aims. Firstly, and most importantly, examining civic pride allows geographers to think about what people value about cities and how civic values themselves come to be celebrated, promoted and defended as a matter of pride. In this sense, we can explore, ask questions about, and critique the ways in which people crystallise a city and civic life into what is most important, or most salient, and address the reasons why civic pride continues to be important in cities.

Secondly, civic pride is clearly a matter of consideration for all local governments, civic leaders, local institutions, community groups, as well as ordinary citizens, in a variety of ways (in and of itself). But civic pride also provides a lens through which to examine other issues about cities and civic cultures. It is not just a question of what does civic pride mean for cities, but also what do current issues like neoliberalism, localism and urban change mean for civic pride. From this we can begin to evaluate civic pride's role or potential role in local policy, and assess whether contemporary forms of civic pride reflect or challenge older (more historic) forms of civic pride.

Lastly, by examining civic pride empirically – according to how local citizens, civic actors and policy-makers themselves perceive and experience it – we can go beyond simply describing the imagery of civic pride, and the structures which represent it, and observe more closely how people construct, embody and contest civic pride on a more everyday level. Grounding civic pride as a lived and embodied construct, that resonates with people's personal and political values, as well as their individual backgrounds and biographies, also allows us to compare the more subjective ways in which civic pride is perceived and experienced with the more institutionalised ways in which civic pride gets (re)produced and mobilised. This lets us explore the relationship between the personal

and the political, between more grassroots types of civic pride and more institutional types of civic pride, and whether these different types and scales expose or reflect competing or complementary values.

Thesis Outline

Chapter 2 (Next Chapter): Civic Pride – The Pride of Belonging

This is the first of two theoretical chapters in which I examine what civic pride is and what it has meant throughout particular periods of urban history. Drawing on examples from the ancient Athenian polis, British Victorian cities and British post-industrial cities, I show how civic pride can be conceptualised as: a form of urban belonging, a set of practices and values, and something invested in and through formal structures and institutions. I show how emotions and emotional discourses are integral to understanding what civic pride means and how it functions. I also show how the politics of belonging both shapes and gets shaped by civic pride, and how civic pride relates to a range of inclusionary and exclusionary ideas, values and geographies. At the end of the chapter, I briefly discuss how civic pride can be thought of as a kind of governmentality – as a way of encouraging citizens to think and act in particular ways, linking here civic pride to questions of civic duty and responsibility. This reflects the basic premise that civic pride is not simply felt and experienced, but is something that can be strategically mobilised and can be productive for a range of local and ideological reasons.

Chapter 3: Pride/Shame, Urban Image and the New Localism

This second theoretical chapter discusses civic pride's role in modern local government – particularly in the context of urban regeneration and localism. I argue that post-industrial urban regeneration strategies and recent discourses of localism have tried to re-invest meaning back into civic pride in order to facilitate growth at a time of economic instability and austerity. However, I show that the discourses and practices that have emerged within and around these agendas have been mobilised at the expense of tackling wider inequalities in cities, reproducing what some might see as a superficial kind of civic pride in and for local government. I again lean upon emotions, and the psychology and philosophy of emotions, to help discuss what kinds of symbolic meanings and antagonisms are at play within civic pride agendas and how local governments operate across a range of competing values and interests. I claim that the new localism agenda is a significant but problematic intervention by the Coalition government to reinvest a Victorian spirit of civic pride back

into modern (post-industrial) cities. I conclude that generally what we are seeing is less a return to a Victorian ideal, and rather a state in which many cities are struggling financially and in some cases are using the spirit of localism to actually resist government cuts and changes.

Chapter 4: Methodology

This details the epistemological and methodological approach I used for this thesis and discusses how my approach relates to, but also differs from, previous work on civic pride. I explain and justify the selection of methods I used to gather data and evidence, discuss my experiences of doing fieldwork, and explain how I approached and structured my analysis. Also in this chapter is an introduction to Nottingham, in which I briefly detail the history and geography of the city for context and for readers who are less familiar with the city.

Chapter 5: Nottingham - A Friendly City

This is the first of two analysis chapters dealing with the question 'what are people most proud of about Nottingham?' Using fieldwork data and a range of secondary sources I examine this by looking at how civic pride and civic identity in Nottingham are constructed, experienced and mobilised by different individuals, groups and institutions. The data from the fieldwork suggested that there was a degree of difference between what people are proud of and what civic pride itself is, although they often overlap and complement each other, as I show. The focus of this chapter is on how Nottingham is imagined as a friendly city, and how and why cities in general are increasingly concerned with and invested in celebrating friendliness as a marker of identity. I critique this idea in various ways through examining themes such as friendliness, tolerance, cohesion and the fragmented and uneven nature of civic life.

At the end of this chapter I present the first of three vignettes, based on a series of participant observations of civic events I attended in the city. **Participant Observation 1** is a short piece about a Nottingham heritage day I attended.

Chapter 6: Nottingham - A Bolshie City

This analysis chapter again looks at how civic pride and civic identity are constructed, experienced and mobilised through exploring what people are most proud of in Nottingham. This looks at how Nottingham is imagined as a ‘bolshie city’, examining how the city takes pride in its history and culture of protest and rebellion, and how the city has had to overcome its negative reputation as a ‘gun crime capital’. This contrasts with but also complements the analysis from the previous chapter, offering a similarly rich but ambiguous picture of civic identity in Nottingham. Like the friendly city idea, I argue that bolshiness is a highly contested notion and is imagined and romanticised in rather selective and problematic ways. I tie together the city’s history of rebellion, the writer Alan Sillitoe, and the council’s recent urban image campaigns to show how there are a range of civic and anti-civic ways in which people engage with the city and express their pride – which together expose a range of challenges for the city and the city council in terms of what kind of bolshiness Nottingham wants and aspires to.

At the end of this chapter I present a second vignette – **Participant Observation 2**, which describes my experience of a Nottingham Civic Society event.

Chapter 7: Nottingham at the Crossroads - The Regional Geography of Civic Pride

This chapter examines the regional geography of civic pride in Nottingham. It explores how civic pride can be read through a variety of spatial lenses and scales, and how people in Nottingham imagine the city relative to other cities and other regions in England. This chapter also details the local geography of Nottingham, with reference to its administrative boundaries and local communities, and suggests that civic pride is often nestled within, but at times fragmented or weakened by, a variety of intersecting geographies and identities. In this chapter, I also discuss Robin Hood and the relationship Robin Hood has with the city and civic pride. Debates about Robin Hood reflect and reproduce Nottingham’s regional ambitions and ambiguities. I argue that through Robin Hood the story of Nottingham and Nottingham’s civic pride can be observed, and that this reflects important linkages between local (fictional) icons and civic identities. Overall, I claim that civic pride in Nottingham forms within and beyond a range of other spatial and regional identities, and that civic pride should be understood in relational and dynamic ways.

At the end of this chapter I present my third and final vignette – **Participant Observation 3**, which describes my experience of attending the Nottingham Goose Fair opening ceremony.

Chapter 8: Redefining Civic Pride Within and Beyond Nottingham

This analysis chapter differs somewhat from earlier chapters by examining how participants defined and understood civic pride as a more general concept and condition of cities. Again there was some level of difference between what people are proud of about Nottingham and how people define, explain and express civic pride in more general terms. While it is possible to see how the two overlap, here I argue that civic pride is something which transcends Nottingham and reflects the broader ways in which civic actors engage with places. I claim that civic pride is as much about individual, everyday values as it is about collective or institutional practices and structures. Through examining the underlying factors which make up civic pride and why people engage in civic culture, I also assess how civic pride might be used in government policy, and how localism, the Big Society and austerity provide emerging contexts for re-imagining and problematising the purpose and value of civic pride.

Chapter 9: Conclusion

This summarises the key findings, suggests areas for further research and evaluates what the consequences of this research might be for Nottingham and for the discipline of geography.

Chapter 2: Civic Pride – The Pride of Belonging

Introduction

In the introduction to this thesis I described how particular periods of history have been associated with particular expressions of civic pride. These periods have been variously championed as periods of ‘heightened consciousness’ in civic life and civic culture, and reflect important moments of change and transformation in cities. The ancient polis of Athens for instance has been widely celebrated for its culture of civic pride and as being the birthplace of democracy and citizenship (Cunningham 2011; Budin 2013). Civic pride stood for virtue and honour in being an Athenian and a citizen of the city-state. In the Victorian cities of industrial Britain, civic pride symbolised the dynamism, opulence and triumph of urban capitalism and civic culture, and would become associated with grand architecture, civic ceremonies and municipal leaders like Joseph Chamberlain of Birmingham, who helped steer local government into a new period of municipal autonomy and enterprise (Hunt 2004; Briggs 1963). In the post-industrial cities of today meanwhile, civic pride is often linked with urban regeneration, economic growth and agendas around rebuilding local identity and strengthening social cohesion (Harvey 1989; Tallon 2010). Given all these historic and contemporary associations and points of debate around the term, what fundamentally is civic pride? How is it produced, perceived, experienced and represented? And is there a degree of lineage between the ancient polis, the Victorian city and post-industrial cities in terms of how civic pride has endured as a feature and project of cities? Or can we think of other ways in which to (re)examine civic pride, and understand its role within theories of place, emotion and identity?

Developing perspectives about civic pride through these different historical angles is useful for a number of reasons. Firstly, as I intimated in the Introduction Chapter, there has been a lack of debate about civic pride’s meaning and role through time, and how different eras of urban history have shaped present day understandings of civic pride. Aside from being considered by some as periods of heightened consciousness in civic pride, I think these

particular contexts – ancient Athens, the Victorian (industrial) city and the post-industrial cities of today – serve as useful points in time in which to observe some of the key characteristics and historic trajectories of civic pride, and allows us to explore why it has been such an enduring feature of cities and city life. I agree with Llwyn (2011) for instance that civic pride has, for some people, become a rather nostalgic concept – a past ideal that some people think needs rediscovering and reviving in cities. So it makes sense to re-examine what this lost ideal is and was, and explore what civic pride reveals about the past, present and future. Just as place matters with regards to civic pride, so does time, and understanding the historic context in which civic pride emerges (and therefore why it emerges, why it becomes important) gives us a better picture of what is at stake when cities promote and defend civic pride. I also want to claim here that civic identities often lean upon the heritage of the past in order to embellish the present and look to the future. Of course other historic examples may have been used here, but were not due to a lack of space; equally, other national and international examples could have been used to develop a much wider understanding of civic pride as a global urban construct. To be clear however, this chapter is not a ‘history of’ civic pride, but rather a (re)conceptualisation of what civic pride is, what it has meant in different eras, and how civic pride intersects with a range of both historic and contemporary geographical debates.

In the first section of this chapter I outline some of the key terms of engagement and debate, and begin to interrogate the relationship and confluence between pride as an emotion and civic pride as a social and political ideal and value. Using examples from ancient Athens, Victorian cities and post-industrial cities in Britain, I then present an analytical framework for thinking through how we might define and explain civic pride as a multi-faceted form of (urban) belonging. To do this I use Fenster’s (2005) tripartite model of belonging, differentiating between different senses, practices and formal structures of civic pride and belonging. This type of conceptualisation is, I argue, helpful for illustrating different ideas and perspectives about the geography and history of civic pride. But, as I note, in some ways this framework artificially deconstructs civic pride and under-emphasises its more holistic qualities; such that we should temper how accurate or useful it is to describe and explain the inherent complexity in civic pride. I suggest there is an important distinction to be made here between a notion of civic pride as being proud of one’s city and valuing its local civic identity, and a notion of civic pride as a more everyday subjectivity of civic mindedness and engagement – the implications of which play out more

clearly across the rest of the chapters. Following on from this discussion of civic pride as a form of (urban) belonging, I then discuss the politics of belonging, and how civic pride relates to and helps shape the way(s) in which people define their identity in opposition to other people and places. This section complements the previous section by showing that civic pride is not just a form or type of belonging, or an expression of it, but is also something that strengthens and reinforces belonging itself, and helps create and sustain certain boundaries between people and places.

In the final section of this chapter I discuss civic pride's role in and potential for fostering forms of civic engagement, and suggest that this can be more or less successful depending on how it is expressed, managed or operationalised. While someone might feel proud about where they live, this does not guarantee that they will participate in local affairs or develop a sense of civic responsibility; hence there can be a danger that pride in the city does not translate to a more engaged 'civic pride'. However, as I suggest, civic pride can, in theory, encourage more active forms of citizenship and belonging, which raises the prospect of understanding civic pride as a form of governmentality – a discourse or rationality which mobilises citizens to think and act in particular ways. I briefly explore this thought in order to foreground some of the ideological implications of civic pride and why it forms an important discourse and ideal for local governments to promote and defend.

Civic Pride and Belonging: Definitions and Concepts

Understanding the terms of engagement in any research project is often a frustrating task – not least because nearly every effort to define something falls short of how it is used in context and the range of meanings it incorporates. While definitions are never truly definitive, the process of defining, and understanding how terms are perceived and used is useful not just for the unfamiliar reader, but also for exploring the politics of meaning and how different interpretations can produce different (emotional, spatial, political) meanings and outcomes. How we define a term or value significantly shapes how we talk about it and act upon it. As geographers often note about certain generic but analytically useful terms (such as, for instance, 'neoliberalism', 'belonging', 'citizenship', to name three), there can be a tendency for people to use these words in rather taken-for-granted ways,

ignoring different interpretations of them, and failing to account for how such words have changed in usage and meaning over time and in different contexts (Antonsich 2010; Newman 2013). The term civic pride seems to reflect this state of definitional underdevelopment; too often it gets left undefined, too often the complex meanings and nuances of civic pride are ignored or underdeveloped, and in many accounts there is little sense of how civic pride has changed through time and in different spatial contexts (Armstrong and Hognested 2003; Wood 2006). This therefore warrants a much closer and nuanced examination of civic pride and the ideas and concepts it is associated with.

It is relatively rare to see civic pride defined explicitly in the literature, even if it serves a more or less clear meaning in the context of what is being argued. From the definitions that do exist, civic pride tends to be defined in rather simplistic or ambiguous ways. Wind-Cowie and Gregory (2011: 14) define civic pride for example as simply 'pride in one's locality or one's community', while writer and critic Trevor White (2012) defines civic pride as the 'goodwill a society has for itself'. Emma Wood (2006: 169) claims that civic pride is defined by a 'shared and cohesive city image', but admits it is a term that 'does not represent an exclusively well defined and understood construct'. Ritter (2007: 17) equally talks about civic pride as a 'vague rhetoric' linked with other idealistic terms such as patriotism, loyalty and citizenship; while Kim and Walker (2012: 95) favour a more substantial claim that 'civic pride refers to an individual's positive mental reconstruction due to the enhanced image of their community'. Such definitions, though useful starting points, rarely make explicit what pride is as an emotion, or what the underlying meanings and processes are working beneath this term 'civic pride'. However, to say that civic pride is a malleable term (useful precisely because it is vague) and can be used in different ways for different purposes is also an important point here, as Ritter (2007) points out. This is a point I will return to frequently throughout this thesis.

It is more common to see civic pride mentioned or alluded to, rather than explicitly defined or examined. In part this is why we see civic pride used in such a variety of contexts. A cursory survey of the literature on civic pride (or at least literature which mentions or relates to civic pride in some capacity) ranges from: studies that have looked at civic pride as a concept related to architecture and public space (Amin 2008; Briggs 1963; Chattopadhyay and White 2014; Stobart 2004), studies that have examined civic pride as an aspect of local culture, memory and nostalgia (Bonnett and Alexander 2013; Dagger

1997 Siderits 2007), studies on how civic pride has been mobilised and championed in the context of urban regeneration (Boyle 1999; Hall 1997; Quilley 2000), studies on the meaning and role of civic pride in local community life and in the context of social cohesion (Darling 2009; Wind-Cowie and Gregory 2011; Wood 2006), to a wider literature that has looked at how grassroots movements and civil societies intervene in civic cultures and promote certain types of 'counter prides' or contest official narratives of civic pride (Anjaria 2009; Askins et al 2012; Roy 2009).

I want to draw on much of this literature throughout this chapter, but also critique and extend it. In particular I want to focus on the emotional meanings and nuances of pride and civic pride, as I think this helps reveal why civic pride functions in the way it does, and helps us understand – and question – some of the underlying meanings and dynamics behind civic pride. If the tendency for urban political geography has traditionally been to focus on more structural, historical and material processes and inequalities in cities, then this more emotional angle highlights the more embodied, lived and contingent processes, meanings and values that cities encompass, and how the city is lived, produced and contested in emotional ways. As I show in this chapter, but also throughout this thesis, this approach does not necessarily seek to repudiate much of what has already been written about cities, but rather complements this literature and shows how emotions are embedded in and constitutive of wider structures and forces. The point is emotions are integral to how cities are experienced and how civic values are produced, mediated and communicated; and equally emotions play an important role in shaping and obscuring structures of power, identity and inequality (Bennett 2013; Thrift 2008). Therefore emotions shape the political, but emotions also are, or rather become, political themselves.

Defining Pride

Pride, like civic pride, is notoriously difficult to pin down into a neat definition. As Tracy et al (2010) discuss it is perhaps too broad and wide-ranging to encompass one unified definition or theory. In its more positive sense, pride usually describes a feeling of satisfaction or self-worth about one's identity or community. It can be a self-generated, personal emotion based in one's affiliation to a particular identity or community, or the

result of some personal achievement or gain. Equally it can arise when a person receives praise from others or attains high status in society (Niklicek et al 2010). In its more negative sense, pride relates to a sense of arrogance, superiority and hubris. It is often said people can be too 'full of pride', too over-bearing in their confidence, and as a result, they can be negative or dismissive towards others. It can also relate to people's sensitivity towards others who mock or undermine their ego or integrity – a pride of being unable to accept slight or injury, or a stubborn pride of refusing to change one's ways or views. In Western philosophy, and within the history of religious thought on pride, pride has thus been bifurcated between two opposing types – one that links pride to a sense of confidence, self-esteem and integrity (pride as a virtue), and the other that links pride with arrogance, hubris and stubbornness (pride as a sin) (Tracy et al 2010).

As I referred to in the introduction, pride is complex because it is not simply an emotion or feeling, but is also a value or principle that guides action and behaviour. In one way, to be proud is to have a level of self-awareness and reflexivity about the integrity of one's beliefs and actions – such that people with pride tend to feel guilty or frustrated if they fail in something, or when their actions do not meet their expectations. Pride can therefore be an aspirational and self-motivating emotion that creates certain expectations and standards for oneself or for society (Smith 1998; Dyson 2006). A failure to live up to these expectations and standards, however, can be cause for self-doubt and even shame – particularly if this failure reflects badly on a person's sense of self-worth and esteem and garners negative attention from others (Munt 2000). Pride can then also be the 'front' someone shows in order to hide or conceal this self-doubt and shame, and also the reason why people with too much pride tend to be less self-critical about what they believe in and the values they hold (a blind, blissful pride in this sense). There is then a highly dialectical relationship between pride and shame – one resisting the other, but in doing so, bringing the other into visibility and relief (Munt 2000; Johnston 2007; Probyn 2005). This relationship between pride and shame will be developed later on this chapter, but takes a stronger hold in the next chapter on urban regeneration and localism.

Another important element of pride is how it relates to what people value and take care of the most. When something takes 'pride of place' it usually represents something important and highly valued. These things of particular value and praise can form important markers of identity and association in places. But they can also distort people's

impression or image of what a particular place represents. As Wind-Cowie and Gregory (2011) note on British patriotism, images of union jacks, the royal family or the Houses of Parliament may be, for some people, the pride and joy of what Britain is and represents as a nation, but they also represent the very images which distort and misrepresent what many other people are proud of (indeed, quite oppositely, they may be sources of shame for some people). Stereotypes can be sources of both pride and shame in cities, but they can also serve to homogenise the identity the city, and undermine its inherent differences and diversities. Alongside this, those things that come to define and represent a place may be experienced differently by different people. A city may, for example, be well-known for being a 'friendly' place, and this sense of friendliness becomes something the city takes pride in; but not everyone will experience this friendliness in the same way, and cities, as we know, can also be very unfriendly places, or at least friendly to some people and groups more than others. Part of the pride feeling therefore is a certain romanticism – a romanticism that becomes as much about what people imagine and aspire the city to be (or a person, or a community, or a nation, for that matter) as it is about what the city is actually like to live in.

Defining Civic

To define what civic means, as I stated in the introduction of the thesis, one must return to the classical cities of Greece and Rome, and talk about civic coming from the latin 'civis' – broadly meaning of the city, or relating to the city and its citizens. In modern parlance, by extension, it is a term that tends to be associated with local government and local community life. It is most often used as an adjective prefix to talk about various aspects of urban or communal life. To talk of the 'civic sphere' of cities, for instance, would generally express or denote the structures, spaces and practices that constitute the city's shared public realm – spaces in and through which forms of local citizenship and belonging can be constituted and made meaningful (Mumford 1961). Civic space meanwhile would generally confer the range of public spaces and sites in the city in which citizens come together and interact – often these are spaces of the city that have some special political meaning and function for the city (Stobart 2004).

Civic cultures and civic identities meanwhile form out of, and within, the basic physical and political structures that make up the city, and represent part of the social fabric of the city that brings different citizens and communities together into a shared image or enterprise. Elise Boulding (1990: xix) for example talks about civic culture as the ‘patterning of how we share a common space, common resources, and common opportunities and manage interdependence in that “company of strangers” which constitutes the public’. Ash Amin (2012) has talked about the civic realm as representing the sites and spaces in the city within which local identity, local politics and local culture get actively produced and contested. For Amin, the civic realm is a site of ‘shared multiplicity’, in and through which citizens are made visible to each other and different power structures are formed.

What constitutes something as ‘civic’ has undoubtedly changed through time, and different places and different cultures ‘do’ civiness in different ways. The legacy of the classical cities is still evident of course – in terms of some of the design elements of public spaces, buildings and monuments, and how local democracy is constituted and formalised. But civic culture and civic identity have never stood still and have shaped and been shaped by the changing nature of cities themselves. This is no less true in terms of the scale of cities, and the bounding of the civic as a geographical unit. In territorial terms, cities have usually been defined by certain spatial-political boundaries within which a local government holds jurisdiction. But as regional geographers have shown, urban regions are complex, and the economic and cultural area over which places function often differs and exceeds the political boundaries of local municipal areas (Jonas 2012; Jones 2009). This means it is often a metropolitan or city-regional scale over which civic structures, identities and cultures are formed (at least in larger cities), across which a range of inter-civic rivalries and conflicts may emerge. How this affects civic pride is complex, as I show in relation to Nottingham. There are also different spatial hierarchies to consider within the city, in terms of whether the civic refers to the neighbourhood or community level, or a more city-wide level, and all the variants, linkages and nuances in between.

While civic boundaries generate certain spatial parameters for civic life, civic cultures are also often determined and shaped by connections and interdependencies with other cities and other regional, national and global cultures. Amin describes how in the modern age the civic is now ‘no longer reducible to the urban’ (ibid: 1938). The roles of things like television, literature, national media and the internet, have diversified the spatial mediums

through which people construct, express and contest the civic sphere. This makes it somewhat challenging to isolate the civic into discrete forms and processes. Equally, changes in governance arrangements in cities (particularly with the emergence of city-regions, public-private partnerships, local economic partnerships, intra-national and transnational governing bodies and other hierarchical structures) and the increasingly global nature of cities and urban economies, have altogether changed the fundamental dynamics and structures of the civic much beyond its original meaning(s). As such, any policy intervention or initiative that supports local civic culture must to some extent negotiate a range of scales and political structures. The significance of this is considered more in the next chapter and in the subsequent analytical chapters, but principally it reflects how the civic has become a highly flexible, fluid and historically contingent term (Llywelyn 2011).

Defining Belonging

Belonging is a term that has generated much debate in geography and the social sciences. It is a term that, like civic pride, seems to mean something quite clear and profound, and yet as Antonsich (2010: 643) notes, rarely gets explicitly defined. My basic entry point for thinking about belonging has been, like others, to think through the emotional and political ways in which people desire and struggle to 'belong'. I am interested in how people feel at home, feel comfortable in particular places, feel connected to their local environment, as well as the beliefs, myths and political processes which give this sense of belonging meaning, reality and status (Antonsich 2010; Wood and Waite 2011; Probyn 1996). I am also interested in how belonging involves an accompanying sense of 'longing', a sense in which belonging may be desired but unfulfilled, mourned but yearned for, or something to be salvaged (Probyn 1996; Llywelyn 2011). Later in this chapter, I show how cities are stages and vehicles for fostering a sense of shared belonging, even this might hide or fail to resolve the fact that (some) people might feel they do not belong.

To date, debates about belonging in cities have been examined through a number of spatial and political lenses - from forms of community and neighbourhood-based belonging (Jones 2013; Savage et al 2005; Sennett 2008), to form of belonging related to different ethnic and cultural groups (Anthias 2008; Kalandides and Vaiou 2011), to practices of

belonging in urban space (Amin 2008; Fortier 1999; Watson 2006), to analyses of the economic and political practices and structures which foster forms of belonging (Hollows et al 2013; Iveson 1998). Across this broad range, it seems North American literatures within the field of 'civics' (which is a more discrete discipline in the U.S than the UK) have tended to look at more formal expressions of belonging through political participation, community engagement and local democracy (Levine 2013). Whereas to speak about 'civics' and civic pride in the UK on the other hand, one tends find more of an association with urban space, certain figureheads of local democracy such as lord mayors and council dignitaries, and also more of a sense of the civic as something concerned with local identity and local (and parochial) politics; a more geographical conception perhaps compared to the North American political conception (Hunt 2004; Jayne 2012). Bridging this trans-Atlantic gap, we might therefore look to both the informal and formal ways in which people belong civically or politically to a place, and how people come to have or feel a 'civic' sense of belonging. A key question here is: to what extent do people belong (and express their sense of belonging) to their civic identity as opposed to other types of identity and belonging (whether regional, ethnic, or interest-based)? And with this, what is the relationship and mutual ground between civic and other types of identity?

Belonging can of course be conceptualised and expressed in different ways. It can be felt as an emotion or feeling, it can signify a sense of identity, comfort or security within a place or community, or it can be instituted formally as a membership or status (Antonsich 2010; Fenster 2005). It can also be expressed through certain practices and behaviours, which can reflect and validate one's sense of belonging. How might we understand civic pride as a form of urban belonging? I think there are two overarching points of entry here. One is to examine the ways in which civic pride is felt, experienced and practised as a form of belonging and how this has been expressed through, and shaped by, different historic periods. The second is to examine how civic pride itself shapes, conditions and mobilises forms of belonging, and how actors and institutions in the city have, through time, encouraged more active forms of belonging *through* civic pride. In other words, while civic pride might denote or signify a sense of belonging, civic pride may also encourage and galvanise this belonging, and give it meaning, purpose and a more political or antagonistic 'edge'. I develop these ideas respectively below.

Civic Pride and Belonging – Different Scales and Formations

Fenster's (2005) study of everyday experiences of transnationalism in cities exposes how particular gendered experiences of belonging become manifest in people's everyday lives through different scales. She conceptualises how belonging is experienced and enacted in different ways through what she calls different 'formations of belonging'. Borrowing selectively from her model and following from Antonsich's (2010) review of the belonging literature in geography, I want to construct three 'formations' of civic pride, which I think serve well as a loose (albeit simplistic and problematic) structure with which to describe and understand civic pride. Following Fenster and Antonsich, I examine here: firstly different 'senses' of civic pride (relating to the emotional meanings of civic pride and how this shapes forms of belonging), different 'practices' of civic pride (relating to how civic pride is enacted, performed and represented) and different 'formal structures' of civic pride (relating to the political and institutional forms that represent and collectively embody civic pride). These formations are inter-linked as I show, but they form some of the basic building blocks for understanding the complex and multi-faceted nature of civic pride.

A Sense of Civic Pride

A sense of civic pride relates to the emotions, feelings and affects which define, shape and give rise to civic pride. This therefore refers to the emotional side of civic pride and the broader feelings and values that form within and around this. As I described in the introductory chapter, this could be a simple 'associative' type of pride of living somewhere in particular and identifying with it as 'home' (or somewhere special). It could be a kind of 'warming' or 'humbling' pride that forms out of being part of a (civic) community – perhaps the kind of pride that might be stirred up when people come together to honour certain traditions and rituals. It could also be a more triumphant or gleeful kind of pride felt or expressed when a city beats its nearest rival at something. A sense of civic pride would refer to all the different ways in which people feel a sense of self-worth and self-esteem about where they live; all the ways in which people feel positively self-enhanced and empowered by belonging to a particular place or community.

In the Athenian polis, it seems people did feel proud to belong – as a citizen of the city-state – in these kinds of self-enhancing and empowering ways. But it was not simply a mere ‘feeling’ of pride or belonging that was important, but the values and principles which structured and gave rise to this feeling, and which made pride into a kind of virtue (Bell and de Shalit 2009; Arnason et al 2013). For the privileged that were granted rights of citizenship (at least), civic pride was as much a value of duty and responsibility as it was a reflection of one’s feelings – thus it had to be expressed through action, through participating in local affairs, or on some occasions, through military duty or public service. In other words, pride in the polis folded feeling, virtue and practice together. ‘Attachment to the polis was very strong’ thus writes Stephanie Budin (2013: 189), not simply in the emotional sense of ‘feeling attached’, but an attachment that became a statement of one’s engagement and solidarity with the city and its citizens. The personal and the political were therefore intimately connected in the context of Athenian civic pride, and this laid much of the foundations for a burgeoning civic culture.

This is an important point of historical context about pride. For pride in the polis, as I have inferred, was a virtue of citizenship and belonging that was quite distinct from anything suggesting hubris or arrogance. It was only later in Christian theology that pride, as a word, developed in its connotations with sin (Tracy et al 2010). This is perhaps why Aristotle claimed pride was the ‘crown of the virtues’ and confirmed greatness upon an individual (see: Cunningham 2011; Dagger 1997). Of course this did not mean that the Athenians did not bear a certain civic egoism or hubris throughout their history. For, as Mumford (1961) argues, it was civic egoism and hubris that would eventually cause stagnation in the polis, which would redirect public money toward buildings, events and other means of urban beautification - and would lead, in military terms, to a weakened city state. Thus Mumford (ibid: 173) writes,

What began as collective self-respect, confident of powers tested under external pressure, turned into the worship of a frozen image of the communal self. In the end the polis was undermined and met destruction by its over-commitment to the arts and rituals that fortified it in defeat and had celebrated its successes. Well did Plato observe in *The Laws* that the greatest plague of the city was ‘not faction but rather distraction’.

While Mumford's words mark the dangers of civic egoism, the way in which the Athenians in principle tied together pride with virtue, and civic pride with civic duty, is important and has shaped a much wider history of citizenship and belonging. The Victorians, as I detail later, would also take on this principle of marrying civic pride with civic duty, but in a less militaristic or territorial form. In today's context, it is perhaps a little less certain whether there is always a direct and tangible connection between feeling proud of somewhere and actively participating in that place. People may simply be 'proud', not for what they have done or contributed, but for the kind of life that the city affords them, for the achievements the city's made, and for the values it stands for. Some have cynically called this kind of pride as 'basking in the reflected glory' (BIRGing) of something - enjoying others' achievements as a collective achievement, or even as one's own (see: Ze'ev 2001: 304). Whether this uncoupling of civic pride as a virtue, in an Athenian sense, from simply feeling proud about a city, is indicative of a wider historical narrative about the gradual dissolution of civic values in modern society is a thought to bear in mind, but would clearly require a much larger historical analysis than can be offered here. The point is that that people may be proud of where they live, and feel a strong sense of belonging towards it, but do little to show it, or do little to actively contribute to the communities they live in.

In these ways, whether coupled with action and duty or not, a sense of civic pride ties together a feeling of pride with a feeling of belonging. Because one feels they belong, they feel proud, and because one is proud, they feel they belong. However, there might also be another sense of civic pride which is not necessarily positive and self-enhancing, but rather negative, or expressed more negatively. We could for example think about situations where pride is provoked by someone or something else - for instance if someone outside the city is critical of it, or stereotypes it in certain ways; or if people's sense of civic pride is antagonised or threatened by what is going on in the city itself. Such scenarios could equally invoke a spirit of belonging and unity in the city, but based in a more antagonistic type of sentiment. The regional economic rivalries that emerged during the industrial revolution in Britain for example were indicative of such provocation in civic pride, where competition for profit, prestige and political influence within and between cities fanned defensive, satirical, but also hostile expressions of local and regional civic pride (Briggs 1963; Ellis 2003; Stobart 2001). The rise of local and national news and media (as well as popular fiction) gave urban communities much greater awareness of other towns and cities, and so new types of regional stereotyping coloured people's imagination

of other places and in turn their sense of civic pride and identity. As this relates to the rise of imagined regions of the North, the South and the Midlands in England will be explored later on in this chapter. A key trait of this kind of civic pride nevertheless is how 'the outside' provokes and mobilises greater feelings of pride and belonging in one's local area and how this then gives rise to competition and potential conflict - producing more oppositional types of civic identity. To say that a sense of civic pride therefore emerges, and emerges stronger, through civic rivalries may be true; but such rivalries, and with that, people's general awareness of what other cities are doing and achieving, may also create certain jealousies and inferiority complexes amongst local people about their city – particularly perhaps for smaller cities that are less well-known. This may make people feel less proud, or more uncertain about their pride, particularly if they feel that the city lacks something, has not lived up to expectations, or is not respected by others.

To extend this point a little further, it is no doubt true that some people do not feel like they belong to the city that live they in, or feel excluded from it, and therefore do not feel a (strong) sense of civic pride. The city may not 'do anything' for them (in an emotional sense), it may not provide them with the quality of life they want or aspire to; some people may feel rather apathetic about the city they live in and treat simply as a place to live. Thus there are different types of negative civic pride that deserve some thought here. These negative appraisals of the city can themselves at times form an important source of shared identity - through shared frustration, shared misery, or shared ironies. Many of us can identify with that mixed feeling of pride, shame and embarrassment over a place that some people feel is 'a bit crap' or 'a bit lifeless'; for even those places might have a certain ironic charm.

A negative sense of civic pride could emerge in other ways too. Where cities have developed negative reputations and have been stigmatised for, say, high rates of poverty or crime, it has been shown that this can generate more defensive forms of pride in response – either in order to combat this negativity, or equally to take pride in (or take ownership over) this negativity (Boland 2010a; Featherstone 2012). This may even occur internally within cities whereby a collective pride emerges within local communities or neighbourhoods against the city itself - a counter-pride to the city or the city council (McKenzie 2013). Without trying to oversentimentalise a working-class spirit of solidarity too much, in certain communities that are blighted by poverty, deprivation and crime, a sense

of community spirit or civic pride may be 'all they have'. For Mike Featherstone (2012: 182), this negative civic pride

takes the practical form of a sense of unity in social exclusion and marginality, and a kind of entrenchment of parochial resistance to the wider social, economic, political and cultural environment, [which] may be understood as a fatalistic brand of social resilience.

Feelings of negative civic pride therefore might operate as a kind of coping strategy that brings communities together against or in spite of the urban social order. It can also be a spur for change – a pride of resistance against this social order. As I detailed earlier on the psychology of pride, pride can often serve to reinforce certain ideals and expectations within oneself or within society – as an aspiration to succeed or to transform one's circumstances – and so while certain forms of civic pride may arise in antagonistic and oppositional ways, it may still serve the positive purpose of generating support for change and contesting inequalities. Indeed those that feel the most acute sense of loss and despair, but equally see the potential for change and improvement, are those with an aspirational sense of civic pride for where they live.

By way of a brief example, the writer and social critic D.H Lawrence's damning words about Late Victorian, Early-Edwardian Britain are illustrative for understanding this kind of negative, but aspirational, sense of civic pride. For Lawrence, despite all the pomp of the industrial revolution and the rejuvenation of local government, the huge physical expanse of cities by the end of the 20th century had not only reaped havoc on the countryside, but signalled the loss of real community and real 'civicness' (Lawrence 2003; see also: Hunt 2004). Modernity had left in its wake a destruction of civic and communal ideals, producing cities with little political purpose or direction. For Lawrence, whom grew up in a small mining village in Nottinghamshire, the cities of England failed to live up to the glory of the older European cities. Contrasting the ancient Italian city-state of Siena with his home city of Nottingham (no less), he harshly observes how:

The English character has failed to develop the real urban side of a man, the civic side. Siena is a bit of a place, but it is a real city, with citizens intimately connected with the city. Nottingham is a vast place sprawling towards a million, and it is

nothing more than an amorphous agglomeration. There is no Nottingham, in the sense that there is Siena. The Englishman is stupidly undeveloped as a citizen. (Lawrence 2003: 293-294)

The industrialised Nottingham Lawrence saw did not then live up to the ideal he expected and demanded, and so his sense of civic pride and citizenship could not be fully realised. It could be said Lawrence was wounded by pride itself. This negative civic pride is perhaps all the more poignant when it is your home city, and shows that civic pride can often be felt and expressed as a kind of longing for something else or something more – a yearning for a lost or unrealised ideal (see Chapter 3, for more on this). The point is, is that when we come to conceptualise a sense of civic pride, we should not just treat pride in isolation, but see it in relation to other emotions, other values, other aspirations and desires, and acknowledge the ways in which it is rendered both positively and negatively as a form of belonging (Fortier 2008).

Practices of Civic Pride

Practices of civic pride should not be considered distinct from the emotions and values which inspire such practices, but are perhaps the visible manifestations of them. Thus they can be equally varied and complex. In the Athenian polis, the tendency to marry pride with virtue would have dictated that what became practices of ‘civic pride’ broadly constituted those practices which demonstrated one’s status as a citizen and one’s general commitment and duty to the polis. This may have included participating in local political affairs, attending festivals and events, being involved in trade and merchant activity, or in certain circumstances, performing military services and defending the realm (Dagger 1997). With the exception of military duty perhaps, contemporary civic pride practices might revolve around similar things: participating in local politics, attending local events, volunteering, joining civil societies and so on. We might also add the range of personal and collective investments people make in places that serve a civic purpose (buying property, starting a local business, local philanthropy etc.). It would of course be wrong say that buying property for example is a practice of civic pride in itself; but the act of *desiring* to buy property in a particular place or community, and establishing roots and commitments to that area through home-ownership, might serve as a kind of practice

which encourages civic pride (although whether home-ownership leads to greater levels of civic pride compared to, say, private renting or social housing is another question).

To be clear here, it is not that all types of civic practice are done for civic pride reasons – one might volunteer in a community centre for example simply because they know someone else who volunteers and were asked to come along; someone might vote in a local election because they are angry with their current MP or local council. In some cases therefore, it might be more accurate to say that such practices or acts confirm an already entrenched sense of civic pride – i.e. that one is proud of their community already, and then volunteers or votes as an extension of this civic pride (Wind-Cowie and Gregory 2011). In other cases, such practices and acts might reflect someone's lack of civic pride, or rather their attempts to address and transform civic pride (as I noted above, aspiring to something more, perhaps out of frustration). Or, we could say that civic pride practices constitute those practices which build and embellish one's sense of civic pride and bring people together into a shared existence and enterprise.

Local (civic) events have always been important occasions in which civic pride and forms of belonging are made and reproduced. Again it is hard to define precisely what a 'civic' or 'civic pride' event is per se, but they perhaps signify those events which have some sort of place element to them, such that they are a local tradition or ritual, or they simply signify those events which are sponsored and organised through local government or some kind of community forum (Darling 2009; Fortier 1999). In the ancient polis, events and occasions such as sporting contests, religious festivals and theatrical performances would have been important in generating this shared civic ethos (Mumford 1961). In more pressing circumstances, such as an impending war, oratory and the art of rhetoric were also important tools for drumming up civic pride and making a spectacle of this shared civic ethos. In this instance, the orator and general Pericles stands out as a celebrated figure of Ancient Greece that used his powers of rhetoric to unite and unify the polis, and consecrate the city as sacrosanct. Honouring the dead at the beginning the Pelopponesian War (c.431-401 BC), Pericles' Funeral Oration of c.431 crowned the city as a symbol of virtue and glory and was, in David Cartwright's (1997: 107) words a 'eulogy to Athens itself' (Schiffman 2011: 55; Louraux 1986). While the modern British city rarely finds itself at war, one could hardly imagine a local councillor or civic leader today, in our somewhat more apathetic age, to deliver such an inspiring speech on civic pride. We would sooner see a

local politician ‘tweet’ his or her pride, than gather the city masses to the city square to make a grand speech – but such occasions still happen, and reflect the ongoing need to establish lines of communication and points of contact between government and people for the construction and reproduction of civic life and civic culture.

In the Victorian cities of industrial Britain, one tends to find that the events and occasions that stirred up feelings of civic pride the most were things like the opening of town halls, annual fairs and parades, and the celebrations witnessed during royal coronations or memorial days (see: Briggs 1963; Hunt 2004). Of course at this period in time civic pride was far less narrowly conceived as it was within the fortified walls of the polis. To celebrate civic pride locally was in many instances to celebrate Britain, British values, and British livelihoods – in other words to celebrate the local *within* the national. The works of Asa Briggs (1963), Tristram Hunt (2004) and Peter Shapely (2012) for example provide compelling accounts of the pomp and ceremony that accompanied these types of events and occasions, and the symbolism they conveyed – often signifying progress, civic aspiration, competitive spirit and local patriotism.

Cities today also celebrate and perform civic pride in various ways through events and occasions. From localised rituals and traditions, to community fairs and celebrations, to city-wide festivals and activities, to more spectacular celebrations such as those performed for major national sporting events – civic pride is performed in a variety of ways at a variety of scales in the city. The opening ceremonies of the London Olympics (2012), the Commonwealth Games in Glasgow (2014) or the Grand Depart of the Tour de France in Yorkshire, for example, were performances that, for many, evoked feelings of both civic and national pride. But whether this was only a short-lived (superficial) kind of pride, based in a rather detached sense of civicness, ignoring (as perhaps many did) the implicit costs and inequalities associated such mega-events, are critical issues to address - particularly in assessing the overall value that these events bring to cities (Boland 2010a; Wind-Cowie and Gregory 2011).

Whether or not making a spectacle out of civic pride is used as a ‘bread and circus’ type of tactic to maintain the social order or to protect certain interests (cf. Harvey 1989; Hall 1997; also see next chapter), it is clear on some level that local events and ritualised performances of local identity are important for promoting and reinforcing civic pride.

Grand display, pomp and ceremony, the mass crowd - while they may serve to paint certain (positive and selective) images of people and places, they are nevertheless important for civic pride because they bring visibility to local identity, and give the impression, if not sustain a reality, of a shared civic community interacting and working together. People may never meet, interact or work with large proportions of the city's populace, but by people engaging with these events and performances as sites of visibility and shared presence with others - the city's 'community of strangers' (Amin 2013)- civic pride can be made all the more real and tangible.

Performance is important not just as a passing moment in time, but in the way it becomes part of the city's heritage – certain events and occasions are remembered, charted, eulogised and celebrated by future generations in ways which embellish the city's identity and pride (Dagger 1997). As I relate to later in the context of Nottingham, when certain events and occasions become established as shared traditions in the city (highlights on the city's social calendar), this helps build the civic psyche of the city, and helps make civic pride itself a kind of ritualised feeling and practice (see: Dagger 1997; Anderson 2006). Geographers have written much on the geographies of performance and tradition, and how they express, reflect and context different forms of identity and belonging (Wood 2007; Watson 2006; Fortier 1999). But more work needs to be done to try and interrogate how civic pride is productive for such events to happen in the first place, and why feelings of civic pride emerge from them. As Catherine Nash notes, performances of this kind 'reveal something of the ways in which performance variously connotes micro-geographies of bodily practice [and] staged theatrical activities' (2000: 660) that (as I see it) serve to embellish and enact civic pride in particular ways and help strengthen local identity.

Lastly, there are a range of other, more mundane, more everyday ways in which people express or 'practice' their sense of civic pride or sense of civicness. These might include people buying 'local' to support independent retailers in the area, or people picking up litter in the street, or painting murals on the walls of houses (Hollows et al 2013). Such practices may go unremarked and again may not be done for explicitly 'civic pride reasons', but which nevertheless resonate with a wider civic pride ethos (and bolster other people's sense of civic pride). Such everyday, mundane and unremarked practices become another important layer or thread in the making of civic pride in places, and complement more formal practices (such as voting or volunteering) and more spectacular displays and

performances associated with civic pride. This more everyday aspect will be explored further in Chapter 8.

Formal Structures of Civic Pride

The formal structures of civic pride relate primarily to the political and institutional forms through which civic pride and forms of belonging are articulated. Alongside a sense of civic pride and practices of civic pride, this category represents the more official domain of civic pride in cities, which would broadly refer to the sphere of local government and other civic institutions. As I have intimated, voting and participating in local – political, democratic – affairs in the city would come under this category. In ancient Athens these formal structures primarily related to offices of power and law (the kings, the magistrates, generals, warriors, statesmen and other civic leaders of the city) as well as the public assemblies (the ‘ecclesia’) where citizens (particularly those considered most skilful and committed to political affairs, the *politai*) were brought together to discuss the decisions and matters relating to the polis (Malan 2012). One could say civic pride was effectively instituted and embodied in the polis through these offices and assemblies. Today in Britain we might think of institutions such as the lord mayor’s office, city councils and registrars, civic societies, cultural institutions, museums, libraries and administration offices as the key structures through which civic pride is formalised and institutionalised – and much of these have origins or precedents in the Victorian era and indeed before.

At this more formal level, civic pride and belonging are not just felt or practiced, but in various ways are instituted by one’s associations with and membership to the formal civic sphere. While in the city-state, the city walls demarcated a clear boundary around who and what belonged, the Victorian and post-industrial cities of Britain represent something much more complex in this sense, for not only is formal citizenship now a matter of nationhood, but the frequency of geographic and social mobility in today’s age, by comparison, means that people can and will move freely across civic and municipal boundaries, such that one’s citizenship is mobile (see: Savage et al 2005).

As I explore in Chapter 6, local government jurisdictions remain significant in some ways because they shape the political parameters of civic pride, civic engagement and municipal

autonomy. Indeed, even while cities have become more fluid, global and multicultural in their form and function, the lasting presence of major civic buildings, public spaces, statues of old heroes and legends, still suggests that the formal sphere of civic pride dominates our impression of civic pride and local civic culture. The town hall in particular has been often read as a focal point for civic pride and a metonym for the collective aspirations of local government and local populations (Briggs 1963; Stobart 2004). Although the symbolism inscribed in public buildings has been well-rehearsed and documented in the literature, I think it is worthwhile to stop and question how far this is often actually an elite – as opposed to populist – view; and whether in fact the town hall in many cities is in fact (also) a source of shame, anger, mistrust (or indeed something simply alien to a majority of the local population).

This more institutional picture of civic pride may also encompass ways in which individuals and groups become formally recognised within the civic culture of the city or when people make a career out of local government. This may include instances where people rise up the local government ranks, become famous locally (perhaps as a local hero, or an influential leader), or become recognised through formal awards and honours (for example, receiving a 'Freeman of the City' award - perhaps one the most enduring institutional forms of celebrating individual endeavour in matters of civic pride). Alternatively, the formal structures of civic pride may be linked with practices of engaging in the political affairs of the city – voting in local elections, being on the boards of various neighbourhood forums, community trusts and partnerships, or it may concern the actions of the 'concerned citizen' who attends public meetings, consultations and debates. Within the more formal civic sphere, more radical action against local government or local institutions might also occur, wherein which people might contest the local government's vision of civic pride (Roy 2009; Anjaria 2009). This is an important point because the image or narrative of civic pride which is presented and celebrated by the city's authorities might be different to how local populations conceive of civic pride and how they feel it should be articulated, promoted and defended (cf. Askins et al 2011).

Of course this kind of institutional version of civic pride is precisely how civic pride has usually been imagined and celebrated within urban history. It is through these formal structures that civic pride itself, as an idea and practice, has become institutionalised into the fabric of the city and has become a performative element of how cities establish and

honour local autonomy and civic identity. The ascension of many British towns and urban areas to ‘city status’ by royal charter, for example, by the end of the 19th century, was an important moment in the evolution of British cities, and would help entrain the belief that cities were now officially and royally recognised for their autonomy, authority and identity (Harrison 1988).

If we acknowledge that this more formal aspect of civic pride has been pivotal in shaping the history and evolution of cities and urban power, we should also bear in mind the kinds of people who have traditionally come to represent civic pride at this level. In the polis, it was propertied males that dominated civic society, while women and slaves were in most cases excluded. It was also a matter of origin and ‘ethnos’ – one could not, in most instances, ‘become’ an Athenian citizen, rather one had to have ancestral ties to the polis. In this way civic pride was expressed through a fairly homogeneous and elite community (Budin 2013). Similarly, across the wider history of Western (European) cities, local government has tended to be the preserve of the upper and middle classes of society, and typically white (heterosexual) males. Stobart (2004) and Hill (1999) have talked about how the civic sphere has historically been a space for articulating middle-class aspiration, in ways that both unify and divide the class structure of cities. By producing an image and political apparatus that represents and stands for the city as a whole, but which reserves power exclusively for the middle-class (white, male) elite, ideas such as civic pride have become part of what Roy (2009: 261) calls a form of ‘populist mediation’ whereby the ‘urban subject is simultaneously empowered and self-disciplined, civil and mobilized, displaced and compensated’. As I detail in the next section, local governments are often invested in generating certain beliefs in the imagined community of the city, in ways which, although productive in some ways, can serve to hide or render invisible class-based, ethnic and other types of inequalities.

From all that I have discussed above – senses, practices and formal structures – civic pride is clearly no ‘one thing’, but is produced, reflected and mobilised in a range of ways. Trying to untangle these different forms or formations of civic pride, and how they emerge across the city, is a key challenge, as is understanding the relationship and interface between them. For example, what is the relationship between senses and practices of civic pride? Between pride the emotion and pride the virtue? Or between the more everyday (informal) ways in which civic pride is expressed and practiced, and the more formal,

institutional ways in which civic pride is articulated? In addition to this, we need to ask: who belongs and who participates in the city, and who contributes to civic pride? With this we need consider how civic pride incorporates an uneven geography of power, representation and inclusion, as well as the historical and geographical context in which civic pride emerges.

Borrowing Fenster's conceptual model of belonging then, we can begin to sketch out how civic pride can be understood in different – structured – ways. As I have suggested already however, efforts to simplify and classify civic pride into discrete categories inevitably produce distortions and obfuscate the more nuanced and subjective ways in which people actually think about and ground civic pride within everyday life. There may also be contradictions: a community might develop both pro-civic pride behaviours and anti-civic pride behaviours (e.g. people might vote in local elections, but not care too much for litter on the street). As I discussed earlier, this kind of conceptualisation is useful to illustrate the different forms which civic pride takes, but should not forego an understanding of how these various formations and scales of civic pride are related and coextensive. A Venn diagram (showing senses, practices and formal structures) could be one way of visualising civic pride's overlapping dynamics, although even this assumes a certain rigidity of distinction between each category. The point is, civic pride is often more cross-cutting and holistic than this analytical model suggests, although we should be careful to talk about what is an authentic or complete ('universal') civic pride. Civic pride folds emotions, practices and structures together, and holds up an ideal (often romantic) image of the city and its citizens that – although important, productive, and at times highly tangible and visible – can also be shown to be complex, fragmented and contested.

The Politics of Belonging and Civic Pride

The Politics of 'Us and Them'

I now want to look at how civic pride can be examined through ideas of inclusion and exclusion. Moving on from looking at civic pride *as* a form of belonging, I now want to discuss how civic pride itself conditions, mediates and galvanises forms of belonging. In

particular I am concerned here with how civic pride shapes forms of belonging in political and (at times) antagonistic ways. This section argues that civic pride is often produced and shaped by relationships beyond one's locality, and that the political function of civic pride is precisely to differentiate and make distinctions between one place and another – to embellish difference out of, or for the sake of, pride.

If we concede that all forms of belonging, identity and community are to some extent shaped by real and imagined boundaries which produce and regulate self and other, us and them, then it follows that civic pride is equally relational and oppositional (Delanty 2003; Sennett 2008). I am proud of coming from Nottingham *in as much as* I do not come from Derby, Leicester or Sheffield (and would therefore not feel pride for those cities (as great as those cities are!)). Place-based forms of belonging, identity and community are not always of course prescribed by accidents of birth, nor necessarily exclusive to one form of identification (such that it is possible, and common even, to identify with and even take pride in, more than one place or community). Indeed geographers have shown how forms of belonging, identity and community are becoming more and more multiple and plural in an age of transnationalism and mobility (Waite and Cook 2011). But we might say, even if cities are becoming more and more transnational, fluid and globalised in form, function and outlook, it is through greater visibility of other places, other cities, other cultures that people are becoming more and more aware of difference, distinction and local specificity – such that civic pride is (re)emerging as a way of reclaiming and celebrating the local (Harvey 1989; 1996).

Geographers have long been aware of the conservatism associated with ideas of belonging, identity and community. This is a conservatism not just of socio-spatial isolation (wanting to exclude other people and places, or be distant from them), but also of historical fixity, tradition and stability, and a compulsion to resist change or outside interface. Fixed ideas of belonging, identity and community are problematic because they can create myths of origin, natural order and 'divine right' over who and what belongs (Fortier 2005; Jones 2013). To not to belong to anywhere meanwhile is either to be a 'nobody', a wandering nomad, or a member of the cosmopolitan elite who has severed his or her ties to home (Massey 1994; Jones 2009). The conservatism associated with notions of belonging, identity and community can lead some people to wary of strong and fiercely proud identities, as though they are 'blind' to their exclusionary or small-minded ways. Instead,

in today's more global culture, some are beginning favour a more expansive conception of these terms - that we are now 'global citizens' that belong to a global community with global responsibilities (Harvey 1996; Jones and Paasi 2013; McClay and McAlister 2014). But people still take pride in their local and parochial ways, and some critics have made the case that pride does not always have to look inwards, so as to exclude others, but can be used as a resource to relate to and co-operate with others within and beyond the local (Wind-Cowie and Gregory 2011; Tomenay 2013). Civic pride seems to confront this conundrum of post-modernity; it must on the one hand be about being proud of a city's identity and the people who live there (and in some sense *fixing* points and lines of difference), while on the other hand be about being welcoming to others, being open to change and diversity, and taking pride in the city's outward relations and relationships. This is the politics of difference and distinction.

For the ancient Athenians, this politics of difference and distinction was based in both territory (the physical and political boundaries of the polis) and in the 'ethnos' of the city. Territory and ethnos regulated which people belonged to the city and which people did not belong. Trade, competition and warfare with neighbouring tribes and competing empires (the Persians, the Romans, the Spartans in this case) also necessitated the building and guarding of the city walls – as much as a matter of survival as a matter of civic pride (Mumford 1961). Enemies were thus the 'constitutive outside' that reified the Athenian identity and strengthened civic pride – reminding us that territory, autonomy and heightened perceptions of difference and distinction were fundamental to integrity of the city-state.

In both the Victorian and post-industrial cities of Britain meanwhile, it would be a stretch to say that territory and ethnos play the same kind of role in determining these boundaries of belonging – primarily because citizenship is now a matter of nationhood and national borders. With the historic disintegration of city walls in most cities, it is now municipal and administrative boundaries that serve as the basic spatial and political parameters for determining who are the 'citizens' of the city. Whether or not people consider themselves citizens of a particular city anymore, these municipal boundaries do matter on some level as they regulate the distribution of services, taxation and local political rights, and play an important role in how regional and national government is organised. But how far these boundaries mean something socially, culturally, indeed emotionally, to the people living

there is more difficult to discern. Indeed within geography, there is perhaps a lack of detailed understanding of the social (as opposed to political and economic) significance of municipal boundaries as they relate to different forms and formations of civic pride, and how far civic pride relates to different types of spatial borders and bordering (cf. Savage et al 2005).

One could argue that it is through regional differences and local rivalries that meaningful social boundaries emerge, more than it is through municipal and political boundaries. In England, for instance, the distinction that is routinely made between the 'North' and the 'South' has become an enduring trope in the development of local and regional identities and the formation of regional pride (Hall 1997; Clavane 2010). While such regional distinctions tend to be based in and reproduce rather stereotypical (monolithic) images of people and places, they nevertheless provide an important lens through which local populations see themselves and see others (Gregory 1995; Lindner 2006). The point is that civic pride (whether local, regional or otherwise) reifies, glorifies and romanticises these regional differences, and, as I show in relation to Nottingham, significantly shapes how local people identify with where they live and what aspirations they have for their city and community.

Images and beliefs about the 'North' (or the 'industrial North', the 'grim North') have been particularly powerful in shaping discourses and narratives of civic pride in many towns and cities in northern England. Although each place may make the claim that their sense of civic pride is fundamentally different to that of their nearest neighbours or rivals, there are certain themes, tropes, and 'leit motifs' that have historically cohered around the North that give the region a distinctive cultural image and heritage. For instance, as romantic and anachronistic as it might be to re-state here, the North is often portrayed as a region of heavy industry, urban decay, red-brick terrace houses and 'common' sounding accents and dialectics - a region united perhaps by its own sense of 'social exclusion and marginality', to use Mike Featherstone's (2013) words. A region diametrically opposed to, and excluded by, the more privileged South. This image of the North historically emerged through regional patterns of industrialisation and deindustrialisation during the 19th and 20th centuries, and it is from this industrial period and its aftermath that the North became known for its spirit of working-class solidarity, trade unionism, and popular (political) radicalism (Belchem 2000; Clavane 2010). Some of these images and narratives also seem

to appeal to the Midlands region, and in particular the East Midlands in which Nottingham lies – although these images and narratives seems to be far stronger in the North than in the Midlands (Shore 2014). Indeed, as I detail in Chapter 7, the Midlands and the East Midlands have struggled to really assert themselves as distinctive English regions (both economically and culturally), and this has in various ways both wounded and reinforced local civic pride. As W.G Hoskins once wrote of the Midlands:

Everybody's geography is weakest when it comes to the Midlands: rivers and towns are widely misplaced, the counties are hard to remember by name and even more difficult to sort out clearly from each other. (in Stocker 2006: 9)

Films, television series, books and newspapers have often played on such regional images and stereotypes in order to capture the character and the plight of the people living there (Clavane 2010; Sillitoe 1960). As Clavane (2010) and Maconie (2007) relate, civic pride in the North for example, broadly speaking, has often been expressed in rather self-deprecating and humorous ways, often as a way of offsetting the hardships of working life and as a way of inverting other people's perceptions of the region. Through this cultural imaginary, the North has created its own mythology of friendliness, of working-class solidarity, grittiness and resolve - attributes which are defined against the unfriendly 'toffs' of the South. These images and stereotypes have also been embellished through the geography of political voting in England, where the North has historically been a more Labour voting region compared to the South. But while many northerners might take pride in this imagined landscape, there is often an implicit tension within the story of the North of wanting to move on, to aspire to something more for the region, and ultimately for people to 'transcend' their own northern plight. Of course many campaigners in local government are lobbying for the North to have a fairer share of England's wealth and prosperity in light of austerity in recent years, as well as more political autonomy from the Westminster 'bubble' as they see it (see: Newman 2013). The dilemma of the 'Northern Man' is evocative here – the epic struggle of roots over aspiration, the chasm between knowing 'who you are' and 'what you could be' (cf. Clavane 2012). Metaphors like this are important for shaping people's perceptions of and aspirations for where they live, and are often rooted in class-based tensions between staying 'true' to one's identity and background, and moving on from this, and leaving it behind.

Antonsich (2010: 644) describes how this politics of belonging shapes the way people communicate and invest in who and what belongs to a given community or place - a 'discursive resource that constructs, claims, justifies, or resists forms of socio-spatial inclusion/exclusion'. In this way, civic pride (re)produces, re-enforces and reflects a range of real and imagined boundaries – which can mean something and matter to people in different ways. These boundaries form the symbolic edges within and along which communities celebrate, but also police and protect, the existence and integrity of their civic identity. I therefore echo Fortier's (2005: 368) call here for being attentive to 'the role of emotions in policing the terms of belonging and entitlement to citizenry'; where it seems pride and prejudice tend to work together.

However this may not always be the case. It is worth considering how civic pride may also be constructed in more open and progressive ways. Darling's (2009) study of Sheffield is a case in point here. His study focuses on how in 2007 Sheffield became the UK's first 'City of Sanctuary'. The City of Sanctuary movement is a political movement calling for cities to welcome asylum seekers and refugees into the city, support their welfare and protect their civil and legal rights. One of the slogans the movement promotes is for cities to be 'proud to be a place of safety' (City of Sanctuary 2012). For Darling, the campaign in Sheffield became a political vehicle for the city to rebuild a collective sense of identity and pride by actively valuing solidarity with those perceived 'others' within and beyond the city. It was thus aimed not just at 're-imagining the city as a welcoming space, [but] also about developing an ethos of responsibility towards those networks and relations that extend beyond the city' (Darling 2009: 133). Darling uses Massey's notion of a 'progressive sense of place' to describe how Sheffield sought to use the City of Sanctuary campaign as a vehicle for dissolving more defensive and inward looking constructions of belonging and pride, in order to promote a more progressive local politics. Thus it became a re-imagining of the city that was

constructed not by placing boundaries around it and defining its identity through counter-position to the other which lies beyond, but precisely (in part) through the specificity of the mix of links and interconnections to that 'beyond'. (Massey 1994: 5)

While the City of Sanctuary campaign had positive outcomes for both locals and asylum seekers in Sheffield, there is still a wider tension here between what really is 'local' and what really is 'beyond', because it assumes a distinction between the two. In other words, the difference has to be reified in order for the city to say it has been progressive and has crossed boundaries. Therefore, while positive in its outlook, a more progressive sense of civic pride, in this sense, does not seek to undo the city and its boundaries (or at least its sense of boundedness); it rather attempts to open these boundaries up, as it seeks solidarity with other people and other places. 'City Of...' projects are a useful way to generate an idea that the city is a cohesive (bounded) whole, and that people share identity and civic responsibility - but the people that deliver these kinds of projects and campaign on them are usually small groups of civic-minded individuals that have the necessary time, skills and conviction to carry them through (Featherstone et al 2012). What this points to is a need to consider how the civic becomes a political tag or organising framework for a more progressive urban politics to take place, but which problematically assumes, and depends upon, the idea that people share the same vision of the city, have the same capacities and means to help and intervene in local affairs, and that the 'city' is the scale in which people want to participate in politics.

The Power of Persuasion: 'Belief without Belonging'

So far I have advanced a range of ways in which we might define and conceptualise civic pride, and considered how this shapes the politics of belonging. To understand further why civic pride has historically been an appealing discourse and ideal, championed as a virtue of civic culture, I now want to look more closely at how people come to be persuaded by civic pride, how people buy into certain narratives and images of the city, and discuss what potential this has for shaping citizen thinking and behaviour. This section builds on the previous to discussion to consider the ideological nature and potential consequences of civic pride, and how certain forms of civicness are represented, promoted and defended. This is important for analysing how and why different historic eras have used civic pride for particular economic, political and social purposes, and how power is produced through emotional concepts such as civic pride.

Some of what I discuss here is explored in more detail and in a more contemporary context in the next chapter. Here I want to keep the debate within the more theoretical confines of how civic pride relates to forms of belonging, identity and community - rather than, as the next chapter does, consider civic pride's application to and role within contemporary local government policy.

Thomas Bridges (1994: 20) has argued that civic culture is 'a persuasive process required to gain and retain the norms proper to the standpoint of liberal democratic citizenship ... [mobilised through a] set of institutional, representational and discursive means'. Taking Bridges' lead, we could argue that civic pride is not simply based in people's heightened sense of belonging, and the sense of community and identity that comes with that, but is influenced by the city's physical and social fabric, as well the discourses, images, narratives and myths which give the city meaning and reality. I have already suggested that certain practices and performances of civic pride make visible a city's identity and bolster a belief in the imagined community of the city. But we need to extend this and say – how do people and institutions then envelop this into a more political and politicised narrative, and what are the meanings and consequences of this imagined community? In Jacobsen's (2002: 10) words, the main question is how do cities and local governments forge a 'central thread in sewing together potentially disparate persons into a single entity'? And from this, how can this coming together of disparate persons into a single entity be used productively for strategic or ideological purposes?

Architecture forms one kind of means by which people buy into this shared image and ideal of the city. As I noted earlier, major civic buildings have often been important physical expressions of civic pride, and represent major symbols and sites of local autonomy and power. The significance of civic architecture is not simply in the fact that these buildings house offices of power, or contain the city's jewels and historic records, but in the architectural form and expressiveness of the buildings themselves. The history of civic architecture - from the ancient Greek temples, to the Victorian town halls, to the post-modern landmarks of today - has been a history of crafting ideas and ideals as much as producing form and function. This is not an exclusive feature of civic buildings of course, but the fact that civic buildings in particular stand to represent and inspire feelings of local identity, autonomy and civic aspiration, makes them especially important for the city and its citizens (Cunningham 1981; Mumford 1961). If one looks at Alfred Waterhouse's town

hall in Manchester (1877) or Cuthbert Brodrick's town hall in Leeds (1858) for instance, these buildings were designed in ways that complemented (Greek and Roman inspired) classical design, through motifs such as columns and domes, but they also used the latest design techniques and materials to emphasise the city's modern status and forward ambitions. The reason that civic architecture is important for civic pride is because buildings form iconic symbols of the city, points of reference and reverence, and they absorb the city's past, present and future into one shared image (although, again, whether they also represent symbols of shame, anger or mistrust amongst local people, is another question) (Llywelyn 2011; Hatherley 2010).

Civic architecture in the Victorian era was therefore not just about creating an iconic landmark for the city to be proud of (or being the envy of other cities and towns), but about ennobling the city, consecrating the present through the past, and fostering a belief that city's civic culture was 'transcendental', both ancient and modern. Thus as Hill writes, Victorian civic culture was

a text, a discourse on the meaning of the city, presenting it as a spiritual legacy from the ancient world, and stressing the inheritance of that civilization....Used in such a way, civic culture was important in celebrating and bolstering local democratic self-government, and in presenting commerce and industry as glorious, honourable and noble... inextricably linked with magnificent and lasting architecture and civic virtue. (Hill 1999: 99)

But as appealing as Hill's words sound, such civic hyperbole was perhaps also the beginning of what Guy Debord saw as the industrial and post-industrial 'spectacle' emerging in society – a civic pride reduced to 'mere presentation...the decline of being into having, and having into merely appearing', as he famously put it (Debord 1967: Thesis 17). People were persuaded into an alluring narrative of a noble civic culture that was as much an image to consume as it was a culture to question and contest; and so a new consumer culture was born (Hill 1999).

What is useful for thinking about here in the context of post-industrial cities is: firstly, how certain images and discourses of the city may encourage certain *beliefs* in the transcendently 'glorious, honourable and noble' virtues of civic pride but *without* the

accompanying need to actively engage in the city; and secondly, how such beliefs may on the other hand inspire or persuade local citizens to *embrace* values of civic engagement and civic duty, and contribute to the making of the city.

In the first scenario, we could think about how civic pride can encourage a certain 'belief without belonging' (Davie 1990) in the city, whereby people believe in the city's virtues and take pride in what the city represents, but do not 'belong' to an active civic culture. This can work both for and against civic pride, particularly in the context of local government. The pomp and ceremony of a civic procession, or the mass crowds that gather to celebrate some local event, for instance, may give the impression that the city is unified and collectively 'happy' as a city. People can attend, consume and go home thinking 'well isn't our city great?' But while this may not be a bad thing in and of itself, it can end up being *only* a spectacle – something citizens simply enjoy, but are altogether detached from. People do not feel they have to actively contribute to the event, say by donating or volunteering, because they have the perception that the city council 'have it covered' or that it is not their responsibility to do so. The professionalisation and corporatisation of modern day city events and events planning (and the bureaucracy that goes with them) is perhaps a broader problem here, because it distances people from the more personal and informal ways in which people can participate and contribute to what goes in the city.

But, in other ways, this may precisely be the point – that local governments, major institutions or big businesses in the city want to *control* the spectacle; they want to manage civic pride, frame it in politically 'safe' or strategic ways, or at least ensure that civic pride becomes an image, a discourse or a narrative which helps protect certain interests and drowns out more critical voices in the city. As others have shown, and as I discuss in more detail in the next chapter, under such regimes, the city is cleansed of any tensions, differences, fissures and cracks which may damage or undermine this image of togetherness and virtue (Harvey 1989; Colomb and Kalandides 2010; Anthias 2008). Once again, as I worded it earlier, civic pride becomes a depoliticised spectacle to enjoy or consume, rather than a sphere to participate in, question or contest. In this scenario, it is only when something important in the city is under threat, or when a community collectively perceives the city changing for the worse, that people come to participate in civic life and challenge local issues. Even these situations however can perpetuate certain

myths about how a city is 'strong in adversity' or 'resilient'. Richard Sennett calls this modernity's 'purification ritual'. This is the ritual of believing, what he claims, is the 'lie' of the imagined community - an image of community not based in any real or enacted sense of solidarity or belonging, but merely summoned to serve particular (often defensive) purposes:

People talk of their understanding of each other and of the common ties that bind them, but the images are not true to their actual relations. But the lie they have formed as their common image is a usable falsehood – a myth – for the group. Its use is that it makes a coherent image of the community as a whole: people draw a picture of who they are that binds them all together as one being, with a definite set of desires, dislikes, and goals. The image of community is purified of all that might convey a feeling of difference, let alone conflict, in who “we” are. In this way the myth of community solidarity is a purification ritual. (Sennett 2008: 36)

Sennett seems to suggest that concepts like civic pride and community spirit serve a certain emotional or psychological need (i.e. to allow people to feel they 'belong' and avoid confronting difference and conflict), more than they reflect or signify the presence of a politically-engaged civic community. These terms, and the political conservatism that stands behind them, can then be used in ways that help regulate who and what belongs to a geographical community – by creating the myth that there is a 'community' in the first place (hence, a 'useable falsehood'). It seems then that certain images, discourses and narratives of civic pride – whether mobilised by local government or local communities – can emerge or be engineered in such a way as to allow to people to *feel* part of a community and protective over it, and yet allow them to act and live in such a way as though that belonging is a given, a pre-existing right, something detached from the more challenging necessities of civic engagement and responsibility – kind of a 'belief without belonging'.

The Power of Persuasion: Belief with Belonging

It could be argued that where civic pride has been reduced to mere spectacle, as something to observe or gaze upon, where people have retreated into a kind of individual

privatism, and feel they owe little to their community or city, an accompanying sense of civic engagement, responsibility and solidarity may easily be lost and abandoned. In this scenario, civic pride is decoupled from its classical origins as a virtue of citizenship and belonging, or at least it becomes more narrowly conceived as (only) the responsibility of local government or major institutions. It could be argued that while civic pride in the Athenian polis managed to combine spectacle with an expectation of duty, civic pride as it emerged through the Victorian and post-industrial cities – if we are to take a Debordian reading – became more of a spectacle alone, and broke the fundamental link between civic pride and civic duty.

But this would be a rather reductionist argument however; a simplistic narrative of historic decay in civiness (indeed how one could accurately measure civiness through time is an interesting question in itself). As I have suggested, people may perform certain civic duties or carry out civic practices not because of any overt pride in something, but simply because they feel it is important, or they feel obliged to somehow. And of course many people still do volunteer today, many attend and participate in local events, and some (though not many) vote in local (municipal) elections (Wind Cowie and Gregory 2011). People still attend football matches, furnish their houses with kitschy trinkets of local culture and paraphernalia (tea towels, mugs, maps etc), create websites and blogs to celebrate and promote places, and some people even write about civic pride for their PhD. So it would be false to say civic pride is 'dead' or has been entirely reduced to spectacle. The broader point here is that, contrary to the discussion above, certain discourses and images of civic pride may still nevertheless encourage a sense of commitment to one's local area, or embellish a pre-existing engagement with civic pride, and mobilise people in collective ways. This was of course part of the original intention of civic architecture – to inspire citizens to do good deeds (and to follow in the footsteps of great civic leaders). So while civic pride might be on the one hand serve as a mere belief in, or myth of, a shared sense of belonging, somewhere through and beyond the rhetoric, the spin, the spectacle, civic pride may also produce, reinforce, or be a potential for, encouraging greater civic participation and civic mindedness.

Bridges' sense of civic culture as a process of persuasion is useful to return to here, and allows us to think about how civic pride can condition certain types of political subjectivity. As I noted in the introductory chapter, when people live somewhere for a long time, make

the time and effort to develop lasting relationships and connections, this can encourage a sense of ownership in places and an willingness to be involved. For those that have developed a strong sense of civic pride, such people need little persuasion from others that (for example) not dropping litter, volunteering, buying local, engaging with one's local surroundings, participating in local events, are important things to honour and are activities through which a community thrives. It is through both personal and civic pride, and the high aspirations and expectations that come with that, that people feel driven towards engaging with civic life and making a difference. This critically depends on whether and how values such as civic pride become the norm in a local area (or city) – such that if people see that others have a sense of civic pride, and are active in keeping the neighbourhood tidy and contributing to their community, then they themselves may feel obliged to 'keep up with the Jones's' and adopt such behaviours themselves (Skeggs 1997; Wind-Cowie and Gregory 2011). To not conform to this culture of civiness might in some places invite negative opinions from others and be considered anti-social; indeed it could make someone the subject of shame. In that sense people can be persuaded by the virtues of civic pride in both positive and negative ways. This is why we might consider civic pride as a form of governmentality that shapes people's attitudes and behaviours in politically strategic ways. I only want to briefly outline this here, but will return to it at various points in the thesis (particularly Chapter 8).

To say that civic pride is a kind of governmentality would be to talk about civic pride as an emotive kind of discourse that shapes people's attitudes and behaviours towards certain political ends. Governmentality clearly has a much broader and deeper history of thought than I can go into here, but certainly resonates with those interested in Foucault and his work on knowledge, power and discipline ('the conduct of conduct'). Dean (1999) and Barnett et al (2008) describe how governmentality involves technologies of power that aim to 'shape, sculpt [and] mobilise' citizens in particular ways, enabling regimes which 'produce' government in and through the individual (collective) subject (cf. Roy 2009). It has been noted that governmentality is no singular theory, nor a technology which guarantees power. Nor is it something that necessarily produces or encourages people to make emotional investments in places (see: Rose et al 2006). Rather, governmentality operates through what Barnett et al (ibid) describe as a kind of 'strategic intentionality' to induce rather than necessarily produce forms of subjectivity and action. Margo Huxley (2008: 1642) equally claims how 'forms of governmentality, then, aspire to shape the

actions and compartments of subjects towards certain ends, but this does not mean that such projects automatically achieve their aims: government and subjects are complex, multiple and contradictory'. Understanding these ideas in a civic context has had some traction within geography (e.g. Roy 2009; Ellis 2012; Anjaria 2009), particularly in terms of the way urban politics and social justice movements often have to confront well-established cultural and political norms and behaviours in the city. Roy (2009: 160) for instance has even talked about 'civic governmentality' as a kind of explicitly civic version of governmentality – 'a spatialized regime that functions through particular mentalities and rationalities...which comes to turn on formations of civic identity and a broader civic commitment to the idea of a unified city'. Roy's analysis is useful because it links personal responsibility with a wider imagination of the city as a collective whole; only through this perception of the collective whole does one feel obliged to enact their civiness and be a responsible citizen.

As I show later in this thesis, there is therefore space to think about how civic pride conditions and encourages forms of intentionality – that is, a desire (if not a capacity and willingness) to promote and defend one's community or city, and to actively engage with the civic sphere. Thus to use Nigel Thrift's words, civic pride clearly has a degree of affective political potential, and forms an important discursive resource which city councils, institutions and communities groups can use to encourage more active forms of citizenship and belonging:

the intention is to engineer *intention* and increase capability by constructing automatic reactions to situations which carry a little more potential, a little more 'lean-in', a little more commitment. (Thrift 2005: 147, emphasis in original)

Civic pride, in this sense, can condition and mobilise political subjects, by encouraging more 'potential', more 'lean-in' and more 'commitment' towards one's community and city. While this may tend to operate at a more individual level, the accumulative effect would be that civic pride then becomes scaled up to local or community scale, and then more widely to the city scale; that 'personal civic pride' leads to 'collective civic pride' (Gildenhuys 2004). As I show throughout this thesis, such logic can be used and mobilised by local governments to extract all sorts of political, economic and social value from communities in both positive and exploitative ways; but this can also conceal the fact that

civic pride can be a highly contested discourse and value, and people's commitment to their local area may involve actively *resisting* local government agendas or contesting their vision of the city. As well as this, people often have different capacities and aptitudes for civic pride and civic engagement: some may lean-in more than others, while others may not lean-in at all.

Conclusion

The aim of this chapter has been to show how civic pride can be defined and conceptualised in a more critical and emotionally-informed way. Following Fenster's tripartite model, I have shown how civic pride can be observed through different senses, practices and formal structures that become conditioned by and reproduced through a politics of belonging. A key point is that civic pride is no 'one thing', but can be framed and understood in different ways, and through different historical contexts. It is therefore a highly dynamic and relational term that folds together the local, the emotional and the political. By examining three distinctive periods of urban history that represent particular stages of heightened consciousness and development around civic pride, I have argued that both geography and history matter in shaping what civic pride is, how it is perceived, experienced and expressed, and why it has represented such a powerful and enduring feature of cities. One could argue that the Athenian polis, the Victorian industrial city and the post-industrial city signify the 'birth, life and death' of civic pride; the gradual decline from virtue to spectacle. But I think it may be better to see certain lineages and re-imaginings of civic pride through time - and also acknowledge that civic pride often returns precisely in times of 'loss' or 'decay'. Furthermore, I have argued that while civic pride relates to how people feel about where they live, and the collective sense of belonging, identity and community that comes with that, it is also a political construct that individuals embody, construct and enact within their local communities. It is therefore through both a collective sense of civic identity and a more individualised sense of civic engagement and civic duty that civic pride is made and made into a virtue; it brings citizen and city together. There are dangers and pitfalls to civic pride however – it may be a mere 'belief without belonging', it may help create certain (false) myths about the city, or it can represent a spectacle to simply consume and enjoy rather than a politics to participate in.

It can be easy to value and embrace civic pride as a virtue and ignore the underlying ideological politics working through civic pride discourses, as well as the uneven and exclusionary ways in which it constructs places and communities. Indeed we must scrutinise the image of civic pride against its reality on the ground, and observe whether it serves more progressive or more conservative purposes (or both). Following on from this, I now take a closer look at how civic pride has been mobilised within local government in recent years and consider how urban regeneration and localism are shaping and being shaped by civic pride.

Chapter 3: Pride/Shame, Urban Regeneration and the New Localism

Introduction

While the previous chapter considered civic pride's relationship to ideas of belonging and identity, I want to now shift the focus to understanding civic pride's contemporary role in local government – particularly in the context of urban regeneration and the new localism agenda in the UK. This chapter therefore differs from the previous chapter by considering civic pride's role in contemporary urban policy, rather than what civic pride means to the individual citizen or community. By returning to some of the emotional and philosophical dimensions of pride, I show how local governments often use civic pride to promote local identity, create economic advantage and defend municipal autonomy but in ways which serve to hide inequalities and suppress, rather than transform, forms of civic shame. I also claim that the new localism agenda under the Coalition government has been a critical intervention in the re-imagination of civic pride in British cities, but problematically evokes a Victorian spirit of civic pride that may prove difficult to translate into the present era of local government. The chapter ends with a brief discussion about how the spirit of localism is being re-appropriated by city councils in more antagonistic ways against central government policy, and how this paints a complex picture of the multiple and shifting ideological projects local governments are invested in.

The themes explored in this chapter around urban regeneration and localism were not issues which participants in Nottingham generally raised in relation to civic pride, however they do form a wider background to some of the analysis. The basic contention that local governments are, as an institution, invested in promoting and defending civic pride, and often use emotional discourses strategically in policy, is a point which does resonate with Nottingham and will be further explored in later chapters.

Towards a More Emotional Geography of Civic Pride in Local Government:

Civic pride is an integral feature of modern British cities, but its meaning and importance can sometimes be overlooked. As a symbol of identity, or as an ideal of local government, civic pride is part of what defines and shapes places, and, as I showed in the previous chapter, forms an important lens through which they are imagined and governed. Recent cultural events such as the London Olympics (2012), the 'Grand Depart' of the Tour de France in Leeds (2014), or the Commonwealth Games in Glasgow (2014), might suggest that a spirit of civic pride is alive and well in many cities. But local government has been under considerable pressure and strain in recent years. Not least, the impacts of austerity (post-2008) and rising social inequalities are creating serious challenges for local government, and this may be damaging civic pride.

Emerging out of, but also alongside, this economic context, debates about urban regeneration and localism have raised concerns about the capacity of local government to deliver economic growth and rebuild or reclaim civic pride (Jayne 2012; Jones 2013). Geographers have tended to be critical about the virtues of urban regeneration and its ability to address social inequalities (Boland 2010; Ward 2003); while the UK's new localism agenda (following the Localism Act of 2011) has generated both enthusiasm and scepticism over its capacity to empower local government and restore civic pride. Prime Minister David Cameron meanwhile, has added his voice to this civic agenda by calling for Britain 'to be far more muscular in promoting British values and the institutions that uphold them' and to stop being so 'bashful' about its sense of pride (Cameron 2014).

In so far as urban regeneration and the new localism agenda have been cause for both optimism and anxiety in recent years, this presents a case for re-examining the contemporary role of civic pride in local government and urban policy. As I began to illustrate in the previous chapter, urban geographers in the 1990s and 2000s showed how constructs such as civic pride were being championed (and manipulated) by local governments to promote post-industrial regeneration (Hall 1997; Ward 2003). This has extended to more recent interest in how neoliberalism and austerity are reshaping the civic landscape (Darling 2009; Jayne 2012). But as I have argued, much of the extant literature on civic pride often fails to adequately define civic pride, explain why it is important for local government, and why the emotional meanings of pride bear an

important relation to how different political imaginaries and spatial outcomes are produced, mediated and concealed in cities.

Examining civic pride is important in this context because it shapes and reflects the values and aspirations local governments stand for and represent. It provides a basis for thinking about how and why cities promote and defend local identity and autonomy, and how emotions figure within, and are productive for, urban policy. Highlighting the emotional aspects of civic pride, in particular, allows us to examine how emotions help sell and 'dramatise' the virtues of urban policy in persuasive, but also misleading, ways. As I began to illuminate in the previous chapter, there is an important parallel to observe here between the ways in which emotions reveal and hide people's 'true colours', and the ways in which urban policy selectively promotes and conceals certain 'truths' of the city for strategic (and ideological) reasons. In this way, part of what I want to argue is that civic pride is often shaped, but also conflicted, by forms of civic shame (i.e. features of the city that do not warrant or inspire pride), and that local governments often get caught between a range of competing and contradictory values and interests when trying to promote or defend civic pride.

In this chapter then, I examine the role of civic pride specifically in relation to urban regeneration and the new localism agenda under the Conservative-Liberal Democrat Coalition. Debates about urban regeneration and localism provide what I think are two interlinked contexts with which to examine civic pride in a post-industrial (post-austerity) context. In short, urban regeneration provides a context within which we can explore the economic and cultural function(s) of civic pride, while localism provides a basis for understanding civic pride's more formal, political dimensions – but the two are closely linked and operate in tension, as I demonstrate. I also want to think about how localism has actually been 'localised' in cities, and in some cases re-appropriated by local governments in a spirit of resistance to the Coalition – which, as I show, tells its own civic pride story.

The rest of this chapter is organised as follows. Firstly, I discuss how urban regeneration has provided a new context and a new impetus for civic pride. I argue that civic pride is being selectively mobilised as a discourse which promotes certain virtues and images of the city, and helps bolster support and legitimacy for local government. Following on from

the previous chapter, my critique is that certain discourses of civic pride serve to obscure the ideological politics underlining urban regeneration, and conceal spatial inequalities in the city. I then move on to discuss the UK's new localism agenda. Here I examine the potential opportunities and limitations afforded by the new Localism Act (2011), as well the localism agenda more broadly. I claim that the Coalition's nostalgic reinvention of Victorian ideals has value in principle, but is largely untenable in the current juncture - both in the context of neoliberal urbanism and, more importantly, austerity. I end with a discussion of some of the anti-austerity discourses and practices that are emerging in cities and within local government, showing how civic pride can be imagined and mobilised in more antagonistic (progressive) ways.

Urban Regeneration and Civic Pride

If geographers have asserted any kind of overarching paradigm to describe and explain the changing nature of cities in the past few decades it has been the rise of neoliberalism and the increasingly entrepreneurial nature of local government (Harvey 1989; Boyle 2011). This shift towards neoliberalism has involved (amongst other things) a re-imagining of local government. Local governments are no longer simply conceived as 'managers' of local services and welfare provision, but important strategic players in the post-industrial economy, co-ordinating and facilitating growth, and leveraging new forms of public and private enterprise. The gradual decline of Keynesianism, the loss of industry and jobs, and the flight of the middle-classes to the suburbs (leaving an ailing inner-city), had effectively by the 1980s and 1990s signalled a new demand for urban regeneration in Britain; and local governments embraced this as an opportunity to rebuild civic pride and local prosperity. As McGuirk (2012, 259) notes, geographers have approached the 'neoliberal city' in different ways; but most accept the contention that 'through rescaling the geographies of governance, the urban itself is taken to have become an increasingly important strategic scale through which neoliberal accumulation and a complementary array of regulatory strategies can be institutionalised and advanced'.

Given this broad context, my focus here is to think about how civic pride is being mobilised in the context of cultural regeneration strategies, and how the emotional meanings of

pride play a role in shaping these strategies. I want to claim that local governments use and manipulate civic pride in order to increase support for (neoliberal) policies at the expense of addressing wider social inequalities; and as result, the underlying meanings and consequences of civic pride often become hidden and effaced, with important consequences.

Cultural regeneration has served a number of purposes in cities – to promote local culture and identity, attract business and tourism, combat unemployment, foster cultural and creative enterprise, and increase consumption (Boland 2010; Florida 2012; Ward 2003). Cultural regeneration has been a way of orchestrating a revival in urban culture – both to escape (and forget) the scars of industrial decline, and to refashion urban centres around new ideas of culture, creativity and the arts. Critical accounts have highlighted how such strategies often promise much in the way of new jobs, tourism growth, and improved cultural infrastructure, but often result in many negative consequences – a commercialisation of culture, a lack of trickle-down benefits for local people, and as Boyle (2011, 2764) notes, a scenario where ‘local welfare budgets [...] become [increasingly] diverted into often-speculative city marketing projects, hallmark events and downtown aesthetic make-overs’. Under such conditions, cultural regeneration tends to invest in and privilege certain forms of culture and creativity more than others, and tends to exclude lower-income groups that are unable to afford the new cultural consumerism on offer (or feel alienated by it) (Boland 2010; Boyle 1997). However, as others have shown, cultural regeneration may also lead to the emergence of more alternative and radical interpretations of what local culture and local pride should do, say, and represent - exposing a more diverse and fragmented civic landscape (Jones 2013; Jayne 2012). Such alternatives may be the grit in the civic oyster for local governments who want to uphold a particular image of the city; but how far such alternatives ultimately reshape the local politics of civic pride in cities is less certain.

Urban geographers have tended to describe how civic pride operates as a legitimation tool within cultural regeneration – a rhetoric to help promote a ‘shared vision’ for the city and promote the positive impacts of regeneration. It has also been considered a ‘bread and circuses’ type of rhetoric to help increase public support for policy and steer attention away from its more negative implications (Harvey 1989; McCann 2013). But rarely do geographers expand upon what civic pride is (or means) precisely, how it is being used and

reinvested in under cultural regeneration, and what the role of pride is in shaping such agendas. This may limit our analysis of why civic pride is important for local governments and why it is being mobilised in the service of neoliberalism.

Harvey (1989, 14) for instance, in his ground-breaking paper of urban entrepreneurialism, states how 'the orchestrated production of urban image can if successful [...] create a sense of social solidarity, civic pride and loyalty to place'. Although in fairness it is not the paper's main point of focus, Harvey does not explain what civic pride is, show how it is different to social solidarity and loyalty, or fully explicate why feeling proud and showing pride for one's city was important for the rise of urban entrepreneurialism (post-c.1970s). The point he does briefly make is that concepts like civic pride arose during this post-industrial era as a defensive, unifying rhetoric for local governments to use to convince urban communities that a sense of place and a sense of local identity were not being eroded or undermined under changes in global capitalism. But while Harvey recognises how this produced 'mechanisms for social control' within cities, his de-centring of civic pride as a more minor outcome of neoliberal processes obscures the ways in which the emotional, the political and the economic were working together under urban entrepreneurialism— particularly in terms of how civic pride was also important *for* the 'orchestrated production of urban image' in many cities, and helped make certain narratives of urban change more believable, more persuasive and more locally meaningful.

Hall's (1997) study of cultural regeneration in Birmingham similarly shows how discourses of civic pride were part of Birmingham City Council's re-imaging plans in the early 1990s. But here again Hall does not really explore what civic pride is, or was in this context, and how pride and shame figured within the discourses he describes. In other words, Hall cannot, to my mind, adequately examine how 'local mythologies of industrial pride' were important to wider regimes of change if the emotional meanings and the political symbolism of pride are missing from the analysis. However, in fairness again, he does show how different constructions of civic identity and acts of civic commemoration through public art can serve to produce uneven narratives of social and historic change; and that cultural regeneration can be framed in strategically positive and aspirational ways precisely in order to close off more critical interpretations and alternatives.

Boland's (2010) analysis of Liverpool as European Capital of Culture provides another example in which civic pride surfaces within the analysis but remains undefined and under-explored. Through analysing different experiences and perceptions of the Capital of Culture project across different areas of the city, Boland 'challenges the hyperbole of culture-led transformation to reveal different geographies of culture, different cultural experiences and different socio-economic realities' (2010, 640). There is clearly a lot of pride and shame surfacing through the analysis, but because he does not explicitly employ a more emotional lens, nor provide a close-reading of the discourses and quotes which he raises, the meanings and significance of these values are left unexplored. The contrast he conveys between the optimism and aspirational language of the city's leaders and officials from the Liverpool Culture Company (who managed the project), and the pessimism (and in some cases downright anger) of those residents in the city who felt spatially and culturally excluded from the spectacle (such as the residents of Croxteth and Norris Green he mentions), is convincingly illustrated however. But again, my point would be that a more serious examination of pride might tease out some of the underlying dynamics of why the Capital of Culture project was so divisive and why different perceptions and experiences of the project spoke to different aspirations of civic pride, and different understandings of civic identity in the city.

The executive summary of the original Capital of Culture bid for Liverpool in fact shows that one of the objectives was 'developing a positive profile and image of the city in the region, Europe and internationally, and increasing the confidence and pride of its citizens' (Liverpool Culture Company 2002, 301). It clearly did not increase the confidence and pride of everyone if Boland's observations are anything to go; and one wonders here whether pride is simply a 'go-to' buzzword which local governments use to bolster public support for policy and steer attention away from its more uneven consequences.

In these ways, current literature on neoliberal urbanism might benefit from this more emotional perspective in order to better understand the underlying logic(s) and intention(s) behind urban policies (why they appear the way they do), and how emotions are used in ways which serve (and protect) ideological interests. Clearly there is a certain advantage to be gained from the slipperiness of emotional terms: terms like civic pride can be used in such a way as to be purposely fuzzy and vague to suit a particular purpose (Ritter 2007). It then becomes difficult to hold local governments accountable for

‘succeeding’ or ‘failing’ on civic pride – which is precisely why we need to scrutinise the politics of civic pride carefully and understand who the winners and losers are (lest what may also happen - that geographers themselves use civic pride in uncritical and un-reflexive ways, and simply reproduce its vague and seemingly unproblematic meaning). But as I suggest later in the context of Nottingham, civic pride is no fixed political agenda - it can operate across a range of ideological trajectories and absorb a range of competing interests. So while certain discourses and representations of civic pride might serve to hide, conceal, or limit an awareness of, the uneven consequences of neoliberal urban regeneration, civic pride might also be promoted and defended in other, more progressive, more antagonistic, ways and re-appropriated in the name of localism (Bennett 2013; Newman 2013).

Localism and Civic Pride

I now want to shift the focus of the analysis to look at how civic pride is being promoted and defended in the context of localism and austerity. For civic pride should not be defined simply as a neoliberal ‘tool’ for urban regeneration. It encompasses a much wider political philosophy about the nature of local government and the values and aspirations it represents. However, as I show, there are critical linkages between localism and urban regeneration that are relevant for understanding civic pride – linkages which reveal how pride (as an emotion) works across these contexts in similar ways.

The governing structures of cities have changed markedly over the past few decades; new local economic partnerships, growth coalitions, city-regional bodies, and other regional and cross-county partnerships, have altogether transformed the local governance landscape (Harvey 1989; Boyle 2011). But despite these changes, the overall strategic direction of urban policy and the local political accountability this assumes still (largely) remains the prerogative and responsibility of local councils and local authorities. The market and the state continue to assert their influence on local democracy of course; but it is local government that still represents the institutional identity of the city and its citizens (even when not everyone agrees with what they do).

The Localism Act (2011) was a ground-breaking but controversial moment for local government and democracy in the UK (Featherstone et al 2012; Lowndes and Pratchett 2012). Although devolution debates had been going on a long time before 2011 within British politics (see: Clarke and Cochrane 2013), localism emerged formally as a policy framework and legislative package with the release of the Coalition's green paper 'Local Growth: Realising Every Place's Potential' (DCLG 2010). This called for more decentralised powers and freedoms for local government, and an end to a culture of 'Whitehall knows best' (ibid, 3). The Act which passed through parliament the following year is wide-ranging in its remit: it includes, among other things, new powers for councils to adjust tax and business rates, powers to protect local assets, and powers for community groups to have more say over local planning issues and local service provision. While critics have attacked the ideological underpinnings of localism (as a smokescreen for neoliberalism, and as an excuse to withdraw state welfare funding), for others localism offers hope in strengthening local democracy, fostering civic engagement and facilitating local enterprise (see for discussion: Featherstone et al 2011; Evans et al 2013). Indeed the green paper proclaims '[w]e believe that these changes will not only help produce a growing economy, but also heighten civic pride, with businesses and communities increasingly enabled to help themselves grow' (DCLG 2010: 9).

Alongside the technical detail, there is certainly something of an emotional advocacy underpinning the government's new localism agenda. Appeals to pride, growth and optimism – and the almost indisputable virtue of the 'local' - are laced across the policy rhetoric and are used to legitimate its aims (Featherstone et al 2012). Localism may well satisfy Cameron's call (cited earlier) for Britons to be 'far more muscular in promoting British values and the institutions that uphold them'. But all for all the masculine boosterism underpinning localism, it is also a concept veiled in nostalgia – a yearning for a lost age of urban civic pride. As others have contended, localism is attempting to hark back to a Victorian spirit of civic pride; of a time when cities and towns were sites of fierce municipal autonomy and local leadership (see: Stanley 2011; Shapely 2012). The Victorian City represents, in this view, a model of civic pride and local enterprise - when local government was free from the grip of Westminster (unlike today) and civic leaders and politicians had the ambition and sense of purpose to expand the civic realm and reap the benefits of industrial expansion (Hunt 2004).

On criticising what he saw as a gradual decline in municipal power within modern cities, the former Communities and Local Government Minister Eric Pickles championed localism in 2011 by suggesting,

It's no surprise that as powers have been leeches from local government, English cities have declined and stagnated...Can you imagine Joseph Chamberlain sitting meekly filling in forms so that some remote civil servant could measure his performance? Everything that this Government is about is about putting power back where it belongs in City, County and Town Halls...I am not advocating some kind of 'Back to the Future' municipal power. We need to go even further - "Chamberlain plus" by also empowering communities and individuals, enabling them to solve their own problems. (Vision for Cities Speech 2011)

The speech contains numerous references to the Victorian City in order to embellish the historic symbolism of localism and to justify the Coalition's intervention ('they [the Victorian civic leaders] knew what they wanted to do - but they also had the powers...and just got on with it'). Pride is at the heart of Pickles' speech, but it requires a close reading of the language, the inferences, and the argumentative structure of the speech in order to tease out the ways in which localism is being framed and advocated here. Within this short extract alone for instance, Pickles appeals to the legacy of Joseph Chamberlain of Birmingham as a figure of inspiration and someone that local government leaders today should aspire to – intimating that Chamberlain's own pride would not have stomached today's levels of central government oversight and bureaucracy. Then, as he authoritatively claims localism is 'putting power back where it belongs', Pickles makes the symbolic move to mark a distinction between the past and the present - that '[w]e need to go further – "Chamberlain Plus"'. As I have explained, pride often places high ideals and expectations upon an individual or society to live up to - it compels one to excel, to self-improve, to aspire to more. So while Pickles shows respect to the Victorian past, he stresses the need to move on from that past, as if to demonstrate another of pride's qualities - the need to claim superiority over something (and, of course, to make localism fit with modern day expectations and realities). This kind of close reading of the speech can begin to reveal how emotions and emotional discourses help make policy sound more persuasive and more commanding, and help 'smooth the path of change'; but equally how

they may conceal the ideological content behind such rhetoric, and render invisible any negative implications (Bennett 2013).

For course, the big 'flaw' of localism, as it currently stands, is that the deep cuts and austerity measures rolled out across local government in recent years have vastly limited the capacity of local government to embrace this historic return to civic pride, let alone maintain local service provision and welfare support (Featherstone et al 2012). While the Coalition have called for 'Chamberlain plus' and advocate 'putting power back where it belongs', they have drastically cut local government finances and forced local populations to pick up the pieces (Lowndes and Pratchett 2012). Localism has been short-circuited by austerity, one could argue. This itself serves to show how, by historic contrast, the real engine of civic pride in the Victorian cities was not just a heady enthusiasm from within local government for more municipal autonomy and enterprise, but the immense financial power of urban elites to facilitate and shape this expansion – particularly in terms of the leading industrialists, businessmen and philanthropists who helped finance the new 'civic gospel' in local government (Hunt 2004; Briggs 1963). It seems that for all the Conservative party's nostalgia for recreating a lost heyday of civic pride and local autonomy in cities, they have perhaps forgotten that it was as much the financial autonomy of cities and the localism of industry itself that enabled this civic expansion.

Given this kind of hollowing out localism within cities today, it is perhaps not surprising that city councils have invested in urban regeneration strategies in recent years - because it is one of the few areas of policy that they can retain a level of autonomy over and generate income from (Clarke and Cochrane 2013). In this way, the political integrity of civic pride as an ideal of local autonomy has lost ground to the economic and cultural utility of civic pride to foster growth and enterprise under neoliberalism.

This is a critical point of difference between civic pride in Victorian cities and civic pride in post-industrial cities. For in essence, civic pride in the Victorian era was largely an expression of economic growth and civic enterprise that became imprinted into the fabric of the city. In other words it was an *output function* of local government that reflected the city's autonomy and prosperity (and which became symbolised in grand buildings, public monuments and major infrastructure projects). Whereas in the post-industrial city, civic pride has become more of a neoliberal instrument for growth and transformation - a way

not of celebrating autonomy and prestige per se, but a way of generating or reclaiming the political and economic integrity of local government and (re)generating pride. Thus civic pride in the post-industrial era has become more of an *input function* for local government, expressed increasingly through 'strategies' and cultural policies (rather than through grand buildings or social housing projects for instance) and operating within and across a much less certain (and a much less locally loyal) political and economic environment. This argument would require more space and careful consideration than I can offer here. But it could serve as a basis for understanding why the localism agenda is somewhat romantic in its nostalgia, and is re-appropriating Victorian ideals under the wrong structural pretences and conditions (Hunt 2004; Shapely 2012).

A final point I want to make here - which, as I discuss in later chapter is relevant to the Nottingham case - is that city councils have not simply accepted this localism-with-austerity compromise, but have actively resisted it in many cases. In 2012 for instance, three northern city council leaders published a letter to the government in the *Observer* newspaper warning of the dire consequences of the scale and pace of austerity. It warned of how 'the unfairness of the government's cuts is in danger of creating a deeply divided nation. We urge them to stop what they are doing now and listen to our warnings before the forces of social unrest start to smoulder' (Observer 2012). There have of course been many other warnings and protests like this since, across the local authority sector, which have emerged alongside more grassroots campaigns (see: Featherstone et al 2012). Whether or not these actions are expressive of a kind of resistive or counter civic pride - in the sense of local governments fighting on behalf of local citizens - they certainly express a more politically progressive direction for local government. This contrasts with some of the other (more neoliberal) trajectories that cities are currently following in the name civic pride, and suggests how civic pride, and the broader role of local government, might also be conceived along more antagonistic lines (Newman 2013). The underlying danger of this kind of protest politics, however, might be that it assumes that the root of inequalities in cities relates to issues about welfare spending and limited municipal freedoms, which may in fact serve to disguise certain 'truths' about the neoliberal city (Clarke and Cochrane 2013). Nevertheless, this reveals how there are multiple and contradictory ideological values being advanced in the name of civic pride within local government, which get played across a range of political, economic and social contexts. The geographical task

therefore is to understand how these processes are rooted locally, and to observe how different types of civic pride operate simultaneously across the city.

Conclusion:

What I have shown throughout this chapter, and also in the previous chapter, is how civic pride can be used for a variety of purposes, and operates over a dynamic political, economic and cultural landscape. It is a highly composite and holistic construct that relates to the different ways people and places promote and defend local identity and autonomy. As I have shown in this chapter, civic pride is not simply a feeling or attribute of cities, but can also be used strategically to advance (or conceal) certain political agendas, and can be used for both conservative (i.e. neoliberal) and progressive reasons. Exploring the politics of civic pride in local government through a more emotional lens does not necessarily serve to dispute or undo much of the existing literature on cities, but rather allows us to explore some of the underlying meanings and intentions behind urban policy in ways which complement more structural or political-economy types of approaches. As with the previous chapter, the analysis in this chapter therefore complements but equally challenges existing literature on cities and neoliberalism by filling in some of its emotional gaps and showing how emotions (re)configure, but also obscure, the ideological politics of local government. A key point is that if we ignore emotions in urban policy we might miss a crucial element of how and why urban policy produces (but also conceals) uneven spatial outcomes (Bennett 2013; Thrift 2008). Civic pride is in many ways an empty (but highly symbolic) vessel for local government, that can be moulded and crafted in different ways – it can be used in the service of neoliberalism in the context of urban regeneration, but also appropriated for more progressive (and politically antagonistic) reasons in the context of localism and (anti-) austerity. Civic pride therefore both shapes and reflects the multiple (and contradictory) ideological projects local governments are invested in, and exposes the underlying tensions between pride and shame (Clarke and Cochrane 2013; Newman 2013). As I have intimated, the geographical task is thus to understand how these processes are rooted locally, and to observe how different types of civic pride operate simultaneously across the city; but also, how different forms and formations of civic pride cohere to

produce certain narratives and images of civic pride that impact on how citizens perceive and engage with the city.

Chapter 4: Methodology

Epistemology – On Being More Emo Than Thrift(y)

As the introductory chapter stated, my broad theoretical interests for this research lie at the intersection of urban and emotional geographies. Within this I have also drawn perspectives from (urban) history, philosophy, sociology and psychology. Before this research was undertaken, my scholarly background was mainly based in Marxist geographies of the neoliberal city (Harvey 1989; 1996; Sorkin 1992) and more post-structuralist cultural geographies (Watson 2006; Thrift 2004; Sennett 2008). It was from these literatures and perspectives that my interest in civic cultures and emotions emerged - not least because it made me consider: 'how do I feel about the city that I live in, and how do engage and interact with it?' Observing how there has been a broader lack of engagement with emotions in geography (and in particular urban geography), I have also been inspired by emotional and feminist geographies, as well as work that has explored the geographies of performance and performativity (Fortier 1999; Munt 2000; Probyn 2005). The analysis within this thesis has therefore attempted to synthesise a rich and wide-ranging body of literature and use this to understand the cultural geographies of civic pride.

One epistemological issue that I have purposely tried to side-step in this thesis is the difference between emotion and affect. This has been a point of debate both within and beyond geography (Pile 2010). In short, I do not find this distinction helpful - particularly in a context of examining civic pride. While some scholars use emotion and affect interchangeably, others have taken these terms to mean and represent different types of epistemological and methodological approach; and this has, as a result, led to a bifurcation within geography between emotional and affective geographies and geographers (see: Pile 2010; Thien 2005). For affect-based scholars like Nigel Thrift and Sara Ahmed, the point of this distinction is to make a clear (or at least substantive) division between a pre-personal, emergent and invisible flow of affect, and a more personal, visible, 'representable' set of emotions (see: Thrift 2004, 2008; Lorimer 2008). As Thrift (2008) has shown for instance, affective geographies tend to be grounded in more non-

representational theories, exploring the performative and nomadic nature of feelings, as well as how feelings and other affective processes might be manipulated and engineered (see also: McCormack 2006). Emotional geographies by and large tend to use more or less well-established definitions and understandings of emotions – such that emotions can be discursively described, represented and ‘placed’ and made into a more or less discrete object of (social) geographical research. There is nevertheless an awareness of the socially constructed nature of emotions within this literature, which has prompted a certain critical reflexivity from academics over how emotions are represented. Thus as Bondi et al (in: Davidson et al 2007: 11) note: ‘issues of how to represent emotion call for those involved in generating emotional geographies to consider the emotion work done via the writing and reading of their texts as well as in their fields of study’. It could be argued that emotions are simply more explicit and visible in the emotional geographies literature compared to the affective geographies literature, emphasising the voice and agency of the human subject more directly - but emotional geographers still emphasise the more processual, unstable, relational and dynamic ways in which emotions exist and operate across space. It is the spatial aspect of emotions that remains critically here, above all else - as Davidson et al (2007:3) note, emotional geographies are interested in emotions in terms of their ‘socio-spatial mediation and articulation rather than entirely interiorised mental states.’

While more affective geographies clearly have value and important insights to offer (particularly in terms of describing the more invisible and latent ways in which the social, the biological, the environmental and the political come together to produce forms of power and shape spatial practices), I find myself somewhat more in the ‘emo-camp’ than the ‘affect camp’ if anything. This is because, in my case, being able to talk about pride in a more or less direct and discrete way (and acknowledging the different forms it takes) is necessary for understanding whether, and how, pride is *shared* in cities, and how it operates within and across urban policy and practice. Given that civic pride has quite a distinctive historicity associated with it, and that my evidence base for this research was always going to be grounded in interviews (that is, people’s personal testimony of what civic pride *is* and *means*), it made little sense for me to construct civic pride along more affective lines. This would have abstracted civic pride away from its historical and contemporary meaning, and taken it into a different analytical, epistemological and methodological direction. This does not mean a more affective approach to civic pride

might still be undertaken within geography – for indeed civic pride is a rather plural and fluid term that does always manifest itself in entirely discrete or distinctive ways (it is much more of a composite and holistic ethos, as I later describe it).

Where I do use a somewhat more affective type of approach in this thesis however relates to what I later will analyse as a kind of ‘tacit’ sense of civic pride. Tacit knowledges are forms of knowledge and ways of knowing that are hidden, emergent, or are difficult to articulate in words and actions (Polanyi 1996). So we might feel a sense of pride about something, but we might not easily have the words to describe the feeling or have an explanation for why it occurred. But – and this where emotional and affective geographies share an understanding on – we can nevertheless communicate *something* of what this pride feeling is or might be, or at least attempt to express the difficulty we have in describing this feeling (cf. Katz 1999). This issue will be explored further in Chapter 8.

A Methodology for Civic Pride

Three broad sources of evidence were sought to analyse civic pride in Nottingham; participant interviews, participant observation and secondary materials. I carried out 49 semi-structured interviews with key stakeholders and people involved in civic life in Nottingham; I produced 3 participant observation pieces (vignettes) based on 3 different events I attended in Nottingham, and I analysed a range of secondary materials. Secondary materials included: local policy documents (broadly from the last 10 years), local census data, local media, film and fiction.

Before I discuss the strategy I used to carry out this fieldwork, I want to briefly contextualise my methodological approach against previous work on civic pride. Broadly speaking, previous studies of civic pride have tended to fall into three methodological categories. Firstly, there are more historical or descriptive accounts of civic pride, predominantly from disciplines such as urban history and political philosophy (e.g. Briggs 1963; Abbot 1970; Shapely 2011). Such accounts have tended to rely upon a range of secondary resources: contemporary histories, architectural and archaeological insights, newspaper reports, local annals and journals, laws and legislation and evidence from

fiction and popular culture. The analytical methods used within these types of literatures are usually based in textual methods (e.g. discourse analysis, visual methods, archival work etc). But notably here, in a number of cases authors do not explicitly address their methodology or approach to data collection; and inevitably within more historic accounts, authors have to rely exclusively upon more official and elite documentation.

Secondly, there is a range of literature that has attempted to address civic pride as a quantifiable construct that can be measured and analysed with statistical formulae. This literature has tended to focus on social attitudes about places and place activity; how certain events, changes or developments in a given community or city affect people's perceptions of local places, and whether and how this then affects perceptions of civic pride (e.g. Groothuis et al 2004; Wood 2006; Sussmuth et al 2010; Kim and Walker 2012). Although some of this work has informed my analysis, this kind of approach is beyond my interests and expertise. It also to some extent fails to grasp the nuances and subjective qualities of civic pride, by reducing it to a numerical value or a narrowly conceived survey-style descriptor. Indeed, a point I want to make in this thesis is that civic pride cannot be measured in simple, statistical terms; but this in itself produces a number of challenges for local governments, particularly in terms of trying to measure and monitor local civic pride, and accounting for it in the context of policy.

Thirdly, there are more qualitative accounts of (or related to) civic pride, predominantly within urban geography and urban studies (e.g. Boyle 1997; Darling 2009; Savage et al 2005). This literature has used a range of qualitative methods, including: interviews, participant observation, ethnography, secondary source analysis and a variety of other textual analyses (visual, video, archival etc.). This set of approaches resonates most closely with my interests, experience and expertise as a qualitative researcher, and in this case provided me the most appropriate and productive methods with which to explore the more subjective, embodied and contested nature of civic pride in a more empirically-informed way.

One of the few pieces of qualitative research in recent years that has empirically explored civic pride - as an explicit focus of its study - is Armstrong and Hogenstad's (2003) work on Bergen in Norway and the relationship between football identities and civic pride. They employed methods of ethnography and participant observation, and developed a textual

analysis of local history and current affairs within Bergen to address how civic identities have been shaped in the region. It does not however attempt to capture the lived experiences and insights of people living in Bergen through personal testimony (i.e. through interviews or other first-hand accounts) and therefore, to some extent, fails to really capture the nuances and subjective ways in which 'Bergen civic pride' is felt, experienced and articulated. Similarly Hall's (1997) study of civic identity and industrial pride in Birmingham is observed and interpreted exclusively from the point of view of author, rather than evidenced through what other people on the ground think.

While some of these qualitative accounts of civic pride have shaped my methodological approach and analytical insights, perhaps the literature that has been most influential to this thesis, in methodological terms, has been literature that has explored other aspects of local civic identities and local politics in cities. Examples I have found useful and inspiring in this regard have been: Savage et al's (2005) analysis of the spatialities of belonging in Manchester, Darling's (2009) study of the 'City of Sanctuary' initiative in Sheffield, Bonnett and Alexander's (2013) study of memory and participation in Newcastle, Bennett's (2013) study of place promotion in Durham, Jones' (2013) study of community cohesion programmes in London, and Jayne's (2012) study of mayoral politics in Stoke-on-Trent. All these literatures adopt a mix-methods approach in order to capture a range of views and perspectives. However again, too often this literature either ignores or underplays emotional perspectives, or at least does not go far enough into explaining the link between wider political processes and more intimate feelings and perspectives – and from the examples raised above, only Jones (2013) and Bennett (2013) attempt to do this to any serious degree. This is why I have also had to rely upon other kinds of studies that have more explicitly looked at emotions in the context of local (civic) identities (e.g. Amin 2008; Johnston 2007; Jupp 2008), and drawn inspiration from these literatures. (How I have teased out such emotional matters will be explained below).

Civic Pride in Nottingham – Who's Got Pride?

I decided that, given my research aims, as well my previous experience in qualitative research methods, using a combination of interviews, participant observation and

secondary resource analysis would be the most effective way to examine civic pride, and draw out some of its emotional dimensions. I originally planned on generating and using another data source, but this failed to materialise early on in the course of the fieldwork. Conducting any kind of research represents difficulties and constraints, many of which are not entirely anticipated. My plan was to explore the idea of poetry, and examine how civic pride could be expressed and evidenced through poetry. Although I was initially enthused by the idea of making a more artistic intervention within the research, I rejected the idea early on; primarily because of a lack of initial take-up by participants, and due to the time constraints I was working with. I was interested in using 'participant poetry' to generate data on civic pride, where I was going to ask participants to write a bespoke piece of poetry expressing their relationship to Nottingham and their sense of civic pride. Given poetry's subjective and expressive form, I was interested in how poetry could, in Poindexter's (2002: 173) words, 'communicate respondents' emotional world'. I thought poetry could capture the more complex and intangible qualities of civic pride and allow participants to develop a more creative approach to understanding their relationships with place. Poetry could also have been used as an elicitation tool for discussing civic pride during my interviews, as well as a reason to bring participants together for an event of some kind, where people would share their poems and discuss them collectively.

My main attempt at gathering participants to write poetry involved attending a Nottingham Poetry Society meeting at the Nottingham Mechanics Institute in the city centre of Nottingham. I explained my research to the group and handed out a participant information sheet to explain the process. My call did prompt a lively discussion about civic pride and how different people felt about Nottingham. However afterwards I did not receive any more correspondence or follow-up interest – except for one participant who offered to be interviewed instead of writing a piece of poetry. I had also advertised the research in a few community centres through leaflets but this also came to no avail. Looking back, I perhaps needed to have distributed these leaflets much more widely across the city, made posters, perhaps posted something in the local news. When you feel an idea has not got momentum and begins to drain time on other activities, it can seem easy to abandon the idea. I think in order to have got participants on board, I would have needed to have had a regular and long-term presence within a poetry/spoken-word type of group like the Nottingham Poetry Society, and framed the method as more of a 'participatory' research project in which participants were more strategically involved in

the planning and outcomes of the research. It may also have needed more investment in terms of publishing materials, inviting a well-known local poet to be on board with the idea, and been built on a more ambitious advertisement strategy. Indeed it could have been a project outside of a research remit. Despite this failed attempt, my observations perhaps offer some speculation for future research into the emotional geographies of poetry and developing more creative approaches to qualitative research (see for example: Furnam 2006; Vickers 2010).

Finding 'Proud' Participants

The fieldwork began in earnest on schedule despite this setback. I proceeded to first identify potential participants, which involved thinking about who were the key stakeholders and informants in Nottingham that could comment best on civic pride. I took the terms 'stakeholder'/'informant' somewhat loosely (since all citizens are stakeholders and informants of civic pride in a city, even if people do not identify with the city or have a sense of civic pride). I sought participants from key organisations, businesses and local groups in the city, including more high-profile civic leaders and more local scale community representatives. I aimed for a sample of people who had a good knowledge and awareness of civic life in Nottingham, and who were involved in or responsible for the civic life of the city, or who worked in local government. Coming from Nottingham myself gave me some insight into who might be appropriate to approach, particularly in terms some of the more public and senior figures within the city council and in the local business sector. I also used my family and snowballing tactics to establish contacts.

My aim then was not to take a random sample of Nottingham citizens and ask them if they are proud or not about Nottingham; nor was it necessarily an attempt to access an even cross-section of participants along socio-economic or demographic lines. My selection strategy was to focus on individuals who had a clear role, interest or knowledge of civic life in Nottingham and who therefore by and large represented a group people *with* a degree of civic pride for Nottingham. Although socio-economic or demographic characteristics were not a factor in this selection process, and not an area of concern I particularly explored in the interviews, the majority of participants were generally educated, middle-class individuals, many with managerial responsibilities or senior roles within

organisations, and whom generally had a good knowledge of the city and its local communities. I cannot claim that the participants chosen were any more 'worthy', 'real', 'genuine' or 'representative' than other people might have been - but they did provide a significant level of insight into the kinds of issues I was interested in. Given the time constraints I had for conducting fieldwork, it was also important that participants were relatively easy to access (usually by phone or email). Of course many were already used to engaging with people in some kind of civic capacity - such that it meant many people were happy to participate and were supportive of the project.

In only accounting for the views of those that might broadly be described as 'civic actors' (i.e. people involved in or responsible for the civic sphere of the city – some perhaps might not have identified with this), this research might be accused of telling a rather one-sided (institutional) story about Nottingham that does not reflect the lived realities of ordinary citizens. It could be accused of presenting a highly skewed and positive picture of the city from the people that are most invested in and celebratory of Nottingham. In defence of this possible accusation it should be said that firstly, most participants were in fact well aware of Nottingham's problems and some of the dangers and pitfalls of civic pride. Secondly, many were aware of different communities and demographic groups in the city, and provided perspectives on how some groups seemed more 'proud' than others. Of course the positionality of participants inevitably shaped their views and impressions, and this was a group that were on the whole proud of Nottingham and valued civic pride. I was still nevertheless able to draw out a rather rich and nuanced sense of civic pride across the city - both through participants' own experiences, and through their impressions (and in many cases direct knowledge and experience) of how other people think about and experience the city.

In order to gauge a breadth of views I selected participants from and across different political, economic and cultural domains and spheres of the city. I also made the explicit effort to gauge views across the city geographically, so that different areas and communities were covered. In terms of representing the political domain of the city, I interviewed city councillors, council officers, one former MP, and a former Lord Mayor of Nottingham - all whom represented the more official, institutional side of the city (the 'civics' as they might be known). These people clearly had a stake and responsibility over civic pride matters in the city and had important insights into how local government

represented and promoted civic pride. This group shared useful insights into the geography of the city and the diversity of its local communities, as well new policies and developments going on in the city that were relevant to the research.

In terms of the economic domain, while the councillors and council officers had considerable insight into the city's business affairs, I also interviewed two influential property entrepreneurs based in the city centre and a local business entrepreneur from the Sherwood area of the city. The relationship between economic enterprise, urban growth and civic pride has been well noted (Briggs 1963; Mumford 1961), so it seemed sensible to explore this angle in relation to Nottingham's civic pride. It also provided an opportunity to explore the links between the motives of business and profit-making, and people's sense of civic responsibility.

Thirdly, in terms of the more 'cultural' side of local civic life, I approached a wide range of people, some of which were also connected to the political and business side of the city. I am using 'cultural' here to mean domains, occupations, identities, that are altogether or to some extent, outside the official domain of government and the market; that is, a sample of people who could reflect upon Nottingham culture and community life more broadly. Participants in this category included a tourism board representative, a local magazine writer, a radio commentator, community sector workers, local activists, church and faith representatives, members of the civic society, academics and artists. The subtle but substantive difference between these participants and participants from the council or local business sector was that by and large they were more freely able to be critical or critically-minded about Nottingham, civic pride and the city council; they had less to lose, or less toes to tread on, compared to others – but as I show, this did not mean that the city council or business leaders were not critical of Nottingham in some respects. Within this cultural domain, I also made an explicit attempt to gather views from different ethnic backgrounds (Polish, Pakistani, Indian in particular) in order to represent (some of) the city's cultural diversity, and use this to think about how other types of identity and pride are embedded in and but also separate from Nottingham civic pride (whilst also not assuming that 'other'/non-white ethnicities, for example, are any less proud of Nottingham – as was pointed out to me by one participant).

Participant Information and the Interview Experience

For each interview, I presented participants with a participant information sheet and a consent form, which together detailed what the research was about, what kinds of information I wanted and the terms of consent (see Appendices 1 and 2). The information sheet was tailored slightly for city council participants in order to emphasise that I was interested in any current policy developments around civic pride and to indicate that the research may have implications for future policy development. In order to comply with university ethical practice, I anonymised all participants and provided them with pseudonyms (see Appendix 3 for a list of participants). In the analysis chapters participants are generally referred to by: their gender (by proxy of their pseudonym), an occasional attribute like age/background (for example, if they are a student, or whether they have lived in the city for a long time), their occupation, affiliation or role (whether they are, for instance, a councillor, a community worker, or a member of Nottingham Civic Society) and for some participants, a general indication of where (geographically) in the city they work or live. These details are given primarily for reader context; there are some instances when this background information is relevant to the analysis (particular as it relates to a specific part of the city or in relation to particular events), but largely these details are illustrative and supplementary.

All participants consented to being anonymous (a few said they would be happy to be non-anonymised, but did not actively request this for the purposes of publication), and the vast majority were largely indifferent/un-concerned about this aspect of the research. A couple of participants wanted reassurance from me during the interviews - if they had been particularly critical about something or someone - that their names would be anonymised and I confirmed this. I understood that for some councillors inferences could be made to disclose who they are (or what political party they are affiliated to), so I did ask for their permission for their names to be non-anonymised if it was their preference and they requested so (only one of six councillors I interviewed gave permission but did not request this). I decided that - given that there are over 50 councillors in Nottingham - anonymising all participants was better for consistency and confidentiality across the process; and so for councillors and other dignitaries the level of detail I provided was on the whole vague enough to make disclosure unlikely in any case. Anonymity was not an issue for most

participants who were, in most cases, quite comfortable and used to discussing the types of issues this research was focusing on; and moreover the research itself was not probing into especially sensitive issues. While many participants were interested in what the potential findings of the research would be at the time, most were simply willing to help (and help me along) and enjoyed having a conversation about Nottingham and civic pride. I intend to disseminate my findings to all participants after the thesis is finished, and would be happy to present my findings to different groups and organisations in the city sometime in the future.

I conducted the interviews over a period of about 12 months between October 2012 and October 2013. Each of the interviews included a mixture of specific questions (related to their job or field of interest) and more general questions about Nottingham as a city. Questions were broadly framed around: their background and relationship to the city, their perceptions of Nottingham and its identity, what they were most proud of about Nottingham, and what they understood about civic pride generally and why they thought it was important (or not important). Each interview lasted between half an hour and one and a half hours, depending on whether participants had other arrangements or if the conversation came to a natural conclusion, once all the questions were asked. As certain topics emerged from the interviews, I developed these lines of inquiry in subsequent interviews - meaning that the shape and trajectory of the interviews as a whole developed incrementally, and gave me an opportunity to cross-examine different perspectives.

To speak of the interview encounters as emotional experiences in themselves, they evoked a range of emotional reactions: curiosity, excitement, intrigue, melancholy, frustration, awkwardness, impasse, amusement and banter. As the analysis chapters show, this range of emotional reactions was partly down to the different types of personality I encountered. While some participants seemed to have formulated their views on civic pride well in advance of the interview, and in some cases set out their stall quite clearly from the outset, others seemed to be constructing their views within the interview itself. The dynamic of most of the interviews was a relay between more intimate details and experiences coming to the surface, and more expansive, abstract and philosophical thoughts emerging on top of and around these. This aspect resonated quite closely to Bonnett and Alexander's (2013)'s study of memory and nostalgia in Newcastle, where they

discuss how participants, during interviews, often appeared to flip seamlessly between different levels of detail and abstraction:

Time and again respondents would commence their accounts with broad depictions and argument, but then, often suddenly, begin to narrate a very personal and 'smallscale' recollection. These narrations were not merely illustrative or subsidiary to the general argument, but opened onto a new type and tone of recollection. This mixture – and to-ing and fro-ing – between the intimate and the general provided a central mechanism through which different nostalgic forms were brought into conversation and collision. (Bonnett and Alexander 2013: 7)

Another factor that influenced the interview experience related to my positionality as a researcher. Being a local Nottingham-born person myself (and equally a fellow East Midlander) meant that most interviews were quite well-informed and based in a shared knowledge and understanding of the city and local region. This was helpful on a practical level in terms of (me or participants) not having to always define or explain everything that was being talked about - which for councillor interviews in particular, who were often short of time, made for a smoother process. However, it equally may have prevented us (myself and participants) from thinking about a more outsider's perspective; that is, the insider-insider dynamic may have meant that in more implicit ways we were not questioning the underlying meanings of what we were discussing, or indeed the authenticity, accuracy, or overall 'objectivity' of what was being said (or how others could interpret some issues differently). In fact, although I informed participants that I come from Nottingham but now live in Leeds, it was as though people were speaking to me like I lived in Nottingham - as though I had the same concerns and ambitions for the city. This did not prevent a more critical or reflexive discussion from happening however, and, as I show, many participants were willing to raise more negative issues about Nottingham. But it did mean that - given most participants were to some degree integrated into the civic culture of the city - the conversations centred around 'well what does this mean for Nottingham, how can I/we think about or improve Nottingham's sense of civic pride?'. It was less about 'well what can a study of civic pride do for academia'!

In the main, I did not tailor my approach or style of questioning for different types of participants (beyond the specificity of the questions I was asking, or the context from which we were talking from). However to some extent the tone and register of some of the questions I asked to councillors was a little more formal and practically-oriented ('what is being done, what can be done, etc, in the city?'). The other interviews were perhaps more jovial, chatty, and perhaps somewhat more open and ambiguous. Councillors were in the main a little more forthright about their views, committed to defending Nottingham as a city and championing its potential, and were obviously more used to doing this.

Another more subtle influence on the course and shape of the interviews was the location – where the interview was held. Most interviews were done in offices and spaces of work, but many were carried out in public venues like cafes or pubs within Nottingham, or in some cases in people's homes. The range of buildings and venues I went to was a fascinating mix of civic buildings (including the town hall and council offices), modern offices, a castle (Nottingham Castle), a windmill (Green's Mill in Sneinton), local pubs and cafes, and a number community centres. Overall, this experience of travelling to and visiting different places and venues gave me an enjoyable sense of 'civic travel', taking me areas of the city I had not been to, or in some cases even heard of, before. In positionality terms, this to some extent led me to believe I was as much an outsider with limited knowledge of the city as I was an insider coming from and growing up in and around the city. Nevertheless, it inspired some sense of civic pride in myself, I think, in getting to know the locations in which people live, work and spend leisure time, and being able to connect the dots in terms of what different areas and sites mean to people.

Participant Observation and Secondary Resources

While the interviews formed a rich source of data and plenty of material for further research, the participant observation exercises I undertook allowed me to explore civic pride as something which I could personally observe and experience, and allowed me to capture how people 'perform' civic pride in various ways. As I have noted in previous chapters, civic pride has often been associated with various kinds of performance in cities - civic receptions, parades, fairs, the opening of townhalls – but accounts of civic performance have tended to be descriptive and historical (Briggs 1963). With some

exceptions, there has been a lack of first-hand accounts of civic events and performances associated with civic pride within geography and the social sciences (though see: Armstrong and Hognested 2003; Fortier 1999). As emotional and affective geographers have noted, however, writing about events and performances as sites of emotional or affective meaning is not a simple process to engage with and account for. One has to somehow perceive and account for the vague but palpable dynamics of these events - qualities such as 'vibe', mood, the 'swirl of surplus' to use Ash Amin's words – and extrapolate meaning out of the complex interplay between emotion, performance and spatial practice (Amin 2008; Wood and Smith 2004).

I wanted to understand what it was to immerse oneself in a civic pride event or occasion and enjoy civic pride as a spectacle invested with meaning. I also wanted to reflect critically on what I had witnessed and write about it as an account looking back. Not only was I interested in some of the sensorial qualities of these events – the atmosphere, the sounds, sights and smells, 'rubbing shoulders' with others and so on (Watson 2006) – but also a sense of how civic pride was being performed and staged with particular intentions (Darling 2009; Robinson et al 2011). Again part of this approach reflects my interest and engagement with how emotions often get 'managed' and orchestrated by urban actors as a tool of social control and persuasion - in particular how emotions can be engineered and manipulated toward certain (social, political) ends (Thrift 2004). I wanted to observe how civic pride was staged, engineered, manipulated as well as resisted or contested within certain events and performances in Nottingham and what the underlying micro-dynamics of these moments were and what they meant to myself and others (Johnston 2007; Thrift 2008).

I attended a number of events across the period of fieldwork, but chose to focus on three for analysis. These were Nottingham's annual Goose Fair opening ceremony, a heritage open day event, and a civic society lecture. For each event I attended I made field notes and wrote a vignette of the experience a few weeks later. This gap between the event itself and writing up the vignettes gave me time not only to digest the 'raw' thoughts and emotions experienced at the event but also allowed me to document any media commentary, historical background and contextual information to inform the analysis. The criteria for what makes a 'civic pride event' is by no means clear-cut and is as subjective as the term civic pride is itself. I chose these events primarily because they were

events which celebrated Nottingham and were to some extent events that were particular to Nottingham. They were also expressly 'civic' to the extent that they were not tied to any cultural, ethnic or interest group, but rather were open to the public and located in the city centre (though this does not mean the civic is a domain void of exclusions and particular interests as I will show).

Finally to complement the interview and observation data, I examined a variety of secondary resources. This included examining city council policy documents, statements by public officials, news reports, local magazines and websites, as well material from Nottingham history books and works of popular culture, film and fiction. I aims for this part of the data collection process were: firstly, to examine how recent policies and initiatives within city council have used civic pride as a value or vehicle for new projects and developments in the city; and secondly to explore what the shared conversations and issues are circulating in Nottingham, what the charted histories and geographies tell us about the city, and how the civic identity of the city is constructed and imagined through different mediums and cultural practices. This provided a different angle with which to explore how people perceive and experience civic pride, and how civic pride can be represented and articulated in and through different forms and mediums.

Data Analysis – Nottingham, Nvivo and Narrative

To form some sort of meaningful basis with which to begin to organise the thesis and analyse the data, I initially transcribed all of my interviews and extracted all relevant quotes and examples. From this, I tried to get a general sense of the key ideas and themes that were emerging. On first attempt, I ended up with three broads themes. The first theme (or analytical 'code' as it were) related to material specifically about Nottingham and what civic pride in Nottingham meant to people. The second theme related to how people defined and understood civic pride more broadly, and included views on how participants perceived the changing nature of cities and community life in general. The third theme was slightly more applied and future-oriented, and aimed to summarise what the key positive and negative aspects of civic pride are and its possible policy implications. The subsequent analysis changed slightly however in order to better reflect the wider aims of the research and the kind of narratives that emerged from the interviews. This was

done in order to better contextualise my findings within current debates in the literature, and to give a more nuanced account of how participants responded to the questions. As Chapter 2 alluded to in more theoretical terms, a key conceptual challenge with civic pride centres on understanding the differences and connections between civic pride as a term related to being proud of one's city (and therefore being proud of a city's civic identity), and civic pride as a more everyday (civic or political) value or virtue. There were distinct, if at times subtle, differences in what people in Nottingham claimed they are most proud of about the city, how they perceive Nottingham's local and regional civic identity, and what they thought civic pride meant in the abstract. The differences and subtiles of these different aspects of civic pride were teased out as the analysis progressed, and this significantly (re)shaped the organisation of the analysis chapters.

As the thesis outline states, the analytical chapters (5, 6, 7 and 8) comprise two chapters that discuss what participants are most proud of about Nottingham, a chapter on the regional geography of civic pride and civic identity, and a chapter on how participants define and embody civic pride as a more everyday construct or value (and what implications this may have beyond Nottingham).

The coding process was done using the qualitative software NVivo, which allowed me to code each transcript line-by-line and organise relevant quotes into particular themes for the analysis. I found NVivo a useful tool for managing and organising long transcripts and providing a central display frame with which to see the data both in its detail and in its entirety. The coding for all three data sources was analysed using a narrative-style analysis method. This method seeks to 'forge connections between personal biography and social structure – the personal and the political' (Riessman 2005: 6) and, like discourse analysis, pays careful attention to the words, meanings and underlying logics of what is being said and how it is being said or represented. This is not to say all the evidence presented itself as a clear 'narrative' as though it was linear, developmental and coherent, but narratives were pieced together to form themes and more coherent arguments. Being aware of the style of conversation and argumentation was important as I have already pointed out. This included being attentive to what participants (seemingly) wanted to convey but perhaps could not, what they perhaps 'had in mind', or noticing when participants appear to say what they feel they ought to say, and what they feel the interviewer ought to hear. I also wanted to explicitly address the emotional content of what was being said, looking out for

certain words, inferences and anecdotes that drew out emotional meanings and experiences, and how participant's political views about the city were shaped and communicated through emotional experiences and discourses (Ho 2009; Bennett 2013). This broadly follows the kinds of qualitative analysis used in the emotional geographies literature, but with an explicit focus on pride and the philosophical and psychological dynamics of pride. People's impressions and experiences of Nottingham and local areas within Nottingham drew out particular emotions and emotional attachments that served to embellish the kind of narratives they were recounting and reinforce the arguments they were making. As Riessman (1993: 3) notes, a key feature of narrative analysis is an awareness of how 'a teller in conversation takes a listener into a past time or "world" and recapitulates what happened to them to make a point, often a moral one'. As my analysis reflects, participants often expressed their views on civic pride not just in 'plain' and 'matter of fact' terms, but as a matter of integrity and personal pride.

What follows now is a brief introduction to Nottingham. This outlines a basic history and geography of the city and lay out some of the themes that will be presented in the analytical chapters.

Introduction to Nottingham

The city has a long and proud history, and has changed much over the last couple of centuries...Nottingham is above all a working city and it's prosperity is down to its people. As the modern city of Nottingham was forged in the 19th Century, Nottingham's people earned a reputation around the world for their craftsmanship in lace and world-leading design and manufacturing through brand names like Raleigh, Players and Boots. Through the radical political movements of the Chartists, Nottingham's people also earned a reputation for determination and a deep commitment to fairness and justice...[However] despite the underlying strength of Nottingham's economy, too many people in the city remain disconnected from the jobs, wealth and opportunities. Poverty persists in many communities, side by side with prosperity. And for some, aspirations are low; too many people do not share the city's optimism.

One Nottingham 2010: 6

Nottingham is a city located in the county of Nottinghamshire in the East Midlands region of England. It has local authority population of just over 300,000, while the conurbation of Nottingham (the 'Nottingham Urban Area') is inhabited by around 730,000 people (NOMIS 2015). The city lies within the geographical (if not cultural) heart of England, surrounded by other East Midlands towns and cities such as Derby, Leicester, Newark and Lincoln (see Figure 1). Although recognised by the UK government for its pivotal role in the national economy by its status within the 'Core Cities' group (an advocacy group for the 9 largest urban economies in England, Scotland and Wales), and famous on an international stage for its historic links with Robin Hood and Nottingham Forest Football Club, this medieval-cum-post-industrial city is not entirely a 'classic' case study city within geography and urban studies, and like a number of Midlands and East Midlands cities perhaps suffers somewhat from a lack of recognition and status within the national imagination (Westwood and Williams 1997; Hardill et al 2006)¹.

¹ Even geographers seem to have trouble identifying the region. Doreen Massey (1991: 28) in her seminal 'Global Sense of Place' essay, wrote 'I remember some of my most painful times as a geographer have been spent unwillingly struggling to think how one could draw a boundary around somewhere like the "East Midlands"'.

Figure 1 - Map of Nottingham and the East Midlands



Source: <https://www.withfriendship.com/user/neeha/East-Midlands.php> (original source unknown)

Nottingham's history, like the history of many cities in provincial England, is one of Anglo-Saxon origins; a town that grew gradually through the Middle Ages and Early Modern period, but then whose population expanded rapidly in the late 19th century and more gradually over the 20th century. Nottingham became an official city by Royal Charter in 1897. From the Middle Ages, trade in Nottingham was traditionally associated with metalwork, dyeing and tanning, as well as the city's then principal international export - gypsum alabaster, which was commonly used to build religious statues and monuments across Europe (Wylie 1853). By the 18th and 19th century developments in the textile industries in Nottingham gave rise to a significant lace industry, which became

geographically concentrated in an area of the city centre referred to as the Lace Market (Matthews 2008). After the Second World War, and like in many cities, much of Nottingham's primary industry began to decline as manufacturing firms moved in search of cheaper labour. The Lace Market area nevertheless remains an economically important area of the city, housing a variety of small cafes, bars, theatres, art and design shops, restaurants and more recently the Nottingham Contemporary art gallery. It has received significant investment and backing as one of Nottingham's 'Creative Quarters' (see: Crewe and Beaverstock 1998).

Aside from the lace, Nottingham's industrial heritage is largely associated with three of the city's major manufacturing names from the late 19th century - John Player's Cigarettes, Boots the pharmaceutical company and Raleigh Bicycles. With the exception of Boots, the employment base of these industries has shrunk vastly over the past century; much of Nottingham's heavy industry having either disbanded or re-located. The John Player factory on Thane Road in south-west central Nottingham closed in 2014 – which was the last remaining cigarette factory in England - while Raleigh and Boots still employ several thousand workers at their headquarters, mostly in admin, human resources and R&D (see here: Needle 2004). Raleigh, in particular, will perhaps always be associated in the literary and film world with Karel Reisz's classic *Saturday Night and Sunday Morning*, a drama set and filmed in Nottingham, based on the book by Nottingham-born writer Alan Sillitoe. Another significant part of Nottingham's industrial history is associated with mining. Although mining was mainly concentrated in areas surrounding the city, like Cotgrave to the south and Ollerton to the north-east, the industry would dominate much of the culture and politics of the Nottinghamshire region during much of the 20th century. Although only a few working pits now survive, at a dramatically smaller scale, the history of the miners' strike in the 1980s left Nottinghamshire people – and by association (perhaps unfairly) the people of Nottingham – with the reputation of being 'scabs', after many Nottinghamshire pit-workers decided to break the picket lines during the tumultuous years of industrial strife in 1984 and 1985 (see: Symcox 2011).

The city's economy today has transformed, like most cities in Britain, into a (largely) post-industrial service and knowledge-sector economy. The city's largest employers include local government (Nottingham City Council and Nottinghamshire County Council), the two main universities (Nottingham University and Nottingham Trent) and organisations such as

Boots, the H.M Revenue and Customs Office, Experian and Capital One. Nottingham is also one of six cities in the UK designated as a 'Science City' because of its leading research and development within the two universities, and from its 'BioCity' hub in the city centre near Sneinton, which promotes innovation in the life sciences. On the retail side of Nottingham's economy, the city centre is occupied like most cities by many large multinational corporations and chains, and has two main shopping centres in the Broadmarsh Centre and the Victoria Centre. Although some smaller market-stall economies exist (like the indoor Victoria Centre Market and the outdoor Cattle Market to the south of the city) as well as a few pockets of small, independent business areas around the Lace Market and along Mansfield Road, it is clear the 'death of the high street' scenario is something that looms over the city. The mixed fortunes of the Broadmarsh Centre is a case in point, with a number of its shops and large areas of retail space now empty; this is currently of particular concern to the city council as it is one of the main thoroughways ('the' gateway even) to the city centre from the city's train station.

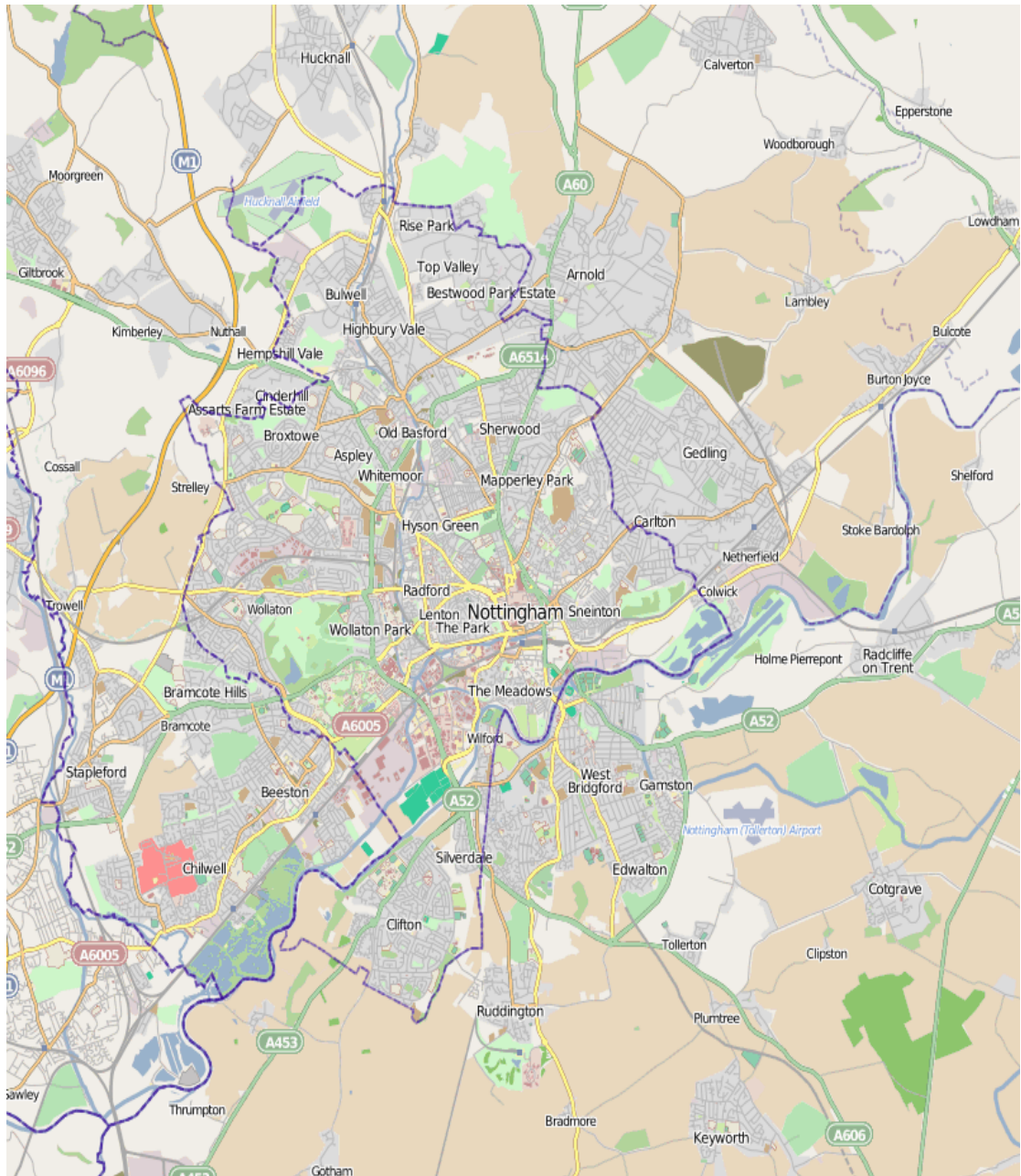
The city contains high levels of deprivation. In 2012, it was recorded as having the lowest average (local area) household disposable income in the UK (see: ONS 2012) and according to the 2010 index of multiple deprivation survey, Nottingham ranked 20th most deprived out of 326 districts in England (see: Nottingham Insight 2011). Like many cities, Nottingham's official boundary encompasses a number of economically deprived communities (such as St Ann's, Aspley and Bulwell), a few economically advantaged areas (such as the Park estate and Wollaton) and number of (largely middle-class) suburbs just outside the official boundaries, such as West Bridgford to the south, Beeston to the west, and Arnold to the north-east (see Figure 2). Nottingham City is a unitary authority meaning it has full jurisdiction over the city and powers independent of Nottinghamshire County Council. But it has this autonomy at the expense of housing some of the poorest communities in the city, and having therefore a relatively low tax-base. With high levels of deprivation, Nottingham has been stigmatised in recent years for its association with gun crime and violence, particularly after the violent deaths of Brendon Lawrence (2002), Marion Bates (2003) and Danielle Beacon (2004) which caught national media attention. Following rather damning statistics published by the think-tank Reform, an article in the *Telegraph* newspaper in 2006 for example claimed 'the clearest picture yet of crime in urban England and Wales shows that Nottingham is the "most dangerous" city, with the highest rates of murder and car crime and some of the worst levels of violence, burglary

and gun offences' (Steele 2006). Nottingham has since been nicknamed such titles as 'Shottingham' and 'Gun Capital of the UK', labels which the city council have been at pains to play down and resist.

As I go on to discuss in Chapter 6, this has been a key issue of concern for the city council, and has necessitated campaigns to resist its negative impacts. It is certainly something which continues to haunt the city even as the council protests that Nottingham is city with crime levels like anywhere else. One of the clearest indications of the city council's overall strategy to resist negative publicity has been the use of the 'proud' on a lot of city council advertising; indeed the city council's main slogan is (since around mid-2006): 'A Safe, Clean, Ambitious Nottingham: A City We're Proud Of'. Similarly a Respect for Nottingham campaign was launched in 2003 to monitor and reduce crime and anti-social behaviour. The aim of this was to 'take an uncompromising stand against begging, street prostitution and drug dealing and restore civic pride in the city...The strategy will demonstrate that Nottingham is not a soft touch for those bent on criminality and damaging the quality of life in the city...' (Nottingham City Council 2003: 2). While some evidence suggests that violent crime is again on the rise in the Nottinghamshire area (see: Nottingham Post 2014a), crime seems to divide opinion in Nottingham as to how much of a problem it is for the city, relative to other places (One Nottingham 2010).

2011 Census data showed that 65% of the population are White British and 35% are from BME and other ethnic communities - of which Pakistani, Indian and Caribbean groups represent around 15% of the total population (Nottingham Insight 2014). Inner-city areas of Nottingham such as Radford and Sneinton (see Figure 2) have seen recent waves of immigration from European Accession countries, particularly from Poland, and ward-level areas such as Berridge and Leen Valley in the central area of the city (the area around Whitemoor and Hyson Green) and Dunkirk and Lenton (to the south west of the city centre) show particularly high ethnic diversity mix (Nottingham City Council 2011). With Nottingham's two major universities, the student population of Nottingham constitutes around 15% of the total population.

Figure 2 - Map of the Nottingham Urban Area



Source: http://images.travelpod.com/cache/city_maps/Nottingham.gif (© OpenStreetMap contributors)

Key: ----- Municipal Boundaries

In terms of cultural activity, Nottingham holds a number of annual community events, officially funded and supported by the city council, including: the Nottingham Caribbean Festival, a Mela Festival, Gay Pride, the Riverside Festival, a Robin Hood Pageantry and the legendary Goose Fair which has been a mainstay of Nottingham for over 700 years.

Venues such as Rock City, Nottingham Playhouse, the Theatre Royal, the Nottingham Ice

Arena, the Broadway Centre and more recently the Nottingham Contemporary art gallery have all been important to the cultural life of the city, as has Nottingham's well-celebrated magazine *LeftLion* (named after the lion statues in the Old Market Square) that distributes on a monthly basis as a popular running commentary on culture in the city. Like most large cities, Nottingham has many smaller cultural venues and spaces within local areas and neighbourhoods, around which local civic life coheres. These will be explored further in the next chapter.

The history of protest and rebellion in the city has also been important for shaping Nottingham's cultural heritage and identity (Stobart 2001). Nottingham has strong links for example with the Chartist and Luddite movements of the early to mid-19th century. In 1831, the city was famously besieged by the Reform Bill Rioters, who - in protest against the Duke of Newcastle's lack of support for political reform in parliament - set Nottingham Castle on fire and mobbed various parts of the city. The infamous Nottingham Lambs, a group of marauding electioneers, also coloured the city's 19th century reputation as a place of unrest. Thus as Emrys Bryson (1983: 127) notes 'through most of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the characteristic sounds in Nottingham were the noise of jeering crowds, the whine of musket balls and the smashing of glass.' Links with so-called 'rebel' writers such as Lord Byron, D.H Lawrence and Alan Sillitoe have also been popularly celebrated in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire, and have been the basis for various literary festivals, theatre productions and film screenings – although arguably these connections have been under-promoted in the city. Meanwhile, more recent episodes of rebellion and protest in the city – for example, the race riots in St Ann's in 1958, the disputes that surrounded the miners' strikes of the 1980s, the vandalism and rioting that erupted during the England Riots of 2011, and Nottingham's part in the global Occupy movement in 2011 – help sustain the view that Nottingham still harbours a reputation for violence, social uprisings and progressive politics. As I later discuss, it is through such a rebellious image and heritage that people in Nottingham frame and take pride in their civic identity.

In terms of Nottingham's current political landscape, the city has been a notable Labour stronghold, both in recent city council elections (Labour has held a vast majority of seats since 1989) and in parliamentary constituencies – all three of Nottingham's MPs have been Labour since the early 1990s. In the May 2013 local elections, Nottinghamshire County

Council was one of only three county councils in England that emerged with a Labour majority – with Labour overcoming a previous Conservative majority in the county (the adjacent county of Derbyshire being another Labour anomaly in that year). Nottingham, like many other cities, also rejected having an elected mayor after the 2012 mayoral referendums across 11 English cities. It has therefore been a relatively stable political environment for local government in the city in recent years. But since the 2008 recession, the city council has come under scrutiny over cuts in services, how it spends money internally, and its tumultuous relationship with central government (see: The Commentator 2013). The city council, like many other local authorities across England, have been vocal in their resistance to austerity and as a city Nottingham has had to suffer cuts in its welfare budget. In a recent public engagement release for an upcoming Budget Consultation (2015/16) for example, the council website states: ‘the Council believes cities like Nottingham are being treated unfairly by the Government...Nottingham has lost more in Revenue Spending Power per household than places in the affluent south’ (Nottingham City Council 2015). As I show in later chapters, this posture of resistance and standing up for Nottingham is an important lens through which we can observe civic pride in action. But it also reveals, as I suggested in the previous chapter, how local governments are often caught between a range of competing (and at times contradictory) values and interests.

Finally, it is hard to mention Nottingham without also mentioning Robin Hood, who represents another, if rather different, part of the city’s ‘rebellious’ character. Nottingham has a well-known connection with Robin Hood – from all the folktales, stories, books and films set in or connected to the city and surrounding region, and from his famous escapades with the Sherriff of Nottingham. Robin Hood is a global icon that many people around the world know and recognise; and whether real or not, Robin Hood has helped put Nottingham on the map. But while a statue of the legend proudly stands outside Nottingham Castle, and various exhibitions and branding attempts have been made to promote the legend in the city over recent years, Robin Hood has not always been embraced by the city. The city council in particular has been accused of underselling and underinvesting in the Robin Hood legend. To the contrary, Nottinghamshire County Council have recently adopted the Robin Hood image for their county flag, and for a long time now, driving into the county along the M1 motorway, one may well read the sign saying ‘Welcome to Robin Hood Country’. The county of course relies upon its association with Sherwood Forest, although even the Sherwood Forest visitor’s centre has been

subject to underinvestment. The city council do have an official 'Robin Hood' however - a man who dresses up in Robin Hood gear and attends civic ceremonies as an ambassador for the city. However, since the closing of the tourist facility 'The Tales of Robin Hood' on Maid Marion Way (Nottingham's inner ring road) in 2009, the city lacks any real permanent Robin Hood attraction other than the statue outside the Castle. In Chapter 7 of this thesis I address how civic actors in Nottingham feel about Robin Hood and whether the legend ought to be something that Nottingham celebrates and embraces as part of the city's civic pride.

This is a brief overview of Nottingham, and throughout the rest of this thesis, I build upon much of this geography and history, but also bring to the fore other themes, sites, events and issues which have shaped the city in recent years. As I stated in the introductory chapter of the thesis, Nottingham appears both different to many larger cities in the UK, as a somewhat more provincial (East Midlands) city and Labour stronghold, and in other ways also comparable to many larger cities - in terms of Nottingham's economic output, the extent of the city's deep (structural) inequalities, and its cultural diversity. Nottingham therefore sits on the threshold of a number of geographical categories and scales – which, as I demonstrate later, can produce feelings of ambivalence over the identity and status of the city, which itself can affect civic pride (cf. Chapter 7). To the author's knowledge, an in-depth, qualitative empirical study of civic pride in Nottingham has not yet been undertaken. This, as I claimed earlier, perhaps reflects a wider failure within British urban, cultural geography to explore the East Midlands and the geographies of civic pride in smaller, more provincial towns and cities. To date, where recent scholarship in geography and other disciplines has looked at Nottingham as a city, this has ranged from: Daniel's and Rycroft's (1993) cultural analysis of Alan Sillitoe and the literary landscape of Nottingham, accounts about post-industrial regeneration in Nottingham (Crewe and Beaverstock 1998; Tiesdale 1995), various kinds of monographs and surveys about Nottingham's history and cultural life (e.g. Robinson et al 2011; Sillitoe 1987), and a range of books and articles on as diverse topics as local food economies (Hollows et al 2013), planning and design (Hatherley 2010) and experiences of neighbourhood stigmatisation in inner-city Nottingham (McKenzie 2013). These works offer various insights that I draw upon throughout the rest of the thesis, and complement my wider secondary resource analysis; I use these together to help tell the story of civic pride in Nottingham.

Introduction to Chapters 5 and 6

Rather than bludgeoning people over the head with what we feel they ought to be proud of – be it the ‘progressive story’ of the left or a set of historic events and institutions for the right – we would do better to attempt to understand what it is that British people are actually proud of about their [cities]...[and] begin to understand which [...] narratives survive and appeal and which do not.

Wind-Cowie and Gregory 2011: 82

The following two chapters explore civic pride in terms what people in Nottingham are most proud of, drawing on some of the key themes, debates and issues which emerged from my interviews and documentary analysis (see Figure 3, next page). I analyse how people construct and perceive the civic identity of the city and what this tells us about civic pride. A key argument I make across both chapters is that the things that people take most pride in often reflects as much about how people want to imagine the city as it reflects people’s lived experiences. Despite this, civic pride remains an important ‘black box’ for citizens to develop shared ideas and ideals about Nottingham and mobilise different civic agendas.

At the end of each of the following chapters, and at the end of Chapter 7, are the participant observation pieces of the local events that I attended in Nottingham.

Figure 3 - Brief Summary of Findings

The description below briefly summarises the main ideas and themes that came out of the interviews, and gives a sense of the breadth of issues participants discussed. These will be explored throughout the rest of the chapters that follow.

Common things that people expressed pride in about Nottingham included:

- Its sense of friendliness
- Its sense of cohesion and tolerance between different groups
- Its history of rebellion
- Its industrial and sporting heritage
- Its relative size and the 'village-like' feel of the city
- Its (local) sense of humour
- Its links with Robin Hood
- Its sense of political independence
- The range of cultural activities going on in the city

Issues and concerns participants had about civic pride in Nottingham included:

- The city's perceived isolation as a provincial Midlands city
- The legacy of its reputation as a 'gun crime capital'
- A sense of apathy amongst ordinary citizens about the city
- Deep structural issues of joblessness, deprivation and crime
- A lack of vision for promoting Robin Hood in the city, as well as disagreement about how the city should be marketed
- Pride's connotations with arrogance, jingoism and superficiality
- A lack of real municipal power and vision in local government
- The impact of wider cultural changes in cities – a loss of community, sense of place etc.

Chapter 5: Nottingham – A Friendly City

Cities have been routinely lauded or deplored for the feelings they induce. Some cities have come to be regarded as generous or friendly. Others are regarded as hard-edged and hyper-competitive.

Thrift 2005: 147

Introduction

Nearly all participants mentioned aspects of friendliness as a key component of Nottingham's identity and for a many number of people it was the thing they were most proud of about the city. The friendliness aspect was identified in two broad respects; one, in terms of Nottingham's everyday sense of friendliness amongst its citizens; and two, in terms of its spirit of tolerance and cohesion across different communities. Why, in theoretical terms, might is this appeal to friendliness be an important theme in cities and within urban geography?

People have for a long time categorised and evaluated cities according to their individual and shared qualities and attributes. These qualities and attributes shape and determine what it is like to live in or visit a city, but they also can be subjective. The media (whether it be newspapers, books, films or other types of media) can also play a role in shaping (and distorting) people's perceptions of places – and yet people's relationships with places and the experiences they have in them can remain highly personal and change over time. In the course of everyday conversation, or in the context of developing, say, government policy, however, it has become routine, practical, and at times politically strategic to simplify places into some small (definable) image or narrative – to somehow capture the 'essence' of a place within a single word or phrase. For instance, a city may be known (or sold to the public) as 'historic', 'modern', 'arty', 'vibrant', 'parochial', 'romantic' and so on – and these words, often vague and inviting interpretation, help shape a certain spirit or image of a place which local people and institutions can use and exploit for a range of purposes (Bell and de Shalit 2011; Tuan 1977). 'Friendly', it seems, has become one of these vague but strategically useful words that somehow captures a certain ordinary yet alluring image of a place and its people – which, as I go on to explain, can be used in a

range of ways to help promote the city and encourage civic engagement.

As I detailed in Chapter 2, cultural regeneration strategies often depend upon the successful mobilisation of messages and images that emphasise the city's virtues and steer attention away from the city's problems and inequalities. This is done in order to help local governments and business partnerships secure investment, build local support for policy and enhance the legitimacy of local politicians and business people (Boland 2010; Hall 1997). The championing of cities as 'friendly' could be conceived as part of this cultural regeneration landscape; one of a cadre of words and clichés that helps urban populations talk about themselves in positive, prideful ways and can be used strategically for economic and political gain. While friendliness may form a valued social quality that a city enjoys, and make people pride to live there, friendliness has also become, to some degree, a new battleground for post-industrial inter-urban competition. It has become a new (arguably 'soft') metric of comparison and point of competition between places. The older battles over which city had the finest town hall, have become the new battles over which city is the 'friendliest' (Darling 2009; Jones 2013). But when we talk about a city being 'friendly' what do we mean?

Surely Every City Wants To Be Friendly?

Talking about places as friendly would normally be given to mean that they are somehow 'sociable', 'welcoming', 'civil', 'hospitable', 'accepting' of different groups, and so on. Within this, there are perhaps two distinct types of friendliness to observe – namely in terms of 'to whom' this friendliness is directed. One would be a friendliness from locals given towards 'outsiders' – particularly tourists, visitors or in-coming migrants. The other would be a friendliness between locals and neighbours; one which reflects more of a tight-knit community (Morgan 2009). Of course, people can, and do, express friendliness to both insiders and outsiders (anyone); an unconditional friendliness. Meanwhile, it is common to see the word friendly now as a suffix for a range of characteristics about a city. Cities are thus 'bike-friendly', 'child-friendly', 'eco-friendly' and so on. With this, the friendly suffix has become indicative of a place's virtues, as well as a kind of organising principle/word for public service reform and policy intervention. As part of the wider equalities and diversities agenda in local government (under the national Equality Act (2010)), urban

policy is increasingly geared towards promoting access and participation (and funding) for targeted groups and activities (particularly for those felt to be discriminated against or disadvantaged); and so it has become increasingly common to see the suffix '-friendly' attached to a range of government-backed initiatives and campaigns. For instance, in Nottingham City Council's *Vision for 2020* strategy document, one of the key aims of the council is for Nottingham to be 'an aspiring and *family-friendly* city where all of our children and young people grow up to be ambitious and equipped to succeed' (One Nottingham 2010: 27, my emphasis). In 2014, Nottingham City Council also launched a campaign called 'Bee-Friendly Nottingham', advocating the importance of wildlife and diversity in the city, and there have similarly been campaigns and initiatives around promoting an Age-Friendly city and a Cycle-Friendly city.

It is surprising, given the ubiquity of the word friendly in urban policy discourse and urban marketing campaigns, that friendliness and the rise of the 'friendly city' have not been scrutinised more by geographers. It is more common to see debates about friendliness within geography in the context of things like: exploring 'everyday encounters' in the city (Amin 2008; Jupp 2008), exploring experiences of multiculturalism in cities (Valentine et al 2009) or exploring how different types of urban space are produced or remade through social practices (Watson 2006; Sennett 2008; de Certeau 1984). This body of literature more often describes the experiential aspects of friendliness (and the social meanings of citizenly interaction) much more than they discuss the 'politics' of friendliness – particularly as it relates to civic pride, cultural regeneration and urban policy. Given this, I want to raise some further points here about how friendliness and the friendly city reflect something much wider about emerging trends in urban society. I claim that the rise of the friendly city is symptomatic of broader changes in the civic and social life of cities, which in no small part is a consequence of people's increasing freedom of movement in a more global age. But alongside this – and as others have observed – I also think we can see the rise of the friendly city as an outcome of recent fears and anxieties around integration and cohesion in Britain; whereby friendliness has become a new umbrella term within public policy to help promote multicultural (or otherwise 'assimilationist') values and help rebuild community spirit and civic engagement in local areas.

On the Virtues of Friendliness

Strauss has talked about how friendly is ‘a wonderfully vague term, but drenched in connotation’ (1976: 196). It is with this kind of premise that I want to explore Nottingham’s claim to being a friendly city. For as I intimated earlier, the power of vague terms is that they can be moulded and mobilised for a variety of purposes. I have already described how we might understand friendliness as part of the lexical/imagistic landscape of cultural regeneration in cities – a policy word mobilised within the wider repertoire of post-industrialism (i.e. cities are no longer ‘industrial’, ‘economic’ – they are now (also) ‘friendly’, ‘cultural’, ‘creative’). It could well be that friendliness and the friendly city have emerged as a kind of post-industrial cliché, a hollow rhetoric to authenticate urban transformation. But aside from friendly being a suffix and organising principle for local government policy, friendliness and the friendly city have also been instrumental to and productive for new types of urban activity in many other ways – they have become part of the engine for economic growth and cultural innovation in post-industrial cities.

In Richard Florida’s (2002, 2012) thesis about creative cities, and the rise of the creative class, for instance, he describes how building a good ‘people climate’ in cities has become an essential feature of the new post-industrial cultural economy. In his formulation, the ability of cities to attract ‘talent’ (i.e. those who represent the leading edge of creative or technological expertise) is becoming increasingly dependent on cities being (or being seen to be) friendly, sociable, dynamic, diverse and open, and so on- such that what people want from cities is as much about people and people-centred place qualities (i.e. the ‘soft’ infrastructure of places) as it about buildings, housing, spaces, facilities and so on (i.e. the hard infrastructure of places). Creating both the image of, and the social infrastructure for, a new kind of creative and friendly city has, in Florida’s reading, become a critical feature of the new creative economy, and again a new battleline of competition between cities.

Bell’s (2007) discussion of the ‘hospitable city’ provides another angle with which to explain why friendliness has become an important feature of the new cultural economy. He talks about how forms of sociability and sociality are becoming embedded in new practices of consumption within cities, particularly within sites of commercial hospitality.

He argues that we are witnessing an increasing interaction between sites and spaces of consumption and the proliferation of new social and public values – such that ‘consuming’ is not, and perhaps never was, simply about consuming products and commodities, but is about having pleasurable, social and even civic experiences and interactions. Although Bell does not explicitly discuss these developments in terms of the emergence of the ‘friendly city’, he makes the point that commercialism and economic activity are becoming increasingly based in and facilitated through forms of urban sociality. Friendliness is good for business is the point here – but business is also a facilitator for new types of friendliness (see also: Amin 2008).

Cities are not all the same of course. And so we might ask, here, how does geography matter in all of this? Factors of size and scale may matter here in determining the extent and nature of how ‘friendly’ a city. Dagger (1997) has argued that the modern metropolis has grown too large, become too fragmented spatially and politically, to foster any authentic communal bonds between citizens. What was once a more embodied and valued friendship between engaged citizens, has become now mere ‘friendliness’ - a pretence of light sociability and inter-mingling between disengaged citizens or citizens who are simply willing to politely help others and help them along (see also: Furedi 2011). And so in Dagger’s more restrictive formulation, only within smaller political communities can a more authentic civic culture exist and thrive – which for Dagger, the Athenian city-state was the model archetype. Indeed, within the tradition of social and critical theory, tropes of ‘proximity’, ‘nearness’ and ‘intimacy’ are usually given to be the grounds in which true or authentic social relations are forged and civic exchanges made - which would tend to suggest that smaller geographical units (i.e. small cities and communities) are more likely to be friendly (Morgan 2009). But this may be a more ‘parochial’ type of friendliness that is reproduced here - one which is inward-looking and exclusionary towards those who are perceived as outsiders (Kearns and Forrest 2000).

In the British media, it instead tends to be larger cities like Glasgow, Liverpool and Newcastle (for instance) that have become known for their friendliness rather than smaller ones (but larger cities also become more known for their negative qualities as well) (Jack 2014). Perhaps it is simply that larger cities - for a variety of economic, political and cultural reasons - tend to be friendlier (or are perceived to be friendlier) to so-called outsiders (i.e. potential investors, tourists, school-leavers thinking about which university

to attend etc) because outsiders drive the very economic and social lifeblood of the city. Larger cities, in turn, also have more presence in the media, they have more resources and gravitas to promote themselves as friendly, and altogether have a much larger stake in promoting friendliness and promoting a friendly image. In other words, the power and influence of larger cities is based in and dependent upon developing strong outward relationships that require friendliness. Whereas, in smaller cities, this is perhaps less necessary, and friendliness instead turns inwards and more between locals than outsiders. In some cases, this friendliness, and the cumulative effect this has on building more parochial attitudes, might then be accompanied by a certain unfriendliness towards bigger cities (Featherstone 2012). But one should not assume an a priori moral hierarchy of 'bigger is better' here, as there are many instances where the reverse would be true; indeed more smaller places often depend upon attracting tourists and visitors to prop-up the economy.

Of course, in quite the opposite way, cities have historically been celebrated as sites in which people can also be anonymous, private and mobile. For those that desire to escape the shackles of the local village or town, the supposed 'narrow-mindedness' of close-knit communities (Taylor 2004; Tomaney 2013), it could be that people do not necessarily seek 'friendliness' when they come to a city; they may even want to escape it. Of course it depends on what kind of friendliness a city exhibits and embraces; and what kind of friendliness people want. While it may be in the interests of local government, marketing firms and business elites for tags such as friendliness to be promoted in cities, other people - perhaps those less familiar with the city - may interpret this friendliness from locals as too forward, too intrusive, or even too 'nicey-nicey' for people to take seriously. Alternatively, people might only want a light-touch friendliness (simple civility and manners) rather than overt friendship and community spirit (Morgan 2009).

Across these issues, we might also think about times when friendliness is not just the 'steady-state' of cities but is somehow required, demanded, or purposively mobilised for specific circumstances. Issues around multiculturalism in recent years, for example, have raised concerns over the need to promote more or 'better' integration and community cohesion in British towns and cities. Certainly since the Northern Riots of 2001 and more recently the England Riots of 2011, both local and national government have come under scrutiny to address what for many on the political right see as the 'failure of

multiculturalism' and the failure of different groups to integrate in British society (Jones 2013; Cameron 2014). Promoting friendliness might well be viewed as a way of promoting shared civic values in order to break down barriers of difference (the logic being, a more friendly society is a more integrated and cohesive society). These issues will be explored in more detail later in this chapter.

One final issue on the virtues of friendliness is that - when one city touts itself as being 'friendly', does it also imply that other cities elsewhere are not friendly? This raises other kinds of questions and tensions. For instance, compared to which city is it friendly, and do all cities have the same baseline of 'friendliness' by which to make equitable comparisons? What are the parameters and proxies for friendliness? Again the implied neutrality and impossibility of defining an absolute friendliness makes it a politically powerful tool because urban actors and institutions can all claim pride in a sense of friendliness without any real consideration of what that means, or what 'evidence' it is based in - making it difficult to measure or dispute. Such ambiguities may also discourage people from self-reflexively questioning what kind of friendliness exists in the city, and whether there are in fact deep social inequalities that exist beneath the city's friendly image. Indeed a friendly city may not be an equal city.

Why is Friendliness a Source of Pride?

A key question is, why be *proud* of friendliness? Beyond its more instrumental uses, why do people want to celebrate friendliness? What does it tell about the broader nature of urban society? It seems part of what is happening here is that friendliness is a new aspiration of and value in cities; it has become something which must be embraced, championed, recognised and appreciated (Jack 2014). It is not simply that friendliness has been co-opted by city marketing firms and city councils to rebrand cities, or emerged purely out of 'fear' over ethnic tensions, but friendliness is being vaunted and lauded at a much wider level in order to reclaim the 'social' in cities; to reinvest in the fabric of society. The key gear-change here is that rather than friendliness being just an everyday 'routine' custom or code of conduct, it is now celebrated and prized as an 'achievement' - because in many ways it dispels other narratives about how we live much more private, individual and digitally-augmented lives. Experiences of friendliness are perceived as more and

more 'remarkable' and 'warming', rather than something run-of-the-mill or expected (think of friends who have been on holiday who invariably say 'oh they were so friendly!' – as if they doubted they might not be). As Ash Amin remarks, friendliness and the ability of different cultures to 'rub along' in cities is a testament to how people continue to embrace a public, civic culture. It suggests urban society has somehow resisted being driven toward total privatism and individualism:

It is easy to forget how considerable a cultural and social achievement this is, given the myriad prospects of anomie, indifference, self-interest, opportunism and hostility among strangers in the contemporary city...of amassed diversity, continual and rapid flux, and increasing unfamiliarity. (Amin 2008: 9)

Being proud of and taking pride in friendliness is important precisely because it grounds people back into a more shared public existence. It resists or at least questions the idea that we live in an increasingly global society, detached from our neighbours and local communities, that digital technology is replacing physical social interaction, and that civicness and a sense of community spirit is a thing of the past. Being proud about a city's friendliness is a pride of revival in this regard, a pride of recuperation and rediscovery over those things some people fear to be lost, dormant or threatened somehow (Hunt 2004). And of course, in a more idealistic way, friendliness is important because people can actually observe friendliness in their everyday lives and feel empowered by it; they can experience it, share it, 'own it' even. Architecture, local parades, civic leaders making grand speeches - these things might be important for representing or embellishing a sense of civic pride in an area, but they are not things which can be felt, embodied and shared so easily among ordinary citizens. We might say this is a civic pride viewed and valued at 'street level', where it is people rather than buildings and elites that become sources and symbols of pride (Watson 2006).

But given all the appeal of friendliness and the rise of the friendly city, how does friendliness materialise and get experienced on the ground, within local, everyday contexts? Are there certain tensions or contradictions, do different types of communities experience friendliness in different ways, and what kinds of spaces and sites do friendly interactions in the city occur? And in what ways is a city like Nottingham uniquely friendly or unique in its friendliness?

The rest of this chapter will discuss how participants constructed Nottingham as a friendly city and how this has become a source of civic pride and civic identity. It is divided into 3 smaller sections; the first section will look at everyday notions of friendliness, the second section will look at issues of tolerance and cohesion, and the third section will discuss how ideas of friendliness and civic pride are produced by and facilitated through community centres in the city. I conclude by suggesting that friendliness is as much an ideal that civic actors aspire to as it is a reflection of the reality of civic life on the ground – but friendliness nevertheless remains an important concept and value for how people in Nottingham understand themselves as an urban community, and how people attempt to negotiate difference and inequality.

Everyday Friendliness

As I mentioned at the very start of this chapter, friendliness in Nottingham was identified by participants in two broad respects; one, in terms of Nottingham's everyday sense of friendliness amongst its citizens; and two, in terms of its sense of tolerance and cohesion between different groups and communities. The first point to make here is that while some of the themes raised above about friendliness and the rise of the friendly city did surface within some of the interviews, it would be fair to say that most people did not describe their views on Nottingham's friendliness in such grand, strategic or philosophical ways. Participants did not talk about the city's friendliness because they thought it was part of Nottingham's post-industrial (cultural) transformation as a city; or that it was strategically important for the city council to uphold an image of Nottingham as a friendly city; or that friendliness was some kind of recuperated altruism in the civic life of the city. However, there were certainly elements of people in Nottingham valuing a good 'people climate' in the city and a feeling that the city should celebrate its 'down-to-earthness'. Themes of belonging, inter-city rivalries and issues around community cohesion and tolerance also featured across the interviews. There was not therefore a complete disjuncture between the literature and people's personal experiences on the ground in Nottingham - but often the tone and register was rather different, and rather less strategic and expansive in its outlook (which I think is part of what pride is about – being humble in one's pride). Let us

now look some examples of how participants addressed this everyday friendliness in the context of Nottingham.

For Michael, a lecturer and community volunteer from Sneinton, it was ‘Nottingham people’ that he was most proud of about the city. He felt that in Nottingham,

“people have time for you, they are generally friendly and personable and interested, and there’s some kind of genuineness about the people, rather than anything kind of special about the fabric of the city - it’s that that makes me the most [proud], Nottingham people. Think they’re a good bunch of people. So I’d be proud to be counted as...you know, I’ve only lived here relatively recently, but you know. I’m happy to say I’m from Nottingham.”

Here friendliness is expressed through descriptors such as people having ‘time for you’, people are ‘personable’ and exhibit ‘some kind of genuineness’. Through experiencing these things in Nottingham Michael feels a sense of belonging in the city – that he is ‘proud to be counted’ (presumably as a citizen, or local). Again it may possible to question what some of these terms mean (for example: what is the ‘genuineness’ he is referring to?, who is doing the ‘counting’ when he claims he is ‘proud to be counted’?) and to what extent are Michael’s experiences reflective of the whole city, or just of particular people and areas. As I related to in my discussion earlier about different qualities of friendliness, he seems wary that friendliness might not always be genuine – that it might be fake, false or strategic in some way (Morgan 2009). For Michael, Nottingham people exhibit ‘genuineness’ in this regard, and this reflects an important point about pride. I referred to this in Chapter 2 as the politics of difference and distinction – that pride is often expressed in ways that assert difference and distinction, and (often) moral superiority, over other things, other people and places, as though people want to make it known that their pride is an *authentic* (worthy) pride (Smith 1998; Tracy et al 2010). So in that sense, it is as though Michael wants to confirm the authenticity of his pride (i.e. that he is basing it on worthy things). Michael also wants to claim his pride is not because of anything ‘special about the fabric of the city’. As to what this fabric might be is unclear, but it perhaps reiterates the point about how we are witnessing the emergence of a more populist, people-centred understanding of civic pride – where it is not the symbolism of buildings, the beauty of the urban landscape, or the great achievements of the city’s leaders that defines civic pride –

but the everyday attitudes and behaviours of citizens themselves (Jack 2014).

Ben, a local student from Edwalton (a suburb to the south of the city), similarly took most pride in the people and the ‘feel’ of the city as it relates to people; qualities which for him register above and beyond a sense of the city’s history or achievements. Asked what he was most proud of, he remarked:

“I would say history, but I think just the attitudes you get around the place. I don’t think it’s pretentious or snobby, doesn’t feel dangerous. The sense or aura around it, it’s the best of everything I think.”

In this response, friendliness is not explicitly referenced but is implied in the notion of the ‘attitudes you get around the place’, which in Ben’s experience feels neither ‘pretentious’ nor ‘snobby’. He also feels safe in the city, which is another critical aspect of belonging – an almost taken for granted part of what civic pride is or is about (see also here: Chapter 8). The ‘sense or aura’ Ben evokes might also refer to what Bell and de Shalit (2011) talk about as the local ‘spirit’ of cities, the kind of ethos which gives a city its unique civic or cultural identity. Again, an appeal to history (‘I would say history’) is raised as though it is important, but Ben then offsets this in order to say something more populist, down to earth and humble.

Simon, another community worker from Sneinton, similarly reflected upon what he was most proud of about Nottingham:

“I love the people, I do love the people. We’re kind of half...We’re very friendly, we are northern really. I’m proud of being northern actually. I’ve got no issue of calling us a bit further north than we actually are, I don’t mind. Cause I think that brings a friendliness...You go to capital cities and people for me have lost this sense of identity...”

The way that Simon constructs Nottingham as ‘northern’ here is an important part of how some participants wanted to position or reconstruct Nottingham’s regional identity – for in his terms northerness implies a regional friendliness that capital cities (i.e. London!) apparently lack. This regional sense of civic pride will be discussed and critiqued in much

more detail in Chapter 7. The imagery, tone and implied meaning of Simon's response resonates well with pride (the emotion) on a range of levels – it speaks to Simon's sense of self-worth and integrity, as well as a certain inflated confidence in Nottingham's virtues. With this he harbours a kind of subtle cynicism of other places, as though to suggest 'well we're friendly and proud here – not like other places'. This is where pride and friendliness have a slightly unfriendly or competitive edge lurking beneath the surface; in expressing a sense of pride about their local identity, people feel the need to call out and shame other identities. This exposes a subtle tension between how civic pride is expressed in both humble and assertive (or self-righteous) ways. The trope of 'we're better than London' features again in this thesis, and is certainly not something which is unique to Nottingham; inverting central-provincial relations is prevalent across many towns and cities in England (Ehland 2007). Simon seems assured that Nottingham has secured this 'northern friendliness', even as a city that is technically located in the East Midlands. He is happy 'calling [Nottingham] a bit further north than we actually are'. As I reflect upon later, this suggests how certain (skewed) regional imaginaries are often appropriated for self-affirming reasons, even if they obscure a range of other tensions around urban image, regional prosperity and the paranoia of 'being forgotten' as a city.

Believing in and feeling part of this everyday friendliness is clearly important for many participants – it shapes their sense of civic pride and civic identity. But perhaps this friendliness is also underwritten by a more competitive and self-aggrandising spirit – a tendency for people to claim their distinctiveness over and above other places. These qualities speak to wider narratives about how urban populations are attempting to recuperate the social within cities – proving to both themselves and others that civic pride and a sense of common endeavour are still alive (Amin 2008). It is not quite then a civic pride of urban image, municipal autonomy and grand ceremony, but something going on in the social fabric of civic life that people take most pride in and want to express to others. As another participant, Geoff (student), put it 'from the point of view of belonging and identity you need something smaller...So when I come back on a Friday, I get off the train, I walk round the corner, I go into the Vic [a pub in Beeston] and I will guarantee that I will know at least 5 people in there and they'll all say hello, and that means quite a lot'. We can begin to see therefore how civic pride and civic identity intersect with what Karner and Parker (2011: 269) call the 'the minutiae of people's biographies and daily lives, their memories, feelings, fears and hopes, their everyday interactions and (complex)

solidarities'. We must be attentive however to how these more everyday notions of civic pride and civic identity are framed by and made through complex regional and class-based imaginations of the city, which may distort a sense of what the city is really like, or which may serve to conceal the uneven experiences people have of living in the city. I now want to explore this further in relation to Nottingham's sense of tolerance and cohesion.

Celebrating Tolerance and Cohesion in Nottingham:

While most participants claimed pride in Nottingham's sense of friendliness at a more general level, for some participants (particularly councillors and council officers) it was a more specific sense of tolerance and cohesion that they felt pride in, and something which they felt the city should celebrate. They mainly referred to this in terms of different ethnicities and communities getting along in the city. But it was at times unclear exactly what was meant by these terms tolerance and cohesion, and why specifically they were a source of pride.

As I intimated earlier, tolerance and cohesion are highly contested terms and the subject of much debate within geography. For some geographers, and indeed for some politicians, tolerance and cohesion are highly positive and progressive concepts - keystones of British democracy and British identity (Cameron 2014; Wind-Cowie and Gregory 2011). For others they are values to be treated with caution, and have arisen not as foundational principles of modern society but as a result of, and as an antidote to, modern society's struggle to accommodate and value difference and diversity (Jones 2013; Valentine 2008). Tolerance is usually given to mean tolerating that which one does not agree with, believe in or subscribe to - which as scholars like Frank Furedi (2011) have shown can mean different things according to different schools of thought. On the one hand, and with some level of simplification here, there is a notion of tolerance as akin to a respectful acceptance or polite indifference to that which is different or other. Tolerance of this kind might translate – in an urban setting – into, for example, a peaceful settlement of ethnic segregation in a city; one that is not conflictual, but equally lacks any sense of co-operation and solidarity between different communities. On the other hand there is the school of thought that sees tolerance as a more much more progressive idea based in valuing,

appreciating, managing and negotiating difference, and building a more plural and inclusive society. A city that espouses this kind of tolerance might be one in which there is active co-operation and inter-mixing between different ethnicities or communities; where cultural conflict is not only accepted and begrudgingly resolved, but embraced as a part of a democracy – as a way of confronting difference and finding common ground. Valentine (2008) reminds us that this kind of tolerance might sound positive but often depends upon uneven power relations - between the ‘tolerator’ and the ‘tolerated’. In other words, it is a question of ‘who is asking who to tolerate what’, and the context in which tolerance is seen to be important. As Thomassen notes (2006: 440) tolerance by definition is in effect ‘to tolerate what you object to’, which is somewhat of a paradox, in that it is both a problem to overcome and an object to achieve. It is within this paradoxical meaning that some have argued tolerance claims a potentially productive or progressive concept, because it allows people to confront difference, otherness and contradiction, rather than simply avoid or pacify it (Hume 2012; Sennett 2008).

But how then do people claim a sense of civic pride in tolerance? What is the basis of this tolerance? Is it a pride based in a mutual acceptance of difference in a city, or does it go further in the way Sennett (2008) and others talk about in terms of being proud that the city *embraces* difference and conflict? There has been little work to date on this precise relationship between civic pride and tolerance. Fortier’s (2005, 2008) and Wind-Cowie and Gregory’s (2011) work on nationalism has pointed to how tolerance has become a source of British identity and pride, and that there is a reciprocal (reinforcing) relationship between the two (particularly as it relates to people’s involvement in the community). But again, as both contend, certain narratives can exclude alternative discourses and mask inequalities; both also show how there is a certain level of ambiguity attached to pride, particularly when this pride is based in, or grounded upon, a past (imperial) culture of intolerance and discrimination. This turns on the question of whether being proud of a nation or a city for example brings with it a certain responsibility or burden to acknowledge or confront a more shameful past. Can we be proud of the present and ‘tolerate’ of the past, or should we seek to express our intolerance of the past in order to be more proud of the present?

The term cohesion (particular as it relates to social or community cohesion) meanwhile tends to describe the nature and quality of the relationships between different groups and

communities. It is in some ways the spatial expression and effect of tolerance; a state in which people 'cohere' (locally, regionally, nationally) around common values and identities. Forest and Kearns (2000: 997) define a 'socially cohesive society [as] one in which the members share common values which enable them to identify and support common aims and objectives, and share a common set of moral principles and codes of behaviour through which to conduct their relations with one another'. In this normative sense, a cohesive society is not one which renders invisible people's differences (i.e. other identities or values), but values and sees them as part of a wider whole (see also: Wind-Cowie and Gregory 2011). In a later paper, Forrest and Kearns (2001: 2127) describe social cohesion in less idealistic terms, as something which is about 'getting by and getting on at the more mundane level of everyday life'. Like tolerance, cohesion is recognised as both a 'problem' and a 'solution' in British society. Particularly after the Cantle Report (2001) was released in the aftermath of the 2001 Northern Riots (which broke out primarily in Bradford, Oldham and Burnley) cohesion has been high on the political and policy agenda, and debates about community cohesion have raised both hopes and fears (see: Gaffikin and Morrissey 2011; Jones 2013). Indeed many city councils, like Nottingham City Council, now have a 'Community Cohesion' team of some kind, but these often serve the purpose of policing and preventing anti-cohesion and anti-social behaviours as much as championing some of the values Kearns and Forrest talk about. Community cohesion debates have also folded into wider debates about immigration, the rise of right-wing nationalism, religious fundamentalism and growing social and economic inequalities in British society. High-profile events such as the 2001 Northern Riots, the July 7/7 bombings and the England Riots of 2011 in particular, however, have heightened this policy drive to tackle, as much as promote, community cohesion in British cities and communities.

Civic pride has been championed as one value which communities might use or promote to help build 'better' or 'more' community cohesion and tolerance. Cantle's (2001: 19) report for example suggested that 'it should be seen as both legitimate and desirable to resource the promotion of new values, such as pride in a diverse community'. A follow up report by the Commission for Integration and Cohesion – called 'Our Shared Future' (2007: 152) - commented on the importance of 'promoting civic pride and a sense of belonging by using local people as cohesion champions and role models'. A report that looked into the impact of the 2011 riots, also suggested how local councils and communities showed

qualities of ‘civic pride’ and ‘community resolve’ in dealing with the riots and their aftermath (DCLG 2013). But was this a dormant civic pride that always there within local councils and communities, or did civic pride *only* emerge in response to, and as a result of, this conflict? As I go on to discuss shortly, and return to a number of times throughout this thesis, understanding what the precise causes and effects of civic pride, tolerance and cohesion are can be tricky to untangle, and presents a significant challenge for policy-makers.

Nottingham’s City Council’s Community Cohesion Strategy (2007) for example points to the role of pride as a condition of, as well as a (partial) route to, improving community cohesion:

A feature of cohesive communities is that there is a feeling of pride in a local area and people have a strong sense of belonging. Some of the ways that these perceptions develop is through local people having a voice and being able to influence decision making about their neighbourhood... Community action, whether its purpose is to improve quality of life in an area or to bring people together to celebrate, help to improve pride and a sense of belonging.

(Nottingham City Council 2007: 8)

The conceptual relationship between words such as pride, belonging, community action, ‘having a voice’ and so on, related to in this quote, in fact conjures up much of what many civic actors in Nottingham understand in the term ‘civic pride’, and what it means as a kind of political philosophy and social practice (for more on this see Chapter 8). As I have already claimed, civic pride often depends on a belief that the city is a shared achievement, with shared beliefs and ideals – and so it seems logical, and perhaps unsurprising, that people in Nottingham would talk about cohesion in reference to civic pride in these ways. People are proud that there is *civic* pride in Nottingham. But while there has been a certain rhetorical push for values such as pride and civic pride to be promoted within this community cohesion agenda, very rarely are these terms adequately defined or explained within the policies themselves. Cattle’s reference to pride posits it as a ‘value’, something to promote through resources, while the Nottingham City Council quote refers to a ‘feeling of pride’ as something linked with a ‘sense of belonging’. Often there is some conflation and confusion therefore between whether pride is an input or output of community

cohesion policy. This reflects much of the conceptual ambiguity of pride and something which policy-makers have struggled to neatly reconcile (Wind-Cowie and Gregory 2011). It could be assumed that what is typically meant by promoting pride and civic pride within these types of community cohesion agendas is that people need to *take pride* in the welfare and wellbeing of their community (i.e. look after it, resolve community issues etc) and that then makes people *feel* more pride about their community, and subsequently take more pride in it. But again further questions arise here. For example, to what scale does the intervention of pride refer to here; is civic pride the same as ‘multicultural pride’; and what potential hazards are there to promoting pride? I will return to these questions throughout this thesis.

While ideas of tolerance and cohesion were championed as key sources of pride in Nottingham, and something the council in particular wanted to highlight, rarely was the reverse point made by participants - that civic pride itself could shape and influence perceptions and experiences of tolerance and cohesion (for example in the way that the Community Cohesion Strategy (2007) suggests). There was less awareness of how civic pride could somehow *lead to* a better appreciation of difference and diversity and foster a greater sense of cohesion and tolerance.

Nevertheless, the general tone of what participants claimed pride in was that not only were different migrant and ethnic communities in Nottingham generally well-integrated in the city, but there was a valuing of different cultures and lifestyles that made it an altogether friendly and inclusive city. One councillor, Terry, thought that ‘tolerance is Nottingham’s greatest asset’; while Henry, a former Sheriff and Lord Mayor in Nottingham, went further to say:

“Most cities are tolerant but we’re accepting, and that’s the much better. We embrace each other. All right there’s a long way to go and I’m not naïve and I’m not a fool, but there’s very little problems racially compared to the Oldhams and the many other cities that have had huge problems. We do mix much better, and we’re much more accepting of each other, and each other’s differences as well, we value each other. That’s something to be very proud of.”

Henry seems to show an awareness here of the difference between mere tolerance and

tolerance as an embrace - or a positive 'accepting' - of difference (Jones 2013; Furedi 2011). He feels Nottingham stands out as a place where people 'mix much better'. Again, like many other participants, Henry feels it is important to stress the distinctiveness of the city's virtues – 'we're not *merely this, we're that*'. While the overarching message is positive, the basic power inequality still remains – it is Nottingham (and the majority white citizens) who (seem to) have tolerated and accepted such groups and taken pride in this toleration (Valentine 2008). But it is not simply the council who feel strongly about the city's cohesive and tolerant identity; it seems the city as a whole has embraced these ideals. This is corroborated by recent Nottingham Citizen Surveys (e.g. 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014) which show that of the 2000 city residents surveyed each year approximately 90% of people – across numerous years - agreed or definitely agreed that 'people of different backgrounds get along well together'². A review of the Nottingham Citizen Survey in 2011 commented that:

Nottingham is often considered to be a relatively cohesive and tolerant city. It has not experienced the disturbances and unrest witnessed in other areas where diversity and immigration have become big local issues. Rather, Nottingham has a history of encouraging, embracing and celebrating diversity and diverse cultural identities. This is reflected in the growth and popularity of cultural festivals, in the long standing investment in community facilities for communities of interest and the range of organisations that exist to support and represent different communities. (Nottingham City Council 2011: 39)

The implication here is that Nottingham can claim pride in both its avoidance of disturbances and unrest witnessed in other areas, and in the level enthusiasm and support for cultural diversity in the city. The latter is expressed or made evident through the number of cultural festivals the city hosts, and the wider community infrastructure the city supports. A number of participants felt that cultural events such as the Caribbean Festival, the Riverside Festival, Nottinghamshire Pride, Goose Fair (see Participation Observation 2)

² The Nottingham Citizen Surveys contain a number of other of civic pride-type indicators such as: the percentage of people who would 'speak highly about Nottingham' and the percentage of people who would 'recommend Nottingham as a place to live'. The 2014 Nottingham Citizen Survey showed that 79% of those surveyed would speak highly about Nottingham and 92% of those surveyed would recommend Nottingham as a place to live (within that, 59% 'a great deal' and 33% 'to some extent'). (Nottingham City Council 2015)

and Light Night were important for building a sense of identity in the city and promoting values of tolerance and cohesion. Many of these events, with perhaps the exception of Goose Fair, would be found in many other cities of course - so there are not distinctly 'Nottingham' events. But this does not take away from the fact that they produce, as much as reflect, highly localised meanings and values that embellish people's sense of pride.

It is important to observe how in both the ex-Lord Mayor's quote and the city council's survey review above, civic pride is expressed through Nottingham being constructed as distinctive and different to other places. Nottingham has achieved what other places have not, or at least it is not suffered the same kinds of problems as other places have (which may suggest it is as much a positive relief as it is pride). Such a message once again builds into the friendly city narrative, and it is a message that the city council can use to demonstrate its efficacy in government (Jones 2013). But what contradictions and tensions exist within this narrative? While this virtuous image of the city as tolerant and cohesive might hold at a broad level, how do these values manifest themselves within local communities and in local civic spaces in the city? And how do friendliness, tolerance and cohesion manifest themselves within and across different demographic and ethnic groups? The next section examines participants' perceptions of community centres in Nottingham and explores how community centres help produce and mediate forms of civic pride. I show that different cultural positions and power relationships help produce, mediate and conceal different types of friendliness, tolerance and cohesion, and that the friendly city narrative may not be quite as inclusive as it first may seem.

Community Centres and the Politics of Diversity:

To end this first analysis chapter, I now look at how ideas of friendliness, tolerance and cohesion become manifest in and through community centres within Nottingham and how civic pride relates to day to day experiences of local civic life. By changing the scale from a city-wide scale to a more localised scale, we can begin to examine how these broader narratives about Nottingham as a friendly city actually relate to people's daily lives, and whether the image reflects the (lived) reality. The analysis here serves to make a much

broader point about civic pride - which is how civic pride and civic identity are experienced differently by different people, and that social inequalities can be both hidden by civic pride discourses, but also in some ways reproduced through particular kinds of civic attitudes and behaviours (or non-engagement). In this sense, civic pride is reflective of and generative for wider urban processes and structural inequalities. What follows therefore complements other literature within critical urban geography around social inequalities and the politics of civic identity at the local (everyday) level; but adds a more emotional lens and analytical framework for how these processes are experienced (Jayne 2011; Bennett and Alexander 2013).

As a city with significant pockets of deprivation, community spaces and centres are important to people's general wellbeing and are sites in and through which local civic life happens and is fostered. The importance of these spaces and sites is in many ways far removed from issues about urban image, municipal autonomy, and the rise of the post-industrial city; they represent spaces of local engagement and interaction, and for some, build a more everyday sense of civic pride. The three community spaces I want to focus on here are: the Arkwright Meadows Community Garden in the Meadows, the Indian Community Centre in Carrington and the Pakistan Centre in St Ann's. As is typical of community centres, these sites accommodate a range of uses: from providing meeting spaces for local interest and support groups, to providing office spaces for community workers, to providing various 'drop-in' services (such as legal advice, counselling etc.), and in each case they have become venues for local entertainment, leisure activities and social gatherings. All three sites support a range of users groups, but perhaps cater for (or are needed most by) some of the city's more marginal, excluded and vulnerable groups - such as refugees, asylum seekers, women in crisis or distress, the elderly and a range of ethnic and religious groups. In many ways these are spaces to observe civic life and civic pride in action, but equally they reflect the very nature of how urban cultures and economies come to serve some groups more than others (Ward 2003; Watson 2006).

The Arkwright Meadows Community Gardens project was built on reclaimed land in the centre of Meadows housing estate, to the south of the city-centre. The site has a clubhouse (with offices and meeting rooms), a range of flower and vegetable plots, a greenhouse, places sit and relax, and an outdoor Tandoor oven - which, I was told, was built for local Indian women within the estate to use for making bread and holding cookery

lessons. Much in the spirit of civic pride, the gardens are adorned with variety of artworks commissioned by local artists and school children, and since its inception in 2003, the centre has developed a strong ethos of community engagement. With funding from Nottingham City Council, National Lottery and the European Social Fund, it hosts a variety of cultural events in the year, as well as yoga, art classes and kids fun days, and has been awarded various 'In Bloom' (floral) awards at both local and national levels of competition.

In many ways, one could regard this centre as the physical and social expression of local civic pride, a site very much based in an ethic of shared belonging, participation and ownership - in an area that historically has suffered from high levels of deprivation. It shows how local people can come together to reclaim urban space for civic or communal purposes. Thus the website reads that the Gardens were 'created by local Meadows residents coming together to transform part of this disused, unloved, rubbish-strewn playing field into a green space for the local people to use...Local residents now enjoy the benefits of a safe space for family events, place of learning and opportunity to buy freshly grown fruit and vegetables (Arkwright Meadows Community Gardens 2015).

It may of course be a 'Meadows civic pride' as much of a Nottingham civic pride, but it has become well-known across the city and has even featured on the national BBC Breakfast Show (in 2014). However, the committee member I interviewed there, a woman called Irene, who was originally from Dublin but lived in Nottingham for over 30 years, did not agree it was necessarily a sense of civic pride that defined the spirit of the work at the gardens. More specifically it did not define her sense of why she was there. For her pride was more a negative term - a self-aggrandising and self-important word; or at least more of an afterthought, something which comes after community engagement. Indeed a number of other participants thought that pride had a number of negative connotations (related to arrogance, jingoism etc.) and were reluctant to claim 'pride' in things that not were entirely of their own responsibility or doing (for extended discussion of this, see Chapter 8). Instead Irene preferred to talk about the gardens as simply a 'worthwhile' project to be involved in; something that was doing 'good things' for the community. Thus, for her, there was no clear sense that civic pride framed the ideals and aspirations of the Gardens – rather the Gardens were simply responding to community needs and desires (and creating a friendly, tolerant and cohesive space for the community). Pride, if anything, was simply a bonus 'feel-good factor' that emerged out of trying to build

community engagement and wellbeing. I asked Irene why she became involved at the gardens and whether it was out of a sense of pride for the Meadows, to which she responded:

“I mean why am I involved with the gardens, I don’t know really. I came down, I liked what was happening, somebody said to me do you want to join the committee, I joined, and here I am, 8 or 9 years later. So things often happen by accident or chance. It’s not I will go out and do something wonderful and be part of this community and be proud and so on, that’s not often why things happen...I don’t think you need to say well let’s do this and then we’ll be really proud of it. That’s nonsense isn’t it. You don’t go into things to say we’ll do this because...you do it cause you’ll improve people’s lives, it’ll provide more housing, it’ll give people a bit of green space, you do it for all kinds of reasons. And if at the end it’s something really good, people are jumping up and down and being proud of it, then marvellous, it’s a bonus.”

This quote highlights the subjective nature of pride and civic pride. One could argue here that for all the policy discourse around promoting values such as pride in local communities, this perhaps does not always register with how people actually engage with civic life on the ground (cf. Wind-Cowie and Gregory 2011). But Irene’s comments may not in fact reflect a substantive qualm with pride or civic pride per se – but rather a way of showing (to me, the interviewer) that she was not overly ‘proud’ or willing to entertain anything grand about what the gardens were achieving. It was therefore a particular interpretation of the word pride that she took issue with; in part, I think, so she could feel ethically in the right place about her role and relationship with the garden or to show that she was not ‘consumed’ by any self or civic-based pride (even if to me, to outsiders, she was in fact highly civic minded and clearly wanted the best for the Meadows). Following Smith’s (1998) conceptualisation of pride, we could suggest that Irene, like a number of other participants that ‘dis-identified’ with pride, is in fact quite a ‘proud’ person in the sense that she expects highly of herself but wants to represent herself in humble ways (that is, she cares about her integrity, how she is perceived by others, so reverts to humbleness *out of a sense of pride*). Alternatively, some people may simply feel more comfortable (and more confident) talking positively and proudly about where they live when they are away from home (physically somewhere else, on holiday say), or when they

are talking to someone who lives outside of the city, who knows little of the city – because in this way, one’s pride might be less questioned or scrutinised by those who know little of the area.

Another case of local community life that I observed led me to question how far this sense of friendliness, tolerance and cohesion in Nottingham translated equitably to different communities. The case in point was around the theme of eating and inter-ethnic mixing. The Indian Community Centre in Carrington and the Pakistan Centre in St Ann’s both have popular weekly luncheons attended by local people in the area (of all ethnic backgrounds), where they serve relatively cheap South Asian-style dinners such as curries. Eating, cooking and sharing food have often been championed as ways in which people can engage with their local community and build relationships with (cultural) ‘others’ (Bell 2007; Hollows et al 2013). Encounters of this kind can help build community spirit and suggest how ‘connections often arise from mundane transactions and can produce deep-seated emotional investments in the locality’ (Karner and Parker 2011: 368).

Alan, a writer for *LeftLion* magazine, regarded these types of spaces/settings as important for civic pride because they allow for different cultures to mix and develop bonds – they helped in his words ‘break down barriers and make relationships so much more possible’. But another participant, Imran, who has Pakistani heritage and volunteers at the Pakistan Centre in St Ann’s, said that although he was proud that Nottingham ‘enjoyed good race relations’, such mixing was often only superficial:

“Now you talk about this, do you think they come cause they necessarily want to integrate with the Pakistani community? They come for the food...It does, it gives you an opportunity, [but] whether you take that opportunity is a different matter.”

Imran went on to say the Pakistan Centre was under increasing pressure to fund its services and functions, and that he and the management board were considering extending their luncheon service to a fully-fledged take-away service in order to raise income. Imran was indignant about the fact that the Pakistani community was being pressured to integrate into the ‘mainstream’ in Nottingham, and use more municipal (rather than more ethnic-based) services, which he felt was a compromise on their culture and faith. For Imran, integration was being favoured over and above multiculturalism

(Jones 2013).

Imran's comments do suggest that we might need to problematise not only the effectiveness of food to facilitate civic engagement, but also how the friendly city of Nottingham (quite literally) serves different people in different (exclusionary) ways. As Bell (2007: 15) and Flowers and Swan (2012) note, multicultural eating might just be a 'shallow way of relating to the other' that is not so much about developing friendly relations with other cultures, but rather a more self-centred pleasure in consuming ethnic food (see also: hooks 1992). But as Imran says it 'gives you an opportunity', which may in fact be a rare one for many people who tend to live and interact in fairly narrow ethnic circles. As Narayan (1997: 180) notes 'shallow, commodified and consumerist ...it seems preferable at least to the complete lack of acquaintance'. A more radical kind of multicultural politics might even assert here that *limiting* such encounters with others to more fleeting practices of eating, or to cultural events and performances, is precisely what multiculturalism is - it is the resolution that difference exists, boundaries can be made, but these boundaries can be porous (this is how I think Imran viewed it). In effect, this means tolerance and cohesion can, in some sense, be simply 'enjoyed' every now and then by different communities, but within a set of more or less clearly defined cultural parameters. It is primarily the *direction* of who enjoys what, under what structural conditions these exchanges occur, and what cultural differences cannot be shared or compromised, that determines the political nature of what is expected and experienced in these civic interactions. This example poses an important question for civic pride – that is, how far, on a day to day basis, do these ideas of friendliness, tolerance and cohesion that people in Nottingham claim pride in actually become enacted and experienced meaningfully, and what kind of multicultural politics do these practices serve?

A similar impression of inequality and exclusion came from Daphne. Daphne works with BME and faith communities in Hyson Green (to the north of the city centre), and is a strong advocate for women's issues. In her view, community life in Nottingham had changed since the 1960s and 70s when she was growing up. What she remembered was a greater sense of community in Nottingham during her childhood, where "everybody cared for each other no matter what nationality or diversity background you came from and everybody cared for each other's children". Now, only in churches and communities of faith does she perceive such spirit still existing. She reflected how 'before' (in the 'good old days') people

could knock on their neighbour's door and ask to borrow some milk, and "people didn't feel ashamed" (Daphne). But now, her feeling was, people would not dare. It would instead be considered rude to do such a thing as ask to borrow milk (see for discussion on neighbourly etiquette: Morgan 2009). She also felt there was a general lack of wealth and status for BME communities in Nottingham compared to other white counterparts – which, as other participants recognised, could prevent people identifying with the city and feeling part of its civic culture.

Kearns and Forest (2000) suggest that we should acknowledge how a variety of practices and experiences of social cohesion exist within the city, and that these are based in and produced through different forms of inclusion and exclusion. These practices are both influenced by and reflective of a range of social, economic and political inequalities that privilege some communities more than others. It has been shown for example by recent demographic data that Black and Black British citizens in Nottingham have a significantly higher job seeker allowance (JSA) claimant rate than other ethnic groups in the city, and by national standards (see Figure 4).

Figure 4 - Unemployment Figures by Ethnic Group for 2014

Ethnic Group	Nottingham		Greater Nottingham	England
	Number	Rate %	Rate %	Rate %
All People	10,845	5.1	3.4	2.5
White	7,125	4.6	2.9	2.2
Mixed	530	4.6	4.3	3.3
Asian or Asian British	585	2.4	2.2	2.2
Black or Black British	1,250	8.2	7.7	5.9
Chinese or Other Ethnic Group	320	3.6	3.2	3.5
Prefer not to say/ unknown	1,025			

Source: ONS 2014 (nottingham.insight.org.uk) - Rates calculated using 2011 Census ethnicity

As Wind-Cowie and Gregory (2011) suggest, unemployment can significantly undermine people's sense of pride (in their community, in their city, in their nation), in part because - as one participant, Catherine, reminded me - it reduces their sense of self-worth and

confidence. For as she put it (paraphrasing slightly), ‘why would they feel proud - what has the place done for them?’ In other words, if people do not feel valued *by* the city, they may not value the city themselves. The table above demonstrates Nottingham’s high unemployment levels relative to both Greater Nottingham and England as a whole. Notably Asian or Asian British people in Nottingham have almost half the claimant rate as White people in Nottingham, but that Black or Black British claimants have a significantly higher claimant rate than both. How these inequalities might serve to damage or undermine people’s sense of civic pride is difficult to determine; but it certainly reflects an uneven picture of Nottingham – one which reflects an economically un-cohesive society.

Daphne’s impressions of discrimination were partly fuelled by a recent report commissioned by the Nottinghamshire Police Force (released in July 2013, a couple of months before I interviewed her) that suggested many Black and Black British people in Nottingham perceived the police to be ‘institutionally racist’, particularly in terms of the proportion of Black people who are stopped and searched on the street (see: BBC News 2013). Daphne suggested that ethnic minorities needed to stand up to forms of discrimination and actually use a sense of pride as a tool for empowerment,

“As ethnic minorities sometimes we feel, we’ve voiced issues and concerns and perhaps they’re not actually taken seriously... That’s why it’s best if you can get to know who you are yourself, as an individual and push forward with what you want and demand what you want with pride. Not with arrogance, or anything like that, cause obviously there’s a way to present ourselves as well, but we do need to voice our concerns and opinions quite strongly and firmly.”

In this way, and in contrast to Irene from the Meadows Community Gardens, pride was something that inspired or guided Daphne’s approach to civic life, and something she regarded as important for herself and others. She claims that people need to ‘know who they are’ and ‘demand what they want with pride’. Pride is therefore not an evaluative construct related to what people are proud of, but a subjective value or resource (a principle of self-worth) with which one might challenge the status quo and empower others. Pride has often been recognised as a motivating force and banner for social change and empowerment throughout history, but this tends to be under-recognised and under-emphasised in community cohesion literature and policy (e.g. Wind-Cowie and

Gregory 2011; Smith 1998). Indeed less tends to be made of pride's *resistive* capacities to challenge civic cultures and empower individuals and (minority) communities to assert themselves at a more civic level (though see: Fortier 2008; McKenzie 2012). Using forms of pride to resist, rebel and transform the civic landscape, as I show in the next chapter, perhaps resonates more with Nottingham's identity as a 'bolshie' city, than with Nottingham's friendliness, tolerance or cohesion. Daphne, in the end, expressed particular pride for Nottingham in the fact that a recent Lord Mayor of Nottingham was a woman from with a Caribbean background (Merlita Bryan), who like her, was recently named as one of the 'Nottingham Women of Substance' by the Nottingham Soroptimist International Group.

This example shows how broader civic pride narratives may once again be contested and be shown to be experienced differently by different groups (see also here: Participant Observation 2). It shows that discourses of friendliness, tolerance and cohesion have a 'tacit obligation to remain unproblematic' (Berlant 2004: 7), but often in ways that hide deeper social inequalities and forms of exclusion. In fact, as I discussed earlier, it is implicit within the very meanings and ideals of friendliness, tolerance and cohesion that certain inequalities and exclusions are necessary – these terms depend upon and reify difference because difference is what they must overcome. So while Nottingham in many ways appears to be a friendly city (and its Nottingham Citizen Surveys to some extent back this up as true), this image is also distortive and misleading – it can both hide and, as a result, help reproduce, a range of social inequalities and exclusions (Bridges 1994).

Conclusion

The friendly city narrative in Nottingham is in many ways representative of the changing nature of cities and the changing trajectory of civic pride. Put simply, what Nottingham highlights is the increasingly 'human route' cities are taking in terms of civic pride; that what people are most proud of about cities is not anything to do with buildings, history, industry or local heroes, but ordinary people and the social fabric of the city (Jack 2014; Wind-Cowie and Gregory 2011). For in pride terms, this is what gives people a sense of self-worth and self-esteem about themselves and their community; it fosters a sense of

belonging; it dispels the notion that the local has been lost to global, or that community has been lost to privatism or commercialism. Friendliness is not just what people are proud of, but is part of how people 'do' civic pride.

However, while the image of the friendly city may be a powerful and shared one, and something which local government might use to sell the city or advocate a particular policy initiative, there is a large degree of ambiguity and nuance in terms of how people perceive and experience friendliness, tolerance and cohesion, and how these qualities relate to a sense of civic pride and civic identity. For some the friendly city image relates to the character of Nottingham people and the everyday ways in which people interact with each other as citizens. For others, the friendly city image is about claiming Nottingham's uniqueness as a tolerant and cohesive city. For others, this friendly city image is about civic engagement at local community centres, helping fellow citizens and building community spirit (without necessarily an accompanying sense of pride). Alongside this, some people question how tolerant and cohesive the city really is; some participants such as Daphne recognised that there is a degree of ethnic discrimination in the city (culturally and economically); other participants such as Imran felt that multiculturalism is being devalued by the city, and that minority communities are being pressured to integrate into Nottingham's wider civic identity. This more 'human route' to civic pride then is also a somewhat ambiguous and contested route, and produces and reflects a contested civic landscape – one which encompasses a range of values and identities. The friendly city image is as much an idealistic image than it is a realistic or in any sense of objective image of civic life in Nottingham. But it nevertheless forms an important image and an ideal that people aspire to and want to positively contribute to in the city.

Nottingham is unlikely to be particularly unique in the way that it values friendliness, tolerance and cohesion – all cities are to some extent invested in them on some kind of economic, cultural, political and even legal level – indeed local governments are obliged to promote and protect equality and diversity under the Equalities Act (2010) and under other existing legislation. This makes it somewhat difficult to judge the uniqueness of Nottingham as a friendly city, and whether it is really friendlier than other places (comparing citizens surveys across different cities might be one answer, although you would need comparable questions and similar numbers of respondents). The analysis from Nottingham suggests that friendliness, tolerance and cohesion do serve as important

anchors for the city and its identity, but crucially they do not equate to social equality and economic cohesion; nor do they resolve the ongoing tensions between integration and multiculturalism. Being proud that the city has avoided rioting and unrest is one thing; but being proud of a city that promotes equality of opportunity, shared dialogue between different ethnic groups (beyond simply eating and sharing food, say) and accepting diversity and difference as *both* a dividing line and something which enriches the city, is an entirely other thing. For as Furedi (2011) warns, values of friendliness, tolerance and cohesion often sound good in principle but are often left empty of their meaning, almost as though we have become too afraid (too intolerant) in mainstream political culture to question the purpose and substantive nature of these words and how they relate to people's lives. Not only do we as geographers (and as citizens) need to question the culturally specific meanings of terms like friendliness, tolerance and cohesion, and the power relationships underlining them, we also need to examine how these ideas are negotiated in policy discourse and everyday practice, and how locally they become sources of pride and identity. For all that said, it is hard to imagine any city not wanting to be known as 'friendly'.

Participant Observation 1: Heritage Open Days – Reflections of a Tour of the Council House and Nottingham Castle

This is the first of my participant observation pieces. As I discussed in the methodology chapter, my intention here is to offer a different kind of documentation and analysis of civic pride. Each participation observation introduces ideas, topics and contexts that are at times slightly different or tangential to the main themes of this research, but they nevertheless provide another angle with which to examine civic pride. My aim for them is to provide a more personal and close-up account of civic pride as an encounter with people and place. I explore the meanings and intentions behind the events I attended, what kinds of emotions these occasions evoked or provoked, and what the events ultimately said about civic pride in Nottingham.

Heritage Open Days is an annual event organised by English Heritage that celebrates local architecture and heritage in various cities and towns across England. Every year in September a variety of historical sites, buildings and landmarks are open to the public for free, and a range of activities, tours and talks are organised around them. I decided to go along to Nottingham's Heritage Open Days – in part because I thought it might serve as a nice contrast to the interviews I had done, and allow me to return to some of the more traditional themes of civic pride (i.e. something connected with buildings and heritage (Stobart 2004)). While the heritage industry is sometimes maligned in critical scholarship as being either imperialist, commodified or exclusive in its representation of particular groups (see for example: Harrison 2013; Cronin and Hetherington 2008), Heritage Open Days seem to offer something different, experientially and culturally, to a typical museum or exhibition, as they are free to participate in and are organised across the city by a variety of public bodies and volunteers. The events get funding and organisational support from local city councils and the national body Civic Voice, the national umbrella organisation for civic societies across the UK. One of the official aims of the open days reads: 'by stimulating curiosity and discovery, the event connects people with their local places and helps foster a sense of belonging and pride' (HOD 2014: Online). This does not necessarily mean that a politics of representation (i.e. whose heritage?) and a politics of

access (i.e. who can and who does attend these events?) might be brought into question here, but at least in theory Heritage Open Days are more ‘civic’ in their remit and aim to foster collaboration across the city in ways that perhaps other types of heritage activity cannot (Waterton 2009). In Nottingham, the Heritage Open Days included a wide variety of activities; from historical talks and walks, cave viewings at Nottingham Castle (part of the city’s extensive man-made cave network), access to historic buildings, guided tours and arts and crafts workshops.

I managed to get myself on a tour of the Council House on the Old Market Square, before having a wander around Nottingham Castle. Designed by Thomas Howitt and completed in 1929, the Council House is an iconic building in Nottingham, classical in style and made of grey Portland Stone. Having never been inside the building itself, I thought it would be exciting to see its interiors. The tour was conducted by a small, spritely woman who said she was a former city councillor and so knew the building very well. I was in a group of about twelve people, mostly older than myself in age (over 40). Many had clearly spent some time in the city, as they seemed to recognise much of the historic information and pictures on the walls and in the display cabinets. If civic pride, in its more formal and institutional sense, involves the self-glorifying act of preserving a city’s past for posterity and displaying it inside ornate cabinets in a grand building, then this was the physical expression of that ideal and aspiration (Hunt 2004). But in a different sense of the term, it was a sense of civic pride that perhaps got us all there in the first place – we all understood the building’s value and symbolism for the city, and by us simply being there on the tour, we validated the building’s importance. It was nice, given the reasonably informal nature of the tour, to ask questions or to simply feel the pulse of curiosity, and reflect on the importance of the building for the city today (for some, the recent royal visit of the Queen and the Duchess of Cambridge for the Queen’s Diamond Jubilee in 2012 perhaps gave it special significance). I did not engage in much conversation with others during the tour, but some did, and some asked plenty of questions, as though they enjoyed the unique chance to speak ‘civic’ in the city’s most iconic building and reflect upon their relationship to it and the city at large (Watson 2006; Taylor 2004)³.

³ On my humble silence, and others’ civic chitter-chatter, Charles Taylor’s thoughts on such encounters are notable here: ‘Spaces of this kind become more and more important in modern urban society where large numbers of people rub shoulders, unknown to each other, without dealings with each other, and yet affecting each other. As against the everyday rush to work in the

After the tour, I visited the castle, but this time I was alone and free to wander aimlessly. I took in the air and atmosphere of the Castle, its grounds and the visitors building at the top and thought about what it meant to the city and to me personally. The visitors building (which is sadly a disappointment to many locals and visitors that it is not an actual 'castle', but rather a ducal mansion) had a variety of exhibitions on display, some local and historical in content, some ornamental and procured from elsewhere, and one was a children's adventure exhibit telling the tales of Robin Hood. One could observe how civic pride was again something to display and encase through different exhibits, display cabinets, storyboards and information signs. But the assemblage here was much less glorified than in the Council House – it was something more akin to a traditional 'dust and cobwebs' type of museum exhibit. As Waterton (2009) suggests in her analysis of heritage photography, the 'framing' of heritage is important, in both literal and metaphorical ways – particularly in terms of context, and in terms of the means through which people connect with heritage. Framing heritage in a literal sense in wooden frames, cases and displays may be necessary for posterity, but it may also prevent people from touching and 'feeling' heritage in more tactile and interactive ways; as though the city, and its civic history, is only a visual percept, a 'still' knowledge and image to observe and behold, something *preserved* behind a glass case. Being there at the Castle, as an encounter with the city's heritage, was a rather placid experience in this regard, in which one had to muster one's own power of imagination to think that this was the very site for much of Nottingham's riotous and rebellious history (the previous 'castle' on this site was itself burnt down in 1831 by the Reform Bill rioters). A more striking juxtaposition I observed was the relative peace and tranquility of the castle and its finely manicured grounds, set against the crane-filled, bustling city below, sprawling out in all directions. Standing at the top, perched on the railings, I felt – like others must surely have before me – a feeling of smallness, as though one is a humble subject of the city's majestic power. Equally I felt the urge to gaze wistfully over the city, as though a guardian angel watching over it.

Metro, where others can sink to the status of obstacles in my way, city life has developed other ways of being-with, as we each take our Sunday walk in the park or as we mingle at the summer street festival or in the stadiums before the playoff game. Here each individual or small group acts on their own, but with the awareness that their display says something to others, will be responded to by them, will help build a common mood or tone that will color everyone's actions' (Taylor 2004, 168).

In the end, as an encounter with heritage in the city, both the Council House and the Castle gave me an opportunity to quietly consider my own relationship with Nottingham, and consider its present and future through its past. Who exactly participated, what kinds of diversity was represented at each of the venues, and how many people even knew about the event across the city is unknown for lack of data. But with reasonable assumption it was a group of citizens who wanted some sort of exploration of the city and sought to understand it better – and in a small way, honour their relationship to Nottingham. In a more poetic sense, the people who attended were like ‘municipal flâneurs’, self-motivated wanderers, who not only had some sort of affection or pride for the city, but were also looking for it, seeking it out and embellishing their sense of pride through heritage (for more on ‘flâneuring’ see: Wilson 1997). It was of course momentary, fleeting but gently evocative; a sense of civic pride engendered through the aimless aim of wandering and absorbing oneself in the city, and of not being exactly sure of what one learnt or achieved. Or to paraphrase de Certeau (1984: 93) a civic pride being written but not always read, flowing through the thick and thins of the urban realm, but nevertheless enriching one’s sense of place.

Chapter 6: Nottingham – A Bolshie City

Don't let the bastards grind you down

Alan Sillitoe 1960⁴

Introduction

If friendliness captures the softer, warmer side of Nottingham's civic pride and civic identity, *bolshiness* is what captures the other (harder, tougher, more resilient) side to Nottingham. Bolshie is a word used to characterise someone or something as uncooperative, awkward or rebellious and often implies a fierce sense of independence and individualism. It was a word used by a member of the Nottingham Civic Society I interviewed when she claimed 'Nottingham people are quite proud of being a bit bolshie'. Other participants did not use this word explicitly but did mention words such as 'gritty', 'rebellious' or 'tough' and 'resilient' to describe the character of the city and its citizens. It was a theme that ran throughout my interviews and, as I will show in this chapter, can also be linked to Nottingham's history and portrayal in the media. This sense of Nottingham as a bolshie city has clear links to the social history of the city as a place of rebellion and political protest (see 'Introduction to Nottingham'), but to date few scholars have attempted to understand Nottingham's present-day identity and civic culture within this 'bolshie' frame (except in part, see: Daniels and Rycroft 1993; McKenzie 2013). In this chapter, I problematise what bolshiness means and how bolshiness forms an important image and anchor for civic pride. Like the friendly city idea, bolshiness provides a lens through which we can observe and critique a range of agendas and practices co-existing within Nottingham's civic culture (Darling 2009; Newman 2013). I claim that bolshiness forms an integral part of Nottingham's historic and present day identity and culture, and helps form an image of self-defiance and self-determination that can unite the city in various ways; equally however I argue that bolshiness can be force for conservatism in the

⁴ Attributed to Sillitoe here, the phrase became popularised during World War Two, deriving from the mock-Latin 'Illegitimi non carborundum' (Radcliffe 2011: 137).

city and can reproduce (at times) rather inward-looking and debilitating ideas and practices.

To begin this analysis it is perhaps worth taking stock of this juxtaposition between Nottingham as a 'friendly city' and Nottingham as a 'bolshie city'. How far do these two images and narratives of the city work and fit together? I claimed in Chapter 3 that local governments often appropriate civic pride for two overarching reasons: one to promote the city and market it for economic growth, and two as a localist discourse and value to defend the city (and resist change). In other words, two quite antagonistic arms of the same metaphorical body characterise civic pride's two-pronged agenda: one arm with its hand waving to promote the city ('come in, we welcome you!'), the other with a clenched fist ready to fight back any outside threat ('get out!'). Might we see this juxtaposition between friendliness and bolshiness performing the same function for Nottingham? That is, the city celebrates friendliness in order to attract outsiders (and to sustain its own local civic life), but reverts to bolshiness in order to protect and defend its civic identity and local interests from outside threat and change. This thought can simmer, and will return later in the chapter.

At another level, these seemingly juxtaposed narratives perhaps reflect a difference between what might be described as an 'internal sense of civic-self' and an 'external sense of civic-self'. I suggest this here merely to speculate how civic pride can be positioned and scaled in particular ways. The internal sense of civic-self is about how Nottingham citizens imagine the city *within and of itself*; how people feel about the city historically, politically and culturally on its own terms. The external sense of civic-self is about how citizens frame civic pride in relation – and at times, in opposition - to 'the outside' and how civic pride is constituted and framed by and through various external relations. These external relations may be both spatially external and outside of the present juncture in time – lost in history, or of the future. Each to some extent relies upon a constitutive outside; a boundary of difference to construct a sense of civic-self against something else, something other and elsewhere – which serves to strengthen belonging in the kinds of ways I talked about in Chapter 2 (see: Antonsich 2010). But in this way, friendliness would be something that concerns more of an internal sense of civic self (i.e. a virtue of local people interacting with other people in the city, regardless of other places or other communities), while bolshiness would be more about an external sense of civic self (a virtue or attribute of the city

directed against others outside the city, or a value with which the city uses to resist externally-imposed change). I am not suggesting that people necessarily think about civic pride in such discrete and bifurcated ways of course, and there are no doubt certain degrees of conflation between these different senses of civic-self (for example when people claim Nottingham is a friendly city, they can refer to it on the one hand as a simple description of what the city is like to live in, but on the other hand as a comparative statement about how Nottingham is friendlier than other places). It is a division therefore that should not be overstated. Nevertheless there is a clear dynamic of internal-external relations going on, fractured through different spatial and temporal frames, which shape and reflect people's sense of civic pride – even though *within* these internal and external parameters, people observe and experience civic pride in heterogeneous ways.

In my Introduction to Nottingham (see Methodology Chapter), I discussed how Nottingham City Council has in some ways embraced this spirit of bolshiness in recent years. The council have had to both play down and resist the negative stigma brought about by the 'Gun Capital' reputation in the city, and more recently have set about, like many other councils across the UK, resisting government austerity. Given the city's strong support for the Labour party in recent years, there has certainly been some antagonism between the city council and the Conservative-led Coalition – which, again, seems to resonate well with Nottingham's history of rebellion and rebelliousness. During the mayoral elections of 2012 (when cities held referendums on whether to have elected mayors or not) Eric Pickles was even quoted as saying 'Nottingham is a bit of an oddity anyway, it goes against the grain of most things in local government' (BBC 2012).

From the interviews I did, this spirit of bolshiness was not just something participants associated with the city council or with the city's history however, but was something that participants thought was an integral part of the city's (present day) cultural ethos; it was something to be proud of and a way in which Nottingham showed its pride. In this chapter, however, I show how it can be easy to romanticise this image of the bolshie city and raise questions about it really means. Like the friendly city idea, I argue the bolshie city image is a *desired* imaginative geography (a 'purification ritual' to recall Sennett's term), that exposes and obscures certain contradictions and inconsistencies within it, and reflects a rather patchy and problematic reality on the ground. The analysis here carries a trace of Derek Gregory's approach to this theme:

Imaginative geographies cannot be understood as the free and fully coherent projections of all-knowing subjects. It is necessary to find ways to interrogate the unconscious and to explore the multiple spatialities inscribed within the geographical imaginary; these inclusions create analytical openings for the contradictions that are contained within (often contained by) dominant constellations of power, knowledge and geography. (Gregory 1995: 475)

I do not wish to follow's Gregory's appeal to psychoanalysis in this regard, but rather read closely into the kinds of symbolism hidden in and emerging from civic pride narratives, and show how these 'multiple spatialities' create a range of analytical openings and ideological trajectories.

Following from the approach of the previous chapter, this chapter aims to reveal how citizens and civic actors can be highly celebratory yet protective of their civic identities – but also how shared images and narratives can be perceived and experienced in different ways (Bonnett and Alexander 2013; Darling 2009). For the rest of this chapter, I adopt the following structure. First I outline a little more of what Nottingham's bolshiness is and means, and show how there can be a significant difference between celebrating the city's (history of) bolshiness and actually enacting bolshiness as a political act or form of engagement. I then examine the bolshie city narrative more thoroughly across two analytical frames: firstly I look at how the author Alan Sillitoe and his novel *Saturday Night and Sunday Morning* represent and give voice to Nottingham's sense of bolshiness; and secondly I examine how the city council's 'proud' campaign both produces and reveals different forms of bolshiness operating within the same political space. In the latter case, my argument centres on how urban image strategies seem to absorb a range of agendas and narratives simultaneously, and reflects the variety of ways in which civic pride, and pride itself, can be perceived and interpreted. I then end the chapter with a brief evaluation of what bolshiness ultimately means for Nottingham and what it can do (productively) for the city.

To Rebel or Not Rebel?

A ‘bolshie city’, a ‘city of rebellion’, a ‘city of rebels’ – such sobriquets seem perfectly suited to Nottingham’s sensibility as a city. A provincial East Midlands city with a history of 19th century rebellion, a figurehead in Robin Hood and an aspiration to be ‘northern’ and ‘gritty’, Nottingham is the ideal bolshie city. Bolshiness, rebelliousness, independence and so on, are important self-identifiers for Nottingham (indeed many cities) because they portray a certain valour, virtue, doggedness and a willingness to fight in the people living there. But such descriptors, if read another way, also have more negative connotations – uncivilised, un-modern, stubborn, an inability to accede to the necessity of change or co-operate with others. Bolshiness is certainly a subjective and malleable term (as well a double-edged sword perhaps). But, as I show, this very trait seems to resonate well with Nottingham’s complex character and sense of self.

A senior councillor and former lawyer, Duncan, who grew up in Nottingham told me what he took most pride in about Nottingham:

“I think its independence, its willingness to be independent, I think is the thing I’m most proud about...which is partly Robin Hood and all of that, but you know its willingness to rebel I think is probably the thing I like most about it.”

Amidst the city council’s recent plans to build a new ‘History of Rebellion’ tourist facility at Nottingham Castle, another councillor, Janet, proudly claimed that “we’ve come to the conclusion that we’re quite an arsey bunch really” and thought that Nottingham should celebrate “its radical past”. The idea of ‘being arsey’, a vulgar synonym for bolshiness perhaps, clearly has traction in the city, and participants were keen to retell the stories of the Luddites, the Chartists and Robin Hood in order to highlight and legitimate this side of Nottingham’s character. There is no doubt that these heroes and anti-heroes of Nottingham’s radical history are of local, national and even international importance in historical terms, but notwithstanding new plans for a History of Rebellion facility in the city, they have perhaps not been as celebrated and promoted in the city as much as one might expect. This might itself be a rebellion in Nottingham in terms of people resisting the ‘capture’ of these histories within a more institutionalised form and narrative – a resistance to these histories being recuperated by ‘heritage’ and the heritage industry

(Cronin and Hetherington 2008). Or there is simply a lack of awareness about them. It is interesting nevertheless to think about how the civic and the anti-civic are brought together in Nottingham and made into a wider civic psyche (see in particular: Dagger 1997; Amin 2008). The implications of this point will play out more strongly as this chapter unfolds.

Gerry, who owns a prominent media production company in the city, thought that this ethos of rebellion defined the city and was something the city takes pride in. It is possible to detect a certain glee in his words as he claims:

“Nottingham does have the spirit of a fighter, of not conforming and I think that is helped by the story of Robin Hood and I think we are deep-seated with that, it’s in our psyche somewhere...that we kind of know that we kicked-arse a bit with the history, we’ve got Nottingham Castle and everything else and we won’t do what we’re told...And even Eric Pickles knows it, and he has a sneaking admiration for Nottingham...”

Here the city is imagined as a city of fighters, non-conformists, and in the spirit of Robin Hood, a city of radical social justice and independence (for more discussion on Robin Hood, see: Chapter 7). The reference to Eric Pickles is perhaps significant, as though Gerry wants to score some political points through his construction of civic pride. While Pickles is in any case aware, it seems, of Nottingham being somewhat of an ‘oddity’ in local government, Gerry feels Pickles has a ‘sneaking admiration’ for the city, precisely - it seems – because of the city’s willingness to uphold the principles of localism and municipal autonomy that Pickles himself espouses (even if this localism or counter-localism is often express *against* central government and the Conservative party).

But what kind of a bolshie civic pride or civic identity is at work in the city, and what does it mean in reality? While it might be possible to claim some of the political tactics of the city council in recent years have been bolshie in style and rhetoric, it is an entirely other thing to claim that this reflects how Nottingham, as a city, thinks and behaves, and that bolshiness is actively championed. This is where the narrative becomes selective and problematic in some ways. From the evidence of my interviews and from local media coverage, it seemed few took any civic pride in reference to, say, the ‘riots’ in Nottingham

in August 2011 - where groups of largely young males smashed several local police stations, as well as pubs, shops and cars across the city, after the disturbances which spiralled out from Tottenham during that summer. The England Riots of 2011 were reported as serial acts of 'destruction', 'wanton vandalism' and criminality in local areas, but critical commentary has cited a range of reasons and motives for the riots across different regions and areas (even if most were a direct consequence of the police shooting of Mark Duggan (Moxon 2011)). It would seem rather fanciful to suggest that the rioters in Nottingham were enacting a 'local' sense of bolshiness and rebelliousness - a civic pride veiled as vandalism - in response to the events in Tottenham. But it is perhaps worthy to think about how some forms of bolshiness and rebelliousness are championed while others are maligned and criticised; and how then civic pride operates selectively across both civic and anti-civic lines.

According to one councillor, Phillip, the riots in Nottingham failed to live up to the kind of 'authentic' riot Nottingham has a history of and supposedly takes pride in - even if they were, to his mind, to some extent justified as a response to police discrimination:

"Yeah they weren't riots...And actually I don't even accept that it was, you know, the poor rising up. What it was, was a bunch of people who had had a rough deal from...they'd been roughed up by the police, in some cases bloody well justified, getting their own back, and it wasn't the poor rising up spontaneously. Cause actually Nottingham does a good riot. This wasn't a very good one."

Underlying Phillip's comment is on the one hand a proud claim that 'Nottingham does a good riot' and on the other, a dismissal that the riots in 2011 represented anything like a social protest or the kind of movement that Nottingham had witnessed in the past. It was mere 'revenge' against the police rather than something which conjured up the spirit of Nottingham.

So in Phillip's eyes the bolshie narrative has a curious threshold of 'authenticity' that selectively imagines what Nottingham's rebellious character does and should look like. The wider view of the riots, as told by local media, the council and police (as well as national media and politicians) was that the rioters showed a lack of social and civic values, a lack of respect for the law, and therefore in effect, a lack of civic pride or community spirit. The

clean-up operations in response to the riots in local areas were conversely celebrated and championed as a demonstrating civic pride and community spirit - as though something good came out of the bad (see: DCLG 2013). While the riots were taking place, and the police were on high alert, an assistant chief constable in Nottingham made the stern warning that:

To anyone thinking about causing trouble this weekend, my message is equally simple: we will arrest you and put you before the courts and you will pay the consequences for your actions...Nottingham is a fine and *proud city*.

Nottinghamshire is a fine and *proud county*. We plan on keeping it that way. (BBC News 2011, my emphasis)

Here a different kind of civic pride was expressed; a resistive and combative one against the rioters. It evokes a sense in which the civic authorities were not willing to let the rioters damage the integrity of the city, and that such a 'proud city' as Nottingham would not be compromised by such anti-civic acts. In other words, there was nothing that the rioters did which resonated with the city's history of rebellion, let alone anything which people in the city were prepared to be proud of or take pride in (indeed, perhaps it merely reflected these youths' lack of civic pride for where they live and their sense of alienation from civic culture, civic values, the city itself possibly). Another councillor I interviewed equally thought the riots were 'a bandwagon thing really', rather than something which reflected anything particularly local or civic about Nottingham. In this reading, the riots were a wakeup call to civic pride and community spirit in local neighbourhoods, galvanising people to come out of their homes to clear up the mess and condemn the riots - rather than something which reflected Nottingham's wider civic pride and civic identity. It would be true to say the council were somewhat relieved that the incidences were relatively small compared to other cities, and that the media did not have the same level of ammo to shame the city further.

Occupy Nottingham – Civic or Anti-Civic Pride?

A similar level of ambiguity arose in relation to the Occupy protest held at the Old Market Square in 2011 and 2012. The protest was one of the longest lasting of the Occupy

movement in Britain, and after 190 days of occupation, the camp of protesters disbanded when the council won a lengthy and costly legal battle for them to be removed (Nottingham Post 2012). The Old Market Square in the centre of Nottingham has often been a space of political articulation and protest, all the way from the Great Cheese Riot of 1764, to the Luddite protests of the 1810s, to the Miners' Strike protests in the 1980s, to a variety of anti-war, anti-cuts and other politics protests in recent years. Some participants expressed pride in the square as a symbol of what Nottingham is and what it represents. But opinion was divided on the Occupy movement. For example, while Michael the university lecturer said 'I liked it being there, I think there should be much more of that stuff going on in a public space...More protest and issues...', Wendy – a member of the Nottingham Civic Society – dismissed it flatly, saying,

“Yeah so I think there were just a group of people doing it cause they were doing it...I think possibly they weren't necessarily Nottingham...they were part of this 'oh let's go and occupy a tree!' Yeah I don't mind, I don't mind people doing these things but I don't think it was a particularly Nottingham thing. I think it was just something that you know a group of people who enjoy doing sitting up trees or sitting in a tent.”

Occupy was clearly an overtly political protest but one which, according to Wendy, perhaps failed to register as a civic protest and had little to do with civic pride. There were various bits to the protest that were 'Nottingham' of course (e.g many who ran the occupation were locals of the city, the Nottinghamshire flag was raised during the occupation, solidarity and support came from local university groups and other campaign groups). So in that sense it was almost a counter-civic pride, a civic pride against the city council, against the corruption of capitalism (against Nottingham even); but one which resonated with the global movement it was part of (Featherstone et al 2012; Askins et al 2012). This connects with my discussion in Chapter 2 about Darling's (2009) work in Sheffield, where his reflections of the City of Sanctuary campaign suggest how civic pride does not always, necessarily, have to be an entirely local and inward-looking idea – but can, in a more progressive sense, be something which builds solidarity and coalitions beyond the city as well. But perhaps the wider consensus was that this was a rather radical and alternative form of protest, one which jarred with any usual expectations of what civicness is, was or can be, and, although meaningful, was not driven far enough by a Nottingham-based

narrative or agenda.

If the local consensus in Nottingham was that Occupy was an un-civic and even an anti-civic protest (it did of course restrict public access and movement in the Market Square), the wider irony of Nottingham's bolshiness seems to be: bolshiness dismisses its own bolshiness. There is a certain (flippant) logic here - for it would go against the logic of bolshiness to claim that the city *should* be proud of a movement like Occupy. Therefore in a paradoxical way, civic pride was both challenged and restored to normality in the city. Nevertheless, despite the dissenters, the protestors were certainly bolshie in the way that they persisted for so long, and some might say highly innovative in the way that the civic and the global were brought together towards a more progressive political agenda (not just in Nottingham of course, but throughout the global campaign). In more theoretical terms, it demonstrated a hint of what Ash Amin (2008: 16) refers to as:

a form of solidarity towards the emergent and always temporary settlements of public culture, serving to reinforce civic interest in the plural city, the rights of the many, the margin brought to the centre, the legitimacy of the idiosyncratic and ill-conforming. Its symbolic projections are oriented towards aesthetic disruption rather than hegemonic confirmation.

'Aesthetic disruption' is perhaps an apt metaphor here for what the protest represented. It certainly 'turned heads' and brought both positive and negative attention in the media for Nottingham; but it also failed to assert any 'hegemonic confirmation' or result in any lasting systemic change. While the protest may have been standing up for the 'rights of the many', the many were too busy ignoring them or wanting to do civiness in other, perhaps less radical ways.

By way of a brief, contrasting note about Nottingham's bolshiness, we could point to another, rather different example of how this narrative has been vaunted in the city. This perhaps represents the beginnings of what some might see as the recuperation of bolshiness by the city council; the 'capture' of the city's rebelliousness under the safer, more placid regime of the heritage industry (Cronin and Hetherington 2008). In the advance of the History of Rebellion developments at the Nottingham Castle, the city council has launched 'Project: Riot 1831' to help promote the city's heritage. The project,

launched in 2013, aimed to promote the history of the Reform Bill Rioters who burned down Nottingham Castle in 1831 and mobbed various parts of the city, after the then incumbent Duke of Newcastle refused to support the Reform Bill being debated in parliament. Funded by NESTA, the AHRC and the National Lottery this £125,000 project

aims to promote debate and support learning about protest and rebellion by creating a new, exciting way to tell the story of Nottingham's 1831 National Reform Bill Riots....RIOT 1831 at Nottingham Castle will develop a mobile augmented reality (AR) app that will offer visitors an active role in creating their narrative experience. (Nottingham City Council 2013)

The project is attempting to innovate the Nottingham Castle heritage experience through the use of digital, interactive technologies and re-enactments, although to date (exhibitions began in the summer of 2014), it is not yet clear what the aim to 'support learning about protest and rebellion' is going to mean in reality. While it is yet to be known whether people in Nottingham have embraced (or have even heard of) this new development, it suggests something of a contrast to the previous two examples, whereby the spirit of rebellion is being embraced and invested in, but exclusively through the lens of history and heritage. The ambiguity lies in the project's aim to 'support learning about protest and rebellion'. This may on the one hand indicate that the city council intend to use this project as a space or a platform to inform and educate people on the importance of *modern* forms of social protest in the city and build creative linkages between the past, present and future. But on the other hand, the city council may want to curtail any suggestion or possibility that the Castle will become a new centre for activism and social change, and instead confine 'learning' to learning about the past.

Whether or not certain forms of rebellion and popular protest are becoming increasingly shut down by the civic authorities and effectively 'museumified' in places like Nottingham (that is, confined to the secure walls and cabinets of a museum - rendered as relics of the past), the more immediate point here is that the city council seem to have taken a somewhat different approach to this heritage project (and the broader History of Rebellion project) compared to their approach – or their assessment about – the Riots and the Occupy movement. In the former, the council appear to be committed to at least honouring and investing in the city's rebellious past in order to promote learning and

booster tourism – but in the latter cases, the council, and the civic authorities more generally, took the view that such acts of rebelliousness were not civic, and were in fact anti-civic (and must therefore be shut down and suppressed). The Riots and Occupy movement were perhaps too ‘raw’, too recent and perhaps not widespread enough in the city (if we take councillor Philip’s view) to be redeemed as acts of civic ‘bolshiness’ (or as acts of ‘Nottinghamness’) - although whether these events will later be celebrated, and take pride of place in some museum or exhibition in the city, is another question. With all this said, there needs to be a parallel discussion here, beyond the confines of this research, about whether heritage projects in general, regardless of their theme, have the potential to engender a greater sense of place and pride among local citizens and encourage more civic-mindedness and civic engagement – as well as also facilitate debate about the meaning and purpose of heritage itself (see here: Hewitt and Pendlebury 2013; see also Participant Observation 1).

From One Bolshiness to Another

We can see that what really counts as bolshiness in Nottingham in many ways depends on the perspective one takes. Multiple imaginaries and political agendas appear to co-exist within the same bolshie city narrative, and this suggests a clear tension between popular and sporadic forms of civic protest and the kind which local government celebrates and renders as part of the city’s ‘official’ historical narrative (Wind-Cowie and Gregory 2011). For the civic authorities in Nottingham - whilst claiming their own bolshiness, to some extent, against central government – bolshiness and rebellion can be viewed as part of the city’s heritage and something to learn from, but as a present quality of the city it must be restrained or even resisted. It appears much easier to lean on the safe distance of history to observe ‘authentic’ rebellion than it is to allow ‘this proud city’, as the Police Constable above referred to it as, to be challenged by modern day rebels and vandals. For the rioters of 2011 and the Occupy protesters meanwhile, the city and its public spaces are sites in which to challenge this status quo, and to question for whom this institutional side of civic culture actually serves. This undoubtedly raises issues that critical urban geographers have been grappling with for a long time, in terms of people’s rights over public space and the production of inclusive and exclusive publics (Darling 2009; Brenner et al 2011). It illustrates quite how complex the civic is as a space of political articulation –

and how different versions of civic pride prides are expressed, appropriated and retold by different groups.

Indeed as the local writer Valentine Yarnspinner (2010) reflects upon in a publication for a Nottingham-based radical history group 'People's Histreh', the history of rebellion in the city may yet be a clarion call for future civic protest, and Nottingham's bolshiness may well be one day 'reclaimed' from the civic authorities:

Dissent, radicalism, revolutionary sentiment and rioting do not fit with the attempts to equate the word Nottingham with brainless slogans like "Proud, Ambitious, Safe". This is even more reason not only to engage in these activities but to rediscover them as part of this city's heritage and reclaim the latter thereby from those who do not consider machine breakers to be role models...[For such rebels can be] fictional archers fighting for good governance. (Yarnspinner 2010: 69)

Yarnspinner's words are a clarion call for the city, as though the city must reclaim its political and radical past for the sake of the present and future. The forthcoming History of Rebellion project at Nottingham Castle will perhaps have to address how such as things as dissent, radicalism and revolution apply to modern day contexts, and whether or not people want to embrace – and therefore (re)enact somehow - this heritage of Luddism, Chartism and the spirit of Robin Hood. 'Fictional archers fighting for good governance' sounds far more noble and heroic than smashing shop windows out of disdain for the police, or camping outside the council house in the freezing cold; but people intervene in the city in different ways and people disagree what good governance really is and means (more on Robin Hood in Chapter 7).

The Seaton Mythology - 'All the Rest is Propaganda'

While the bolshie city narrative is clearly a partial, contested and strategically mobilised one in Nottingham, it is not, for all its political heroism and violent outbreaks, simply about deliberative politics and mass mobilisation. It also holds an important cultural element

within it, in terms of how the city imagines itself as a city and how the cultural activities of the city are oriented and influenced. Bolshiness perhaps is, as Gerry suggests, well-engrained in the psyche of the city, if not in always spectacular ways, but in ways that make Nottingham *Nottingham*. Like the friendly city narrative, the bolshie city narrative provides a platform for Nottingham to speak about itself in romanticised and fictionalised ways; more than an image, it forms a kind of shared cultural dialogue, which has become embellished through various stories, histories and legends (Linder 2006). The romanticised and fictionalised elements of civic pride are important. For citizens do not (usually, necessarily) lean upon facts, statistics or a detailed analysis of the city's history when talking about civic pride; they revert to the city's general ethos or feeling, the stereotypes, the city's heroes and villains. People enjoy absorbing the city and themselves into a kind of drama, a drama which gives people a sense of place and belonging.

Myths, narratives, stories, legends and fables, written within and about places, play a critical role in the social formation of civic identity because they have the power to act as a mirror for people to understand themselves and others (Tuan 2003). They can capture many of the dreams, desires, fears and frustrations people have for themselves, the people around them and the communities they are part of. As Cameron (2012: 574) notes 'stories express something irreducibly particular and personal, and yet they can be received as expressions of broader social and political context, and their telling can move, affect and produce collectivities'. It is not just the stories of course, but the characters within them that are important. The city mythologises certain heroes and villains from the city's past (fictional or otherwise) which in turn shape the history and culture of the city and how citizens understand themselves. For civic pride is not just lived directly, but is lived vicariously through certain people, ideas and stories (Lindner 2006; see also Clavane 2011).

This section discusses fiction as a lens through which we can discuss and refract civic pride. This exposes a different kind of reading of bolshiness that illustrates once again the complex character of Nottingham's civic psyche. My primary concern here is the relationship between the emotional and cultural geographies of literature and civic pride. To do this I want to explore one of Nottingham's key 'texts' of the 20th century – Alan Sillitoe's 1958 novel *Saturday Night and Sunday Morning*. This text, its main protagonist, the film that accompanied it, and Sillitoe himself, together hold up a mirror for

Nottingham. This is a mirror that allows the city to understand itself in particular romanticised and fictionalised ways, and like I referred to above, produces an image or mirror through which the city vicariously thinks and behaves. But it is also an image that provokes a question for the city – does Nottingham look good in its bolshiness? What I show here is how literature itself can animate civic pride and bolster a sense of identity beyond the text itself.

In a city that has often celebrated, but again arguably has yet to fully capitalise on, its historic links with iconic writers such as Lord Byron, D.H Lawrence and Alan Sillitoe, to name some of the city's most notable connections, few scholars in geography, except most notably Daniels and Rycroft (1993), have attempted to make such an explicit link between the city of Nottingham, civic pride and literature in order to say something about how civic identities are produced and imagined (see also: Walker and Fulwood 2012). Having said this, there has been a wider literature on literary geographies, which have looked at how novels and landscapes are co-produced in different ways (Brosseau 1994; Daniels and Rycroft 1993; Sillitoe 1987). It serves as a useful point of departure then to re-examine how Sillitoe's novel has shaped the city and its sense of civic pride, and what Sillitoe's legacy is, roughly 50 years on since his novel was published.

As Brosseau (1994: 334) notes, a literary focus in geography has historically offered geographers ways of 'examining more subjectively [a] sense of place [in order to] provide accounts of personal appreciation and experience of landscape'. Furthermore, novels which evoke existing landscapes and regions are powerful because

they immerse us in the various attitudes, values and conflicts shared by the people of a particular region in relation to their environment. In this case, the presumed realism becomes a collective subjective realism that the novel is able to grasp and describe adequately. (ibid: 226)

I am particularly interested in how literary figures come to be metonyms for cities, microcosms of what goes in cities, and figures which produce and reflect civic mentalities (Brown and Campelo 2014). Again, I want to explore, if only briefly, how civic pride gets lived vicariously through fictional characters. Each of Nottingham's so-called 'rebel writers' reflects a different and perplexing relationship with Nottingham in their own way, but I

wish to focus my analysis here, with reference to interview material, specifically on the influence of Alan Sillitoe and examine how he and his writing provides some useful metaphors for understanding Nottingham's character and the internal struggles it has over civic pride.

For if there is any individual figure that symbolises Nottingham as a bolshie city, it is the icon of Arthur Seaton from Sillitoe's *Saturday Night and Sunday Morning*. Sillitoe was born and raised in Nottingham and although leaving the city as a young man, wrote fondly of his hometown throughout a long career of writing – in novels, screenplays and poetry. He is often grouped together with the 1960s literary movement of 'Angry Young Men', alongside contemporaries such as John Braine, John Osborne and Keith Waterhouse. Together these writers have been credited for pioneering the literary and cinematic tradition of kitchen sink dramas, most often depicting ordinary working-class life in industrial (pre- and post-war) Britain (Clavane 2012; Marwick 1984). Arthur Seaton, a semi-fictional character inspired by Sillitoe's own upbringing, was a post-war factory worker for Raleigh Bicycles in Nottingham, known for his brazen and cunning attitude to authority and his notorious womanising. He was a youthful, working-class man disillusioned with the pretences of the political classes. He loathed the idea of simply 'getting on' in the workplace and favoured a stronger sense of self-preservation and individualism that he felt others were too dishonest and spineless to pursue. As one memorable quote recalls, if he was not

pursuing his rebellion against the rules of love, or distilling them with the rules of war, there was still the vast crushing power of government against which to lean his white-skinned bony shoulder, a thousand of its laws to be ignored and therefore broken. (Sillitoe 1960: 170)

Karel Reisz's 1960 classic film adaptation of the novel has been as much part of the industrial iconography of 'old' Nottingham as any other representation of the city (even though only parts of the film are actually filmed there), and the face of Albert Finney (who plays Seaton in the film) will live long in the city's memory as a symbol of self-defiance and self-determination (see: Hanson 1999). Recalling his first visit to Nottingham in the 1970s, urban planner Adrian Jones (2012) reflects on the kind of Nottingham that Sillitoe helped shape:

your image of Nottingham could not help but be shaped by ‘Saturday Night and Sunday Morning’. Twenty years after Albert Finney’s fine portrayal of Arthur Seaton, and despite massive slum clearance and redevelopment, Nottingham was then still very much the place of Sillitoe’s portrayal; a working class, bolshie city that played hard and took full employment for granted.

Daniels and Rycroft (1993) have argued that Sillitoe was the literary ‘grit in the oyster’ at a time when, in the 1950s, the city’s authorities were reimagining Nottingham against the backdrop of post-war optimism, and trying to claim it as a modern, bright and clean city (see also: Shapely 2011). In contrast, they suggest that ‘Sillitoe’s image of the city and its citizenry is not one of coherence and continuity, of community building, but one of conflict and upheaval, of explosive physical and social change’ (1993: 476).

Sillitoe’s legacy to literary (and cinematic) social realism has recently been celebrated in Nottingham by the setting of up an Alan Sillitoe Committee, a special group working to preserve the heritage of Sillitoe and raise funds for a possible memorial or statue in the city. There was also a photography exhibition in 2012 held at Nottingham University’s Lakeside Arts Centre that celebrated the film’s cinematography and its representation of working-class life in post-war Nottingham. Henry, the former Lord Mayor in Nottingham mentioned earlier, told me proudly: “‘Don’t let the bastards grind you down’...what a wonderful line, who wouldn’t have wanted to write that!?” Sillitoe clearly resonates as an important figure in the city. But for all the literary acclaim, it is difficult to assess how much Sillitoe means to the wider population of the city – outside of the more institutional civic sphere; and whether Sillitoe is someone that the city of Nottingham really takes pride in - or indeed someone that captures what Nottingham civic pride means. One could argue it is only perhaps an older generation, literary buffs, or at least people who regularly read the pages of the *LeftLion* magazine, who really are aware of Sillitoe and have any pride in him. The Sillitoe Committee notwithstanding, there is very little physical evidence that Sillitoe has left his mark on the city. Except for the occasional theatre reproduction of one of his novels at venues like the Nottingham Playhouse, or photography exhibitions, or the odd reference in local and national media to the Angry Young Men generation, one could easily live in Nottingham without coming across Sillitoe.

Sillitoe was however given an honorary Freeman of the City award by Nottingham City Council in 2008 shortly before he died, and so his legacy will at least live on in both civic and literary circles within and beyond Nottingham. I asked Alan, the *LeftLion* writer what he thought the relationship was, if indeed there was one, between the character of Arthur Seaton and the sense of ‘Nottinghamness’ that the magazine tries to convey to its readership,

“I think there are elements of don’t trust the system, and I think there are elements...I mean our strapline is ‘all the rest is propaganda’ [another famous line from the novel] you know. There is an element of yeah don’t tell us what to do, these are the good things, these are the good times, I guess that’s what we’re promoting. But I don’t think we’re saying go back to...We don’t want Nottingham to be full of piss-heads that sleep around with everyone’s wife, that wouldn’t be a great city either. But if you take the good elements of Arthur Seaton, the complete and utter conviction and faith in his own thought process. That’s important.”

This is an interesting reflection here on what kind of bolshiness is really being imagined in Nottingham. Although Alan recognises the lasting spirit of Seaton’s abrasive, anti-establishment, working-class mentality, he recognises that the modern city of today ought to be recognised for the ‘good things...the good times’ and not be tarnished by the unsavoury reputation of Seaton’s character. The sense of bolshiness, and in turn the kind of civic pride Nottingham aspires to, is rather this ‘conviction’ and ‘faith in [Nottingham’s] own thought process’. This notion of having ‘faith in one one’s own thought process’ reflects an important aspect of Nottingham’s bolshie identity, and the kind of localism the city aspires to – it is perhaps something which Nottingham both enjoys and lacks in some ways (see for further discussion of this, Chapter 7). It is the kind of dogma that Pickles himself might applaud. Another famous line from the novel is ‘whatever people say I am, that’s what I’m not’, which in part reflected Arthur’s, and moreover Sillitoe’s, rejection of stereotypes and classifying people into fixed identities, classes and allegiances (‘they don’t know a damn thing about me’). This in itself is another important part of the Nottingham character and Nottingham’s collective bolshiness as a city - which as I show in the next chapter, to some extent resonates with the complex regional identity of the East Midlands as a kind of ‘neither here nor there’ region.

Part of why the Seaton mythology is intriguing is because, in the end, he will forever remain a somewhat enigmatic and elusive character; both an inspiration for the city and a warning of the city's darker side. To recall Brosseau's (1994) words, rereading *Saturday Night and Sunday Morning* allows us to 'immerse [ourselves] in the various attitudes, values and conflicts shared by the people of a particular region'. But it also provides a certain purview of time - of continuity and change. The Nottingham which Arthur Seaton inhabited is no longer the Nottingham of today, but his bolshie spirit lives on in the city, as though it is a disposition the city enjoys reverting back to and honours, as it confronts new challenges and finds 'new axes to grind'. Again the theoretical point here is that cultural geographies and literary geographies often meld together to create and reproduce lived (fictive) landscapes. The imagined and the real are not separate realms in the life in the city - they are co-constitutive and lived simultaneously. As Rolf Lindner (2006: 39, my emphasis) puts it: 'writers and/or literary genres play an essential part in the development and consolidation of the image of a particular city; indeed, the texts are *actively constitutive* of the city'. This is why I think in certain (selective) ways, Arthur Seaton is both a symbol of the city, and a figure through which the city vicariously thinks and behaves; Seaton represents the city's independence, defiance and lack of conformity, but equally its violent temper and its less savoury underbelly. Seaton, like Sillitoe himself, mirrors the tensions, ambivalences and contradictions of civic pride, and what it is to belong, conform and rebel in the city. Of course, how much the character of Arthur Seaton actually would have wanted to have been honoured and eulogised as a civic symbol is another question entirely - indeed the irony is, he would have likely scowled with contempt at such a pretence that he was being modelled as a figure of 'civic pride'! A small extract from the Alan Sillitoe Committee's publication list called 'Seaton Rifles' playfully uses the literary voice and local dialect of Seaton to reflect upon Nottingham, past and present. As we can see, enigmatic and bolshie as his character is, Seaton is the ideal rebel; but a rebel perhaps *with* a (civic) cause:

The past is only good when what you pull up can be seen as part of the future. Tek a tip from me – unless you're looking over yer shoulder for the law or a jealous husband, don't look back. Leave the past to get lost in the mists of yesterday or it'll smother you. Nottingham ain't what it was in a lot of ways, but it's still my city. And as much as them toffee-nosed weasel-eyed gets [gits] in the council try to ruin it, it'll still be my city. (Walker and Fulwood 2012: 26)

Negotiating Bolshiness In and Against Local Government

I want to now return to the more political meanings and ramifications of bolshiness in the context of local government. Bolshiness may be part of Nottingham's popular (cultural) urban identity and image, but how does this apply to the kinds of images and messages the city council promotes? And moreover, what kind of bolshiness is by produced by and voiced against the city council as it tries to promote economic growth and defend the city's image and reputation. Here I discuss how the city council slogans and advertising materials that promote pride (e.g. 'A Safe, Clean, Ambitious Nottingham: A City We're All Proud Of') form another analytical space within which to frame and critique the city's bolshiness. This tells yet another story of Nottingham's civic pride and the different ways in which it is promoted, defended and contested.

In my 'Introduction to Nottingham' and earlier in this chapter, I discussed how Nottingham City Council has developed a bolshie spirit and reputation in recent years from the way that it has protested the government's austerity measures and reforms. I want to explore this further here, but bring this into a wider discussion about Nottingham's civic identity and the different ways people perceive and experience civic pride. As other geographers have discussed, a key question here is: how much do urban image strategies that use the language and symbolism of civic pride actually *evoke* an already existing sense of civic pride in the city, or how much do they conversely *provoke* a negative response that undermines a local sense of civic pride (see: Boyle and Hughes 1994; Darling 2009). In other words, do urban image strategies affirm or unhinge local civic pride, or can they in fact hold together and represent multiple meanings and agendas? The explicit use of the word 'pride' in the city council's marketing presents an obvious empirical choice to flesh out some of these kinds of questions and examine the different ways in which urban image strategies both produce and reflect different bolshie practices in and against local government.

Nottingham's Gun Crime Problem-Turned-Nottingham's Civic Pride Problem

It would be no exaggeration to claim that the high-profile shootings of Brendon Lawrence, Danielle Beacon and Marion Bates, combined with high rates of violent crime recorded in the city during the early 2000s, fuelled a media frenzy that Nottingham City Council and

the city as a whole struggled to really recover from. The gun crime issue effectively forced the hand of the city council to try and counteract this negative stereotype and redeem the city from this shadow of shame. Perceptions of gun crime and violence in the city were remarkably 'unfair', a number of participants told me, and many went on to stress the negative and undeserved damage that this episode caused the city. Although some recent crime figures would suggest that violent crime is on the rise in the Nottingham regional area (see: Nottingham Post 2014a), generally one could argue that, adjusting for municipal boundaries, Nottingham is by and large comparable with, or indeed safer than, other large metropolitan cities in terms of crime (see for instance: IEP 2013). Nevertheless, as much as the council might want to point out favourable statistics, the city has 'become tarred with that brush' as one councillor put it. Even Nottingham's *Vision for 2020* strategy document has earmarked crime as a strategic priority for the city - 'to tackle the culture of criminality which is the norm in small sections of the community and which has a disproportionate effect on the city's crime rate' (One Nottingham 2010: 22).

Despite this, participants also felt that the city was beginning to overcome this negative reputation and redeem a sense of civic pride. One interesting impact, which again supports this narrative of bolshiness in the city, has been the city council's strategy of avoidance and being un-cooperative with national media and television companies wanting to do crime and other issue-based documentaries in the city, in order to prevent the city from being stereotyped in particular ways. It was a *Panorama* television show on the city's night-time economy released in 2004 that inflated the city's image as a place of violence and disorder. Similarly, it was an infamous report by the *Telegraph* in 2005, interviewing the then Chief Constable in Nottingham Stephen Green, that helped further cement the city's reputation for crime (Green admitted that 'we [the city] can't cope' and argued that more frontline police officers were needed to fight crime in Nottingham). Jon Collins, Leader of the Council, was well aware of how much the media influenced perceptions of the city early on in his tenure. Back in 2006, he was quoted in *LeftLion* magazine as saying:

it's easy for a city to get a poor reputation, but it's more difficult to turn it round again and change that perception. I think people have got to be very careful with what they say to the press. An inappropriate word out of place can get taken the wrong way and cause a lot of damage. It allows a lot of the national press to get

easy copy and there's a degree of lazy journalism there. We've got to find ways to challenge it and that's what we do. (LeftLion 2006: Online)

Phillip, the councillor mentioned earlier, took a more hardline approach, saying that:

"The other thing you've got is we spend a lot of time stopping stuff. So TV crews that wanna come and look at your property, TV crews that wanna come look at your crime, we will not cooperate. We had an example last week with *Dispatches*, which I don't trust an inch, the *Dispatches* programme, and we've had problems with them in the past. You get no benefit from it. So that's stopping negative stuff, we spend an enormous amount of time stopping negative stuff."

He went on to reflect 'it is a very complex thing what pride is...It's not just what it is, it's what it's not'. There is no doubt that denying the possibility of being shamed – the shame of shame in Munt's (2000) words - is part of the reason why the city council have adopted this bolshie stance with the media. Whether this constitutes a strategy to protect civic pride or whether it is simple political expediency – for the council to avoid being scrutinised or stereotyped by the media – is unclear; but it is likely a bit of both. Perhaps the council's wariness over television companies for instance, as Philip relates, reflects a certain paranoia in the mindset of the city council that something bad will inevitably result from Nottingham being filmed for a national television show. Even fears were raised when Birger Larson's 2012 one-off fictional television crime thriller *Murder: Joint Enterprise* was released, having been filmed and set in Nottingham, apparently threatening to 'open up Nottingham's old wounds' according to one media reporter (see: Doward 2012). The use of civic pride as a defensive mechanism of self-preservation may be logical and expedient for the council, but it sits uncomfortably with the parallel need to portray Nottingham as a good and safe place for business and tourism – indeed as a city that is 'proud' of its virtues and wants to advertise them. As I discuss below, this is perhaps part of the reason why the city marketing materials used by the council which say 'Proud of Nottingham' have had a mixed response – they are postured too much towards defending the reputation of the city and the city council (and placating outsider perceptions) rather than promoting a positive and locally-meaningful message (Boland 2010a; McCann 2013).

As geographers and others have long argued, the use of branding and marketing has been

a salient feature of post-industrial cities and urban regeneration schemes in Britain and elsewhere (for recent critical scholarship, see for example: Boland 2013; McCann 2013; Ward 2003). Much of the literature has tended to focus on three main strands: the economics of branding and its role in the neoliberal transformation in cities; the cultural meanings and impacts of branding as it relates to different places and communities, and the use of branding to promote (sometimes more radical) political causes and to defend local civic pride (Boyle and Hughes 1994; Featherstone 2012). To say city branding is a highly strategic exercise that local governments invest in would perhaps underemphasise the fact that it has become a more routine and institutionalised practice of urban entrepreneurialism – it would be hard to imagine a city not branding or advertising itself in some way within today's more competitive (global) market (Darling 2009; Boyle 1999; see also Chapter 3). As I suggested in the previous chapter in relation to the rise of the friendly city, branding has been particularly important in cities that have suffered from negative reputations and high levels of deprivation; in such cases, branding has been used to orchestrate and promote urban transformations of various kind and rebuild local pride and prosperity. Branding (through billboards, advertising campaigns and tourist brochures for instance, but also through what local politicians and business people themselves say about the city) becomes a kind of visual and discursive strategy for legitimating urban activity, and persuading citizens and people outside the city that investments are being made on behalf, and to the benefit of, the local area (Boland 2010a). As I discussed in Chapter 3, we need to be critical of how certain types of branding propagate certain myths about the city, and render invisible other realities – realities which would otherwise expose the falsehoods of these (re)branding exercises (the inequalities they hide) and the ideological values upon which such exercises are based.

As I have mentioned, a key issue is how far and with what success urban image strategies gain the support of local citizens, while at the same time function as an appealing image or discourse to external audiences. In other words, we need to scrutinise the geography of policy 'buy-in' and 'buy-out', and how different narratives of civic pride are produced and contested, by and for different groups. McCann (2013: 2) claims that geographers need understand better the fluid nature of city branding in order to gain a better sense of the different ways urban elites position policy - noting how 'more attention needs, then, to be paid to how urban elites' extrospective stance toward policy is balanced and bolstered by an introspective politics that seeks to generate pride in and support for local policies'.

Looking specifically at how civic actors link city branding with civic pride opens a useful lens with which to consider the politics of local policy and assess what kinds of buy-in and buy-out there is. This can be used to assess whether the 'Proud' slogans in Nottingham serve to complement or undermine Nottingham's bolshie civic identity. It also provokes questions around whether civic pride can be 'actively engineered' by local government and, like I discussed in Chapter 3, whether emotions such as pride can be mobilised strategically within policy to produce particular types of (civic) outcomes (see for discussion: Bennett 2013; Thrift 2008).

Pride Slogans – The Many Sides of Civic Pride

As was noted above, arguably the main intention behind Nottingham City Council's slogan - 'A Safe, Clean and More Ambitious Nottingham: A City We're All Proud of' - was to reclaim local pride in the city and build a more positive image for Nottingham, for both internal and external audiences. The slogan, and the 'Proud' signs which were produced across the city, had in fact come off the back of a previous media campaign in 2005 which adopted an ill-fated 'slanty N' logo that failed to sit well with citizens and the local media (see for discussion: Heeley 2011). After this campaign dissolved by 2008, the words 'Proud Of' and 'Ambitious' became ubiquitous across the city as part of the Labour Council's communication strategy and urban image campaign. These words have featured on posters, in bus shelters and tram stations, in leaflets and newsletters, on numerous flags and banners adorning the Market Square (particularly after the city has done something positive and celebratory – like getting good exam grades in schools, or when a local sports team or sports person wins something). As Iveson (2012) notes, city branding is becoming ubiquitous and wide-ranging both in terms of content and volume of material, and in terms of the form it takes - whereby more traditional branding materials such as banners, flags and posters are now sitting alongside television screens and electronic advertising boards. This is certainly true of Nottingham, although it would be a stretch to say that it was anything like Times Square in New York in the centre of Nottingham. Nevertheless, with enough attentiveness to the city's visual clues, it would be no exaggeration to say that pride has been quite literally scripted and 'wired' into the civic landscape of Nottingham in recent years; although whether everyone has noticed this is another question.

Nottingham is not unique in the way it has branded words such as 'pride' or 'civic pride' in the city – these words have been branded across a range of local government initiatives in recent years. For example, a cursory survey of recent 'pride projects' promoted by local authorities in Britain ranges from: Richmond Borough Council's 'Civic Pride Fund', to Cheltenham Borough Council's 'Civic Pride Urban Design Framework', North Ayrshire Council's 'Civic Pride Awards' (which celebrates local community activists), Derby City Council's 'Streetpride' project (which co-ordinates street clean-ups and protects public spaces), the 'Pride of Manchester Awards' (which celebrates the best of Mancunian culture every year), to Derry/Londonderry's 'Pride in Our City' campaign, that helps promote green spaces in the city. Of course 'pride' in recent years has also been a word very much associated with Gay Pride events in many cities – thus 'Nottingham Pride', 'Manchester Pride', 'Leeds Pride' and so on. It is interesting here to speculate whether the absence of 'Gay' in the title of many of these Pride events not only suggests an attempt to pluralise the politics of these events (i.e. to celebrate pride in all identities, cultures, lifestyles etc.) but also reinforce the *civic* aspect of what they're trying to achieve. Thus as Bell and Binnie (2004: 1814) note Gay Pride events are often premised on 'the imperative to be proud, to display pride and to wed gay pride to civic pride (which involves making the city proud of its gays and the gays proud of their city)'. Pride is clearly becoming part of the lexicon of civic credibility and cultural enterprise. But the local context of this is important because emotions and emotional words are subjective and open to interpretation (Ho 2009). I want to argue here that through the very subjective and ambiguous nature of pride, different political imaginations of *bolshiness* emerge, and that then this reflects different aspirations and trajectories for civic pride.

When asked about the pride slogans in Nottingham, participants were generally not concerned about their visual impact (there was no apparent issue with city branding, *per se*). Rather what divided people was the semantics of pride and the different ways these slogans could be interpreted. Some participants thought that they demonstrated a sign of renewed municipal confidence in the city council, a sense that the city council are 'proud to serve' and that the city is 'back on its feet'. For others these messages were patronising, ambiguous and empty of substance, and were instead an excuse for people to vent their frustration at the council's 'marketing spin' and their incompetence in 'getting it right'. For example contrast the following observations, one from Sally, a student, and another from Michael, the previously mentioned university lecturer:

“You walk round and you think almost like yeah the council, they kind of care about what people think of the city. They want people to feel involved and proud of the city. I think it kind of works.”

“You know, ‘you’re not proud or ambitious yourself, so we’ll be proud for you’, is the way it comes across to me. And for me that’s the really negative side of the word proud, it’s kind of full of yourself. ‘We’re proud of what we’re doing here’ ...you know, every time I see [them] my teeth grind’.

For Sally, these signs are a confirmation that the city council ‘cares’ and ‘want[s] people to feel involved and proud’. Another participant equally praised them by saying ‘if a council didn’t care and it doesn’t advertise what it aspires to, it’s not really doing its job is it...’ In this reading of the slogans then, they serve as a kind of visual ‘index of credibility’ (Thrift 2008) that gives people a feeling of being included and looked after by the city council. But for Michael, these messages lack credibility and appeal because they imply that citizens themselves lack pride and ambition, and that the council are acting on other people’s behalf. Significantly, Michael pays attention to the *negative* connotations of pride as something people feel when ‘they are full of themselves’ – echoing the historic conception of pride as akin to hubris, a sin to avoid.

So while for the student these slogans encouraged people to feel involved and proud of their city, for the lecturer they induced precisely the opposite. Boyle and Hughes (1994: 468) suggest that such marketing has ‘not generated a new false consciousness’ in cities, but a ‘heightened a consciousness of falsity’. But as clever as this inversion sounds, clearly this depends on one’s point of view, and the different ways people internalise branding messages. As some commentators have noted, where city marketing lacks a locally meaningful message, and is imposed from above without any local buy-in, the impact can be alienating and produce the opposite of what it is trying to achieve (Braun et al 2013: Merrilees et al 2009). Another participant, Joe, a church pastor, equally lamented:

“I think they’re a waste of time and money. I think they’re trying to fool us...they’re saying ‘look we’re doing a good job’, but are they? I just don’t see any merit in doing that at all. Waste of money, that’s I think.”

It is clear then that civic messages can evoke personal (emotional) responses that reflect and reshape people's aspirations for places. It is perhaps not always the messages themselves, but who advertises them, the political thinking behind them, and the resources used to deliver them (resources which may otherwise be spent on welfare, infrastructure, culture etc.) that determines people's emotional responses. Once again the civic and anti-civic seem to occupy the same political space in Nottingham, reflecting a contested civic landscape. But while divisions between local citizens and the local council tell one story of civic pride and bolshiness, there is another story to tell here that relates to the wider purpose and integrity of local government as a whole, and the ways in which local governments defend, and struggle to defend, the 'local' against the centre (i.e. central government), in rather bolshie and 'parochial' ways.

Reviving the Integrity of Local Government in the Name of Civic Pride

Alan, the *LeftLion* writer, felt that pride cannot be 'forced' in the same way that Michael suggests, but recognised its value:

"Do you have to read that to remind yourself or something, do you know what I mean, I think that's the same thing. Pride in your city. You cannot lecture or tell people to proud of the city. It's got to come from within. But a council also has to remind people."

This concession at the end is interesting, because Alan implies that perhaps there is, at times, a lack of pride in the city, or that it is occasionally dormant, in need of a 'boost' every now and then. Of course the premise of civic boosterism has always been based on a deficit model – that a city somehow needs to be boosted – socially, politically, economically – through some sort of intervention (Hall 1997; Harvey 1989). Some participants were aware of how promoting pride came out of a period of when the council was under scrutiny for Nottingham's violent reputation, but this did not entirely reconcile the issue of the council appearing to 'actively engineer' or 'induce' civic pride. One participant, Daniel, who is an independent arts and culture researcher and consultant, was astute enough to suggest that promoting urban image in these ways was the effect of a

wider decline in municipal autonomy in cities – something which he felt had resulted in a ‘hollowing out’ of civic pride. He argued that civic pride was now a more artificial construct that the city council merely promoted and advertised, rather than anything based in local autonomy or civic enterprise. This recalls some of the arguments I outlined in Chapter 3, but is captured succinctly here:

“The problem that you have in thinking about civic pride today is that compared to what it was it is an artificial pride. Civic pride through most of English history was rooted in a place’s sense of itself and its achievements and its autonomy...[In the past few decades] there has been a fairly consistent assault by government of all complexions on local government, and local government now has almost no autonomy. Most of its funding comes from central government.... So that, I think, is the problem with city pride. Nowadays you look at the buses in Nottingham or street signs or whatever and they keep saying ‘proud’ in huge letters and it feels a bit like whistling in the dark, ‘keep your spirits up!’ Cause actually, this city council has got very limited capacity to make the city proud of itself, so it has to tell people to be proud of themselves.”

So in Daniel’s version of civic pride, it is the political autonomy and economic sovereignty of the city and its local government that best encapsulates civic pride, more than anything to do with the wider cultural fabric of the city or its social identity (Hunt 2004; Shapely 2012). As I argued in Chapter 3, this notion of civic pride as a political construct based in municipal autonomy appeals to the Coalition’s narrative of localism as a political project to revive. Localism is responding to the apparent legacy of centralism in local government, the decline of strong civic leaders like Joseph Chamberlain, and the consequent decline of civic leadership, civic enterprise and meaningful urban power and identity (Westwood 2012; Pickles 2011). As such, it follows that urban image strategies have emerged as a hollow reminder and response to this loss of financial wealth and political power in cities - and as Daniel noted himself, such strategies are now one of a few areas of policy that local governments have control over and can mobilise profitably on (see: Clarke and Cochrane 2013). For Daniel then, the use of pride in this marketing campaign feels hollow not because it draws upon a negative sense of pride (as a kind of hubris), or because the message is ‘un-Nottingham’ in some way - but because it lacks the political integrity and municipal power behind it. Evoking pride thus leaves a resonance of nostalgia as its

emotional response (see for discussion Bonnett and Alexander 2013). But like Hunt's (2004) analysis of civic pride, Daniel is mournful for a strictly political and economic conception of civic pride, as opposed to its social and cultural meanings (although he did (partially) recognise these too). This was the particular sense in which he understood the term civic pride, which was relatively rare amongst participants (see Chapter 8).

The city councillors I interviewed generally thought these signs and slogans were important and justified given the circumstances the city was faced with in the mid-2000s. In defending the signs and slogans, one councillor, Clive, thought they did actually reflect local feeling:

"I think we actually thought it's genuinely what people feel. We were getting this on the doorstep. We were getting people saying 'I'm fed up with Nottingham being run down'. They were also saying 'I'm fed up with the streets being a mess, I'm fed up with the behaviour of those people on the street, I'm fed up with that sense of crime'. So we absolutely had to act on it both for its value and its perception."

But another councillor meanwhile - Duncan, mentioned earlier in this chapter - suggested that it was time for Nottingham to 'move on' from this kind of civic pride sloganeering. He suggested other, larger cities, like Liverpool or Manchester 'wouldn't need to tell you that they're proud', implying that Nottingham was showing itself to be 'weak' by proclaiming its pride (this regional dimension will be explored further in the next chapter). Another councillor, Ian, thought that the pride slogans told yet another story: one which returns to Nottingham's sense of bolshiness. Ian felt pride in the fact that in political terms 'Nottingham doesn't just follow the pack'. He argued that the pride slogans were meant to represent how Nottingham was independent, anti-London and anti-establishment in its ethos and outlook:

'I think politically, what it is to do [these pride slogans] is to tell people in Nottingham, that they're not...They don't have to follow the London line, they don't have to follow what's coming out of the BBC and ITV every day and Sky News, they can think about it themselves. The reason we...I mean politically we made those decisions to have pride...it was actually...I think to tap into a mood in

Nottingham to say, look, we don't want to be told by you Eric Pickles or David Cameron or whoever, Sky News, this is what you should be doing. We'll do it our way and we'll support that way, and that's why, in reality, we keep winning elections to be honest.'

This quote quite nicely highlights the sense in which a spirit of localism has been localised and (re)appropriated by local government as a way of re-asserting local identity and autonomy, and countering perceptions of London-centrism in British politics. There is certainly a hint of Sillitoe's maxim here - 'don't let the bastards grind you down' - but there might also be a more strategic and cynical element to Ian's words - in the way that he suggests this is why the Labour party in Nottingham 'keep winning elections'. Unlike other participants who recognised how the pride slogans were a reactionary message to defend the city's image and reputation, Ian underplayed this aspect and wanted to promote the more political and cultural spirit of Nottingham. So rather than bolshiness in Nottingham being about resisting the council, the council are actually invested in championing their own bolshiness as a matter of civic pride.

Overall then, while for some participants the word pride failed to communicate a meaningful message, and failed to encourage local buy-in, for the city council and other participants the word pride was utilised successfully as a way of tapping into the mood of the city, re-asserting its integrity and status, and promoting feelings of belonging. This suggests that different types of pride and pride politics are operating simultaneously within the same city marketing campaign. The city council actively engineered civic pride in order to protect and defend the city's reputation, and on some level promote and strengthen a sense of localism. Indeed for one council officer it resonated as a kind of Big Society idea: "we do need people to take more pride in their neighbourhood, cause we haven't necessarily got resources to spend on...it costs a lot to clean up neighbourhoods". I will discuss how civic pride discourses might be utilised to promote more active civic behaviours in Chapter 8. The findings here echo Barnett et al's (2008) sense of how institutions of power operationalise 'strategic intentionality' to encourage particular forms of thinking and behaviour for ideological purposes. But from the evidence of this research, such intentionality may not always achieve the results it intends to, and people may revert to bolshiness against the council (Boyle 1997; McCann 2013). Bolshiness and civic pride therefore operate in a complex and contradictory space, producing a range of

civic and anti-civic views and serving a range of interests. The point is that *pride gets personal* and for every action there is a complementary and opposing reaction.

Nottingham is now left with the question of ‘what next?’ Does the city, like Duncan suggests, really need to express civic pride in such a direct and instrumental way, or does it in fact need to shout louder? Or shout a different message; one which citizens feel they can get behind and yet remains appealing to outsiders. As Wayne Borrows (2008: 12), writing in the *LeftLion* magazine, notes glibly:

One day, the council might even replace their slanty Ns [sic] and ‘proud and ambitious’ logos with something more fundamental to the city’s sense of itself. Just imagine it - the next big city PR campaign fronted by Arthur [Seaton], fag cocked, with ‘Don’t Let The Bastards Grind You Down’ flapping round his head on a fancy scroll.

Conclusion

I started this chapter by suggesting that if the friendly city narrative appeals to the ‘warmer’ side of Nottingham’s civic pride, then the bolshie city narrative appeals to a harder, more fierce side of Nottingham’s civic pride and can be read and critiqued in similar ways. I have shown how bolshiness in Nottingham is often romantically constructed as a kind unifying mythology of rebellion, independence and cultural enterprise - which like friendliness, is a popular and appealing discourse to celebrate and promote, but reflects as much an imagined landscape as a lived one. Bolshiness and the spirit of rebellion can also become managed and appropriated in various ways by the local civic authorities for a variety of political and economic purposes – and because of this, some forms of bolshiness are championed while others are not. The way the city council has attempted to resist austerity and resist the city’s reputation for gun crime shows that political bolshiness, at an institutional level, has gained a certain legitimacy, whereby certain discourses and displays of bolshiness have become an ‘index of credibility’ within the council to show the city that they are on the side of the people (although not everyone agrees). The Riots and the Occupy protest meanwhile suggest that Nottingham’s radicalism is not always perceived and rendered in civic ways; so while some people take

pride in Nottingham's history of rebellion and support the city council's spirit of localism, many are much more ambivalent about how forms of rebellion and protest should operate in today's context and what ultimately constitutes an authentic Nottingham rebellion or civic protest. A much more extensive study of protest in Nottingham would have to be made to evaluate this properly. Meanwhile, Alan Sillitoe and the mythology of Arthur Seaton paint a different cultural image of the city – one which speaks to the city's strong sense of self-preservation, a fierce resistance to conformity and authority, but also an image which speaks to violence, of un-channelled anger and frustration, and a refusal to cohere with others – indeed a very un-civilised and anti-civic type of pride. The bolshie city narrative is therefore a divided and contested narrative – a tautology perhaps of what bolshiness is. In acknowledging this then, the analysis suggests that we need to attend to both civic and anti-civic forms of pride, and acknowledge how the word pride itself can be interpreted in different ways by different people.

It is easy to imagine that most British cities would make claims that they are bolshie, rebellious, gritty or resilient in some form or another (Belchem 2000; Featherstone 2012). It appeals to a sense of integrity – for to not embody, promote and defend these principles would suggest a city is weak, conformist and unable to define itself and assert its authority. Nottingham may want to promote this narrative precisely in order to fend off any suggests that it could be weak, conformist and unable to define itself and assert its authority; for it placates an unnerving paranoia about what the city really represents, and what its status is regionally and nationally (see next Chapter). But with a very real history of rebellion, supplemented and embellished through a number of fictional icons such as Robin Hood and Arthur Seaton, Nottingham seems uniquely placed to carve out a strong urban image of bolshiness and rebelliousness that can in theory be both locally meaningfully and attractive to people visiting the city (that is, it could be a city 'with edge'). One should not over-instrumentalise the bolshie narrative however, for this would go against its very logic; and indeed one could argue that it would not be in the Nottingham character to be overly proud of its bolshiness. People in Nottingham may be proud of the city's bolshiness and its history of rebellion, but in embracing this image and identity, there must be an acceptance that Nottingham is not (always) a city of 'coherence and continuity, of community building, but one of conflict and upheaval, of explosive physical and social change' (Daniels and Rycroft 1993: 476).

Like the friendly city narrative, the bolshie city narrative will continue to be important for Nottingham as it looks to the future. Both politically and culturally, it is a spur for civic action and creativity, and will continue to be a key lens through which to tell the wider Nottingham story (see also: Participant Observation 2). It fosters an urban imaginary that becomes all the more real the more it is imagined and re-told (Linder 2006). It will be interesting to see then whether the development of the History of Rebellion tourist facility over the next few years is successful in capturing this – whether it captures an ‘authentic’ image of Nottingham and its civic history, and whether it inspires new forms of rebellion and protest. I want to end this chapter with a quote from Sarah Dale, a Nottingham based psychologist and author, who wrote a blog piece for the 2014 Nottingham Festival of Words (a city-wide literature festival launched in 2013, now running annually). Dale summed up the current mood in the city in the following way:

In Nottingham, it seems to me, there is an increasing creative pressure forcing its way up through the streets. It isn't necessarily pretty, though it sometimes is. Our history of textiles and lace, design and style is still very much alive. But there is also a gritty determination, a bolshie desire to tell our stories, whether through film, theatre or words, through music, pictures or games. Recently, I sense an impatience to get on with things, make things happen, and to take risks in trying things out. I think Nottingham is more than ready to make some noise. (Dale 2014)

It is hard to know whether everyone in Nottingham has this ‘bolshie desire to tell [their] stories’, but many within the civic sphere do seem ready to take on and take pride in this bolshie identity as the city attempts to build and shape its civic future. It is not so much a question of can or should Nottingham be bolshie, but rather a question of what kind of bolshiness Nottingham champions and embraces, what narratives appeal and which do not (Wind-Cowie and Gregory 2011) – as well as which communities are represented and which are marginalised, and whether, in the end, this bolshiness can in any way be socially progressive and transformative. Successfully balancing a civic identity that is friendly and yet also bolshie will be a significant challenge for the city, and one which cannot be entirely predicted or managed; but these qualities are part of what makes Nottingham, and form important vessels for civic pride.

Participant Observation 2: ‘Notorious Nottingham’ – The Civic Society’s Christmas Lecture

The lecture was held at the St Barnabas Cathedral Hall in the heart of the city centre, where the President of the Nottingham Civic Society, Tom Huggon, spoke on the theme of ‘Notorious Nottingham’. Huggon is quite a prominent and charismatic character within Nottingham civic circles. Not only is he President of the Nottingham Civic Society, he is Deputy Lieutenant for Nottinghamshire, the official Town Crier for the City and on the boards of various environmental and cultural institutions across the city. If civic pride was embodied in a single figure in Nottingham, Tom Huggon would perhaps fit the bill (although it would be a stretch to say he was any kind of ‘celebrity’ in the city).

The Civic Society in Nottingham goes back to 1961 when the then chairman of the local architecture society, Arnold Pacey, set up a group to help protect architectural heritage in the city, as well as to campaign on current planning issues. The society aimed to ‘encourage the improvement, development and preservation of the features which go to make a pleasing environment for the citizens of Nottingham’ (Nottingham Civic Society 2012: 17). In similar vein, a recent chair of the Nottingham Civic Society, Hilary Silvester, describes the nature and purpose of the society today:

The society continues to work on behalf of the city: we don’t always agree with proposals and decisions made on behalf of us as citizens and lovers of Nottingham, but we will continue to make the case for our city as a historically and strategically important member of the group of the eight Core Cities of England [now extended to ten across Britain], and celebrate our victories in maintaining the character and vitality of Nottingham. (Nottingham Civic Society 2012: 21)

Civic societies have historically been key champions for urban heritage, and this description neatly captures some of the values that underpin the civic movement in general (see also: Bell and de Sharit 2011; Di Cicco 2007). For example, the national umbrella organisation for civic societies, Civic Voice, describes the typical character and ‘mindset’ of civic societies in the following terms:

Civic societies can be provocative, stubborn, forceful, inspiring and outspoken on behalf of the places they care about. They are fiercely independent and grassroots organisations, often providing the grit in the oyster which stimulates people to think, reconsider and widen their horizons. They will celebrate and encourage positive action and be forthright in resisting damaging change. They are also a store of knowledge and expertise about local places which is an essential starting point in recognising and strengthening their identity. (Civic Voice 2012: Online)

In many ways I think this description captures much of Nottingham's own sense of civicness, independence and bolshiness, although perhaps in more forthright terms than participants typically conveyed.

The 'Notorious Nottingham' talk was not so politically motivated in this sense, especially as it was the annual Christmas lecture and therefore had meant to be a more light-hearted affair. As a talk concerning many of the city's most famous and infamous heroes and villains, much of the talk, nevertheless, celebrated the city's most 'provactive, stubborn, forceful, inspiring and outspoken' people from its civic past. The audience was almost exclusively older in age (50-60+) and white – which, as I will suggest, had a certain bearing on the nature of what proceeded. Huggon told a variety of short stories, anecdotes and readings from historical archives about various characters, events and infamous incidences from Nottingham's past. Included in this were: Police Chief Constable Athelstan Popkess, who gained notoriety in the city from the 1930s to the 1950s as a hardline reformer; the history of Goose Fair and the infamous 'Cheese Riot' in the Old Market Square; the various deeds and misgivings of some of Nottingham's Victorian judges and magistrates; pub life and pub culture across many of the city's now extinct pubs; and lastly, the influence of Alan Sillitoe where Huggon read a little from *Saturday Night and Sunday Morning* and discussed Sillitoe's legacy in Nottingham.

Huggon's theatrical voice and charisma as a storyteller made for a relaxed and enjoyable atmosphere. As I sat and observed from the back I could tell people enjoyed listening in for the references ('who remembers such and such') and were glad to interject when Huggon probed the audience for a particular detail of something. For many who were there, especially given many were old enough to remember Nottingham in the 1950s and 60s, there was clearly a sense of shared knowledge and *pride in sharing that knowledge*

amongst this group of civic friends and acquaintances (Morgan 2009). Huggon was the mirror for the audience to reminisce about the city, facilitating what Bennett describes as ‘the more subtle threads of community which are felt, experienced, understood, but almost never explicitly expressed’ (Bennett 2009: 192). Like the Heritage Open Day experience, I was curious and intrigued about what was being said about the city – the talk fostered new points of connection for me with the city, connections which I could take away with me and remember in the future. I, like others probably, were perhaps not ‘proud’ necessarily of this history in an objective sense, to the extent we condoned the notorious deeds of Nottingham’s villains (though perhaps in some cases we were). But rather proud because I, we, felt that we lived in a city where ‘things happened’, and where interesting characters lived and thrived. With this, Nottingham became a theatrical stage for stories to unfold; the city’s heroes and villains the protagonists, we (the citizens) the gently baying audience (and part judge and jury), and Huggon as the narrator and guide to the city’s past (Lindner 2006).

However, for all this rather good-natured civic pride, in the same evening I encountered a rather different kind of civic attitude from a member of the audience who sat next to me. This was an uncomfortable experience. During the mid-way interval of the talk I was scribbling a few notes on a piece of paper when a woman sitting next to me (white, probably over 60) voluntarily asked ‘are you here to report on the event?’ ‘No’, I explained, ‘I’m doing a research project on civic pride for a PhD thesis’. Immediately she responded ‘Oh...well we used to have it here [civic pride], but not anymore I don’t think’. Intrigued as to why this might be the case, I asked her some further questions and it was revealed quite quickly that she harboured anti-immigrant and frankly racist views about immigrants and non-white groups in the city, who for her had destroyed the Nottingham she once knew. ‘How can we have civic pride when we have streets called ‘Mandela Street’?’ was one comment I remember (which is inaccurate at the very least, as there is a Mandela Street in the Meadows, but no Mandela Street). It turned out she had lived in Nottingham her whole life, mostly in the northern part of the city centre around Hyson Green, which is now one of the most ethnically mixed areas of the city. Her discomfort over the changes she had seen in her local area had changed her sense of place. The presence of immigrant groups (which upon asking her, she mostly imagined were illegal, non-English-speaking and not altogether integrated within the ‘community’) clouded her impression of civic pride, as though the ‘authentic’ Nottingham was now a mere relic of its more white and parochial

past. This mixture of anxiety and fear she harboured over immigration contrasted with my own experiences of growing up in a mixed school – which I begrudgingly mentioned to her in order to say it was perhaps more ‘normal’ for me to see and mix with other races and cultures (although West Bridgford, where I grew up, has markedly less ethnic minorities than Hyson Green does). During our conversation a couple of other women in front of us turned around and agreed with what the woman was saying, though in less prejudicial terms (‘they should ‘learn the language’ – was the general feeling of concern). I engaged in some conversation with them but thought it best to keep my own thoughts to myself.

It was striking that by me simply mentioning civic pride, it evoked such a reaction – such a reactionary reaction – and in some ways a rather candid one for a public event where people did not all know each other. I had thought the talk was meant to be an opportunity to celebrate Nottingham – its past, present and future. But for these people, perhaps a sense of pride in the past cuts closely with a sense of shame and loss about the present (see: Sennett 2008). Perhaps the fact that the talk was on Nottingham’s past drew these kinds of people to attend. Were these people searching for a lost authentic Nottingham to which they could identify with? Was their strong sense of the past a reaction to their fears over the present? Richard Sennett puts it in these terms,

Thus does this passion to create a clear self-identity [for Nottingham] act to conserve the known past in the face of the disturbing present? The historical turn, the event or experience that doesn’t fit preconceived feelings and one’s sense of place, is deflated in its “truth value”. Because of this fear, the more comfortable, the easier dicta of the past are made the final standard of reference. (Sennett 2008: 10)

It certainly cannot be said that the woman encountered here represented the whole audience, nor was representative of the civic society board members. Equally however it is important not to deny or accept that such fears over multiculturalism, immigration and integration are a significant issue in some communities (see: Jones 2013). But the encounter at least suggested there might be a certain generational gap and ethnic divide in how (some) people perceive civic pride. This resonates with some of the analysis in Chapters 2,5, and 7 about the nature of belonging and the symbolic boundaries people make between ‘us’ and ‘them’ (cf. Antonsich 2010; Fortier 2005). It also resonates with

the broader point that civic identities are contested and that different people have different views about what the city and civic pride should represent and aspire to.

In the end, my experience at the civic society lecture in Nottingham revealed an ambiguous picture of civic pride. For most people the talk evoked a mixture of curiosity, laughter and positive (re)connection with the city, but for a few the talk was a mirror for reflecting on what Nottingham no longer is and induced feelings of 'civic mourning' (cf. Llwyn 2011). Civic pride can therefore take a variety of emotional trajectories, and for some this pride produces or reinforces certain boundaries. This point echoes Fortier's claim about 'the role of emotions in policing the terms of belonging and entitlement to citizenry' (2005: 368). It is clear that geographers need to understand the way ethnicity, migration and the contested nature of citizenship shape civic pride, and how certain narratives of civic pride reveal or hide certain social, racial, or class-based prejudices. As Chapter 5 discussed, a key ideological issue here is tolerance, and the inequalities and prejudices that make up British national identity (Furedi 2011; Fortier 2005). While Nottingham may have developed a good degree of tolerance and cohesion within and across many communities, for some people, it seems, tensions still remain, tensions which are entangled in feelings of fear and shame; tensions that, ultimately, make us question people's willingness to integrate outside of their ethnic community or identity.

But for all that said, it was a night in which one could observe and be absorbed by the infectious atmosphere of civic pride, and it was Huggon himself that had made it so. It was, to my mind, a slightly stuffy, 'old-worldly' kind of civic pride, quite detached from the city at large (who, in the city, I wonder, knew we were there, or even knows anything about the civic society?). Still, it was a coming together of local citizens to a public place to celebrate the city and its people. Citizens gathered into the agora, an orator spoke, and the crowd cheered.

Chapter 7: Nottingham at the Crossroads

– The Regional Geography of Civic Pride

A small and picturesque village, Nottingham can be found in The People's Republic of the East Midlands, which can be located on the outskirts of London, Newcastle Upon Tyne, Manchester and Glasgow, if you believe the bollocks the City Council spout in their hyped-up, over-the-top advertising.

Unencyclopedia⁵

Introduction

This chapter considers the regional geography of civic pride in Nottingham. It is primarily concerned with how civic actors in Nottingham constructed the local and regional identity of Nottingham and how other types of civic and non-civic identities impact on this. This extends from the previous two chapters by exploring different scales of Nottingham's internal and external sense of civic self and highlights the multiple spatialities at work within and across different civic pride discourses and narratives. Rather than necessarily attending to what people are proud of about Nottingham, this chapter introduces more of the 'negative' or 'weaker' aspects of Nottingham's civic pride – issues which people felt were missing or lacking in Nottingham, and which impacted on the city's status on a wider regional, national and even international stage. This chapter also discusses how these more negative aspects of civic pride are internalised, resisted or reappropriated in various ways by civic actors and citizens as a matter of civic pride (including, for example, the more ironic ways in which people take pride in their city). While the first half of the chapter considers Nottingham from a wider regional perspective, the second half of the chapter considers the geography of the city itself, and the relations, tensions and conflicts within the city and between its smaller communities. For this, I discuss the role of municipal boundaries and other cultural identities, and consider how these factors shape, bolster or otherwise disrupt particular discourses and practices of civic pride. In sum, this chapter aims to advance a more regional and multicultural analysis of civic pride in Nottingham in

⁵ <http://uncyclopedia.wikia.com/wiki/Nottingham> (Accessed 21 January 2015)

ways that have yet to be fully explored in the literature. It complements, but also at times challenges, literature on the regional identity of Nottingham and East Midlands, and connects with current debates about regions, regionality and relationality within geography (e.g. Daniel and Rycroft 1993; Jonas 2012 ; Stobart 2001). My analysis has broader ramifications for understanding the multiple and fluid nature of civic identity and civic culture, particularly in terms of thinking through how political boundaries and issues of scale within and beyond cities can be brought into productive tension with how communities and civic actors on the ground negotiate civic and other forms of pride. With this, I demonstrate how such processes produce and reflect multiple civics across multiple localities and regions (Naughton 2014; Ehland 2007).

I begin this chapter by looking at how participants constructed Nottingham's regional status and identity, and its complicated relationship to the East Midlands and England more broadly. I then consider, respectively: how the spatial configuration of the city itself is constructed and experienced, how different communities promote civic pride within (and in spite of) the city, how different municipal boundaries shape, alter and disrupt civic pride, and, from this, I assess whether the local (regional) geography of Nottingham is productive or disruptive for civic pride and what this might entail for Nottingham's future. The final section of this chapter provides a discussion of Robin Hood and evaluates what Robin Hood brings to Nottingham as a symbol and source of civic pride. This complements my earlier discussion – on Alan Sillitoe - about the confluence between literary and cultural geographies (and the role of fictional icons in animating in civic pride). Robin Hood is useful for illustrating Nottingham's regional complexities, and for showing how different people have different ambitions and aspirations for Robin Hood as a cultural and political icon. I then end with a short conclusion, in which I suggest that themes of region, scale, boundary and multiplicity need to inform our understanding of civic pride and civic identity.

“People Forget about the Midlands, it’s like We Don’t Exist” – Nottingham’s Regional Problems

As my Introduction to Nottingham shows (Chapter 4), Nottingham is located in the East Midlands region. The East Midlands comprises the counties of Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire, Leicestershire, Rutland, Northamptonshire and Lincolnshire (see: Figure 1 in Chapter 3). Within the East Midlands, Nottingham is located north-centrally (within the southern portion of Nottinghamshire), about 15 miles east of Derby and 25 miles north of Leicester. It could be described as a provincial city located in the geographical heart of England. Despite Nottingham’s fairly central location within the nation, participants were nevertheless uncertain and frustrated by Nottingham’s regional identity and status as a city. The East Midlands generally, and Nottingham specifically, were imagined by some participants as a ‘grey area’, caught by a sense of inbetweenness – primarily between the more popularly well-known ‘North’ and ‘South’, but also in terms of its relationship with, and status in, the wider Midlands area. Some participants felt that the city lacked the kind of regional distinctiveness and cultural identity of other cities and other regions in England. As Robert Shore (2014: Online) identifies, this is a pervasive conundrum for the Midlands:

The Midlands - that great swath of England squeezed between the self-mythologising power blocs of north and south on the national map – has an image problem. And that problem, essentially, is that it doesn't have an image. Even in this great age of identity politics, coming from the Midlands is tantamount to coming from nowhere in particular. Professional northerners are legion, but professional Midlanders?

Such a lament that the Midlands lacks identity belies the fact that the Midlands in the 19th century was highly regarded and valorised as a pioneering region of the industrial revolution and a focal point for municipal autonomy and the new ‘civic gospel’ (Hall 1997; Hunt 2004; Stobart 2004). However, Stobart (2001) argues that the *East Midlands* specifically differed and became isolated from what came to be known as The Midlands during the 19th century. In part this was due to the localisation of its industry and trade networks, which were predominantly based in textiles and coal mining. Stobart argues that cities like Nottingham, Derby and Leicester developed their own particular patterns of

trade and industry, and this produced a more fragmented regional, but also, cultural landscape. Effectively this meant that unlike other regions, the East Midlands lacked a certain 'psychological oneness', and would perhaps become more parochial (i.e. more locally fragmented) as a result. As Stobart notes, it has only been more formally recognised as a distinct administrative and cultural region in the past century:

the east midlands [sic] industrialised strongly but apparently without experiencing a parallel growth in wider regional integration and identity. Constructions of the East Midlands as a broad unitary spatial entity date not from the industrialisation of the 19th century but from the activities of planners, geographers, and historians in the 20th century. (Stobart 2001: 1308)

Before the 1960s, cities like Nottingham, Derby and Leicester were in fact part of what was officially called the 'North Midlands', which was a region created for the 1881 UK census, and the current administrative boundaries of the East Midlands only became fully realised in 1974 (Hardhill et al 2006). This is why in his historical study of the area, Stobart distinguishes between the 'east midlands' region and the 'East Midlands'. This may be one important historical reason as to why people in Nottingham feel the city has an ambiguous regional identity – because the East Midlands itself has not developed organically, nor has it been integrated politically over a long period of time. Hardill et al (2006: 180) go as far to say that over the past century 'the vast of majority of the region's inhabitants have had no idea what [administrative] region they live in'.

But as Stobart (2001: 1306) notes, regions are never fixed or natural, but are rather historically contingent and socially constructed: 'regions are not pregiven "naturalistic objects" fixed in space and time; as both constructions and material entities they are "humanly produced and humanly changeable"'. As Gilbert (1988) argues, it is also important to differentiate between the types of region being constructed - such as whether it is a region of cultural identity, a functional economic area, a physical or environmental region, or a region constructed for administrative purposes (political or statistical, say). It also important to consider how regions overlap and share interests, or alternatively compete with one or another at a range of political, economic and cultural levels and scales. Not least it is the context in which the region is being imagined and mobilised that is important, for this frames how and why regions emerge and dissolve, or

change in composition and function. The East Midlands certainly presents a case for understanding this multiple and contingent view of regions and resonates with a range of current work within geography on regions and regionality (e.g. Bonnett and Alexander 2013; Jonas 2012; Jones and Paasi 2013). As we attempt to understand civic pride through this more regional lens, we must also, as Jonas (2012) notes, attend to the issue of *relationality*, and how consider how civic pride in Nottingham is shaped, mediated and galvanised through its relations and relationships with other places and other regions. One could argue in a more absolute sense, civic pride *only* emerges because of such relations and relationships with other places and regions. We therefore need to question how people in Nottingham perceive the city in relation to, for example, other similar sized cities, other 'Core Cities' and other neighbouring cities.

Wherever They Say I am, That's Where I'm Not:

As now a member of the 'Core Cities' group in Britain, and as a city historically crowned as 'Queen of the Midlands' (the origins of that phrase are unclear to the author's knowledge), Nottingham is in many ways an economically strong, authoritative city, that may be small in population relative other cities, but punches above its weight in terms of its economic clout. The Economic Strategy Research Bureau [ESRB] (2014) recently calculated that Nottingham has a 26% higher GVA (gross value added) rate (per head) than the national average; while in comparison to other EU cities:

Nottingham has one of the higher levels of GDP per head [in relation to a number of] small to medium sized cities in the EU, 26% higher than the EU average and above many of the larger cities in southern Europe (such as Alicante and Córdoba). (ESRB 2014: 4-5)

As I noted in my Introduction to Nottingham section however, there are of course very deep structural inequalities in Nottingham. As the ESRB report notes, much of Nottingham's economic successes are driven by an in-commuting worker population, many of whom live outside the city, leaving an impoverished inner-city. This is not entirely unusual of course for most metropolitan cities, although it represents an on-going concern for the city (Nottingham Growth Plan 2011). But as a city with many large public and

private employers, two successful universities, a strong retail market, a local icon in Robin Hood, a famous football team in Nottingham Forest, and an tourism industry worth around half a billion pounds (and a regional tourism industry purportedly worth £1.5 billion) (Experience Nottinghamshire 2014), one might think that - given all this wealth and identity - local people might quite easily identify with, and classify, Nottingham as a distinctive, regionally powerful city. But, it seems, many do not think this way. From the impressions of a number of participants interviewed for this research, and their impressions of what other people in the city think, many are rather guarded about Nottingham's regional identity, and feel like it is a city that is often forgotten, misrepresented or left behind.

Of course, one might assume most ordinary citizens do not scroll through reams of statistics, reports and tourists guides to shape and judge their opinion of the city; rather they tend to lean upon more general impressions and experiences to assess Nottingham's relative status as a city. While participants on the whole felt proud of the city's friendliness and bolshiness, many participants also felt the city lacked 'regional obviousness' and felt confused about what the East Midlands identity is or represents. Participants were unable to easily locate Nottingham on the cultural map of English cities - which for a number civic leaders and business people, was a key source of frustration. One issue here is in which direction - north, south, east, west - does Nottingham look to and compare itself with and against?

The city that a number of participants mentioned to compare Nottingham with was the neighbouring city of Derby. Derby has slightly smaller population of around 250,000, but has played a key role in the economic development of the region, and was historically a key trading partner for Nottingham and other cities in the region. Commercial linkages around iron, coal and textile industries were significant in the 18th and 19th century between Nottingham and Derby, and this close economic relationship has continued to the present - shown for example by the recent establishment of the Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire Chamber of Commerce. As 'Queen of the Midlands' Nottingham has often lay claim to its economic and cultural superiority over Derby, which only became officially recognised as a city in 1977 (Nottingham gained city status in 1897). As such, some participants remarked confidently or made ironic jests to the effect of 'we're obviously better than Derby' or 'we're more of a city than Derby'. Others argued that this

rivalry was more hype than serious - more something that Nottingham Forest or Notts County football fans took seriously, routinely professing their 'hatred' for Derby County on the terraces each week.

But this relationship with Derby, and more broadly the East Midlands, exposes an underlying tension in Nottingham in relation to civic pride. This tension is chiefly one of aspiration. Philip, the previously mentioned councillor, for example, told me Nottingham is a city that should set its sights *beyond* Derby, *beyond* the East Midlands, and begin to see itself as a more national and international city. Claiming a regional sense of civic pride about Nottingham being bigger and better than its nearest East Midlands rivals was for him, and for others, a rather redundant point, a *fait accompli*; and that instead, the city should be seeking to compare itself to larger cities like Sheffield, Leeds and Manchester. In Phillip's words '...the football fans might look at Derby and Leicester, but it's no good, cause you're actually looking backwards if you look at Derby and Leicester'. While most participants were not so dismissive of Derby (some participants were in praise of it), others similarly felt Nottingham continues to sit on the cusp of East Midlands 'irrelevance', lost in its own provincialism, when it could be a more nationally significant city. This shows an interesting divergence between a more light-hearted civic pride expressed in football rivalries, and a more serious political construction of civic pride expressed in terms of urban ambition. One is a kind of civic pride 'lite', while the other is rather a grander vision of civic enterprise and entrepreneurialism; both nevertheless show how civic pride can underpinned by different forms of competition (Hall 1997; Harvey 1989).

But while people in Nottingham may be confident of its status within the East Midlands, it nevertheless remains on the cusp of being recognised as a major national city. Being 'on the cusp' of anything can foster a creeping paranoia and a doomed fatalism about whether success will happen (see: Clavane 2011). Nottingham may of course never be a major national or international city, but because there is, for some, an ambition or a desire for it to be recognised as such, *this* is what produces this inferiority complex, because aspirations have not matched the reality. And this where the regional issue returns. For it is a question of whether, or how much, Nottingham should increase its profile and status on the national stage through its identification with the East Midlands; or whether it is better served identifying as 'northern', or a Midlands city (see also: Chapter 5). Catherine, a local artisan from Sherwood (an area north-east of the city centre) was frustrated by

what she perceived as the ‘lumping together’ of the North and South into two amorphous, and misleadingly simplified, regions that Nottingham does not easily identify with or fit into. In contrast to Phillip’s feeling that Nottingham needs to look beyond the East Midlands, Catherine argued that it is the Midlands itself (she did not specifically identify the East Midlands) that needs to be ‘reclaimed’ and better promoted if Nottingham is to better assert itself. Echoing Robert Shore’s lament (see above), she claims that:

“People forget about the Midlands, it’s like we don’t exist...You know if you’re north of the Watford Gap, you’re north! And so when I lived in Leeds I’d get this - oh are you southern, even though it’s not very far...it’s about an hour in the car isn’t it? So this is another thing about Nottingham, we need to promote that we’re in the Midlands rather than the North or South.”

Samson— a student originally from Nottingham who now studies in Leeds - expressed a similar frustration, but felt that it was in fact the association the city has with the industrial ‘North’ that actually maligned its regional identity:

“I do think it gets grouped in with places like Sheffield and Bradford as being a grotty northern city, which is I think unfair...cause we’re the East Midlands. Firstly we’re not northern, secondly [it has been] tarted up a lot and it’s a decent city now.”

The construction here of Nottingham being a ‘tarted up’, ‘decent city’ and not a ‘grotty northern city’, was not a viewpoint that was widely shared amongst the participants I interviewed. As I have already noted, many participants in fact aspired to being affiliated as northern in order to claim Nottingham as a being a friendly, working class city. This echoes Gilbert’s (1988) and Stobart’s (2001) points about how regional geographies become framed in particular ways to serve particular purposes, and become strategically placed within time and space. Catherine and Samson seem to agree that the East Midlands/Midlands needs to be better understood and represented. In Catherine’s case, this is a matter of making a more rigid distinction between North, South and the Midlands (as Catherine suggests, the subjective and relational ways in which people construct the North and South mean that the boundaries of these regions are often arbitrary, and this means people tend to gloss over the Midlands). But in Samson’s case there is a strong

sense in which Nottingham needs to actively distance itself from the ‘grotty’ North as he, rather dismissively, sees it, and celebrate its East Midlands identity. Once again this shows how pride often encourages people to make seemingly authoritative statements over the nature and extent of the differences between certain people and places (*‘we’re not like that, we’re like this’*). Class and regional prejudices therefore shape and structure the way people perceive civic pride and imagine political urban futures.

Not only did participants feel that Nottingham lacks regional obviousness, many also felt that other cities are more passionate about their civic identities and have a stronger sense of pride compared to Nottingham. Cities that were perceived to have a stronger sense of identity and pride included Manchester, Liverpool and Newcastle, and to a lesser extent Bristol and Birmingham. What was it that Nottingham felt inferior over in comparison to these cities?

Several participants suggested that the Nottingham accent and dialect was not that distinctive, and this led to people outside of the city not being able to recognise that someone was from Nottingham (or the East Midlands). Indeed it is fairly uncommon to hear the identifier ‘Nottinghamians’ to describe a local Nottingham person in the same way one might hear of ‘Liverpudlians’ or ‘Geordies’. Meanwhile, many participants felt that outward perceptions of the city are largely limited to a few famous cultural associations and negative stereotypes; a loose association with Robin Hood, Nottingham Forest Football Club and more recently its stereotype of gun crime and violence (but don’t all insiders inevitably think that outsiders stereotype and misrepresent places – is that not the narcissism of pride?). Polly, who works for Experience Nottinghamshire (the city and county’s central tourism board), suggested that what Nottingham seems to lack is a ‘tribal element’. For her, Nottingham lacks togetherness as a city, in contrast with other cities that are more confident behind their civic identity:

“I think Newcastle is an interesting one because there is a tribal element. There is no tribal element about Nottingham. So the Mancunians, and the Liverpudlians and the Newcastles...I suspect we’re more similar to Sheffield and Leeds on that basis, that sort of triangle of Midlands [sic] cities...that are not so – parochial is not quite the right word – but I think you’d know what I mean by that, not so focused on their own area. Whereas Liverpudlians have a sense of their own self-being, as

do Mancunians, as do Geordies.”

I think it is wrong to assume that people in Nottingham (or indeed Sheffield and Leeds) lack a ‘sense of their own self-being’ - for it is clear from the data discussed so far that people do think about, in reflexive ways, what kind of civic identity the city has, and how citizens collectively think and behave. But the point here is that Nottingham’s identity is not an assertive or well-known one. Polly begins to hint that perhaps Nottingham is a more open and less parochial city because of this; but she later told me how this was not necessarily a good thing, because it meant people tended not to talk up the city or advertise what the city has to offer.

The contrast she makes with Liverpool is significant. For as Belcham’s (2000) work on Liverpool suggests there has often been a recognisable ‘Merseypride’ in Liverpool that has asserted itself into the national imagination. He describes this Merseypride as a self-referential and self-aggrandising type of pride that has mythologised the ‘exceptionalism’ and ‘otherness’ of Liverpool as a city. Of course this is no doubt bolstered by the larger size of the city, its history as an international (imperial) port, and the region’s more distinctive Liverpoolian/Scouse accent. Latterly this means, for good or worse, Liverpool tends to be far more stereotyped and parodied in the media and popular culture – which itself helps reify and strengthen the region’s distinctiveness and obviousness (see also: Boland 2010b). One could argue that Liverpool’s civic identity is also supported by a more developed cultural infrastructure in comparison to Nottingham, particularly in terms of its museums. The Museum of Liverpool, the Merseyside Maritime Museum and the Beatles Museum in particular have the size and gravitas to dwarf Nottingham’s main cultural facilities – the Museum of Nottingham Life (hardly an equivalent to Liverpool’s Museum of Liverpool), Nottingham Castle, the Galleries of Justice and Nottingham Contemporary, to name some of the larger ones. This is not to diminish Nottingham’s cultural infrastructure or suggest that Nottingham is any less proud because of this. But it does perhaps highlight how larger cities tend to have the size and economic power to invest in and promote civic pride and civic identity in ways that smaller cities simply cannot. In this way, it is not that people in Nottingham lack a ‘sense of their own self being’, as Polly describes, as though out of will or because people lack pride - but rather the (relative) size of Nottingham, its indistinctive accent, its economic power and cultural infrastructure, altogether does not allow for the city to be absorbed in such a self-referential and self-aggrandising story of

itself, and so the city's pride appears to be weaker.

This first part of the chapter has addressed how regional geographies can shape, alter and at times undermine people's sense of civic pride. As I have begun to show, but will continue to develop later on, when civic actors reflexively unravel the civic identity of the city and re-scope civic pride to a wider regional lens, they expose much of what is contingent and fragile about the nature of pride – that pride can be taken away, given a hard blow, exposed as something else, something weak or lacking. Nottingham's supreme confidence over its nearest rival Derby is mirrored sharply back its own inferiority complex in relation to other cities, particularly larger cities that appear stronger or more passionate about their civic identity. Another key point then is that civic pride is produced and negotiated relationally - it is shaped and animated through the geography of inter-urban competition and comparison, which is as much an imagined geography as a lived, or a material, one. But to repeat the critical angle I have offered throughout this thesis so far, regional images and stereotypes can often dramatically distort realities on the ground, and say little of the socio-economic profile of regions and the diversity of the communities that live there. A key caveat, however, is that many people quite simply enjoy such distorted realities – they enjoy (false) stereotypes and the imagined geographies of 'us' and 'them' – because it gives people a stronger sense of identity, community and belonging, and therefore pride (Armstrong and Hognested 2003; Linder 2006). As I show below however, regional imaginations can still shape the way local people behave and relate to one another.

Towards an Everyday Regional Identity? Nottingham's Self-Deprecation and Humour

Following on from the analysis above, there is one final issue to raise here in relation Nottingham's wider regional identity, before I turn to look at the spatial configuration of Nottingham and the diversity of its civic communities. While much of the regional literature in geography tends to focus on the history, development and spatial formations of regions and regional imaginaries and the different ways they can be interpreted and

analysed (Jonas 2012; Jones and Paasi 2013), normally what is less theorised or demonstrated empirically is how much regional identities shape and impact on people's day to day lives and how they are embodied by the people that assume these identities (though see: Bonnett and Alexander 2013; Boland 2010b). This is not surprising in some ways because – as I will reflect upon in the next chapter – civic identities are not always immediately obvious in people's day to day lives; people often embody and articulate civic identities and forms of civic pride in more tacit and subtle ways. This is as much an ethnographic question; how can we observe local (civic) identities in a given environment or community, and how then can we describe and write about them? My participant observation work has to some extent give me an angle with which to do this; but here I am interested how participants themselves observed the 'Nottingham character', and what it is to 'do' and 'be' Nottingham. I have already shown how friendliness and bolshiness seem to be two key characteristics that define Nottingham's civic identity (or rather that illustrate what people are most proud of about Nottingham as a city), and now I want to problematise this civic identity from a more regional perspective, returning to some of the more negative and weak aspects about Nottingham that participants raised. My claim is that the Nottingham character can often come across as somewhat timid or hesitant; or at least local people seem to be reticent to becoming overly proud or fiercely defensive. And yet while this frustrates some people in the city, for others this lack of a strong pride has been internalised as a matter of pride in and of itself - manifest as a form of community-building and as a way of engaging 'appropriately locally' with others. Specifically, I want to show, if somewhat briefly, that through local humour Nottingham's weaknesses and faults can be internalised and reappropriated as a source of, or a basis for, civic pride. This is important to highlight because while regional imaginaries may paint particular and selective images of places that bear little relation to how people live, exploring how people internalise and embody regional imaginaries within their everyday lives tests this image against the reality; and further illustrates how local citizens think and behave in locally and regionally 'appropriate' ways.

The first aspect I want to look at here returns to the issue of whether Nottingham has, or rather lacks, a 'tribal element' - that is, a distinctive and shared cultural identity on which to base its civic pride. I have discussed how Nottingham lacks regional obviousness, which for some fosters a perception (and a subsequent paranoia) that Nottingham therefore tends to be forgotten, underrepresented or misrepresented somehow in the national

imaginary. As pride is often related to confidence, it should follow that when a city lacks confidence in itself it lacks pride and self-belief (and vice versa). What kinds of ways then do Nottingham citizens perhaps reflect this in how they talk about and act in the city? This question requires looking at the style of refrain in how people ‘talk up’ (and ‘talk down’) the city, which in this case appears to, at times, come across as hesitant, cautious or even negative. Polly, mentioned above, thought the following:

“I don’t think it always believes in itself. It doesn’t always put its best foot forward. I get very irritated with fellow citizens who are too quick to run things down, and not fast enough to sought [out] what’s there... And I’ve heard very senior businessmen who should know better, who truly should know better. And then in the next breath they tell you that nobody supports the city and nobody says positive things about it, and I so often wish to say, ‘well you should just listen to yourself then...do you not believe in this city?’”

Polly shows here a level of frustration about how Nottingham lacks belief in itself as a city, suggesting that the very people who should believe in the city (senior businessmen) are too often quick to be negative and instead ‘should know better’. Is Polly, like the Coalition government, searching for a lost generation of Victorian-style civic leaders and civic minded capitalists to promote, wholeheartedly, the virtues of the city? At a purely emotional level, Polly’s quote reflects much of how civic pride discourses often waver between feelings of aspiration and frustration – a desire for something more, but a reality of something less (see next chapter for more on this). Whether Polly’s perceptions, as someone involved in the tourism sector, are partial and based in purely anecdotal evidence, or whether there is a wider perception about Nottingham’s lack of civic pride within the business community is unclear – although from the interviews I conducted with business people in the city, this did not seem the case. However, Max, a local surveyor in the city, did feel Nottingham does not always set its ambitions high enough, and that within the private sector particularly, there was frustration that Nottingham (and by implication Nottingham City Council) did not always take enough ‘risks’ as a city:

“...cities need to keep reinventing themselves, keep changing, keeping it sort of fresh, coming up with ideas. And I don’t think we’re very good at that. I think that’s a frustration that quite a lot of us feel. But you just sort of think come on

guys, you've got enough intelligence around the place to make a difference, but you don't seem to want to do it and stay safe-ish."

For Edward, a council officer, it was not the private sector or local government that necessarily lacked confidence, but more ordinary citizens, in terms of the way people talk about the city in everyday conversation. Originally from Newcastle, Edward similarly perceived a level of timidity or reticence in the Nottingham character, as though - like Polly suggested - the city did not always believe in itself or that people are less willing come to its defence. For Edward, an important part of civic pride is how far people come to the city's defence and stand up for the city – something which he felt people in Nottingham lacked, or were slow to engage with by comparison to people in his home city of Newcastle:

"the other thing I notice here is that you can be critical about Nottingham and you have to be really hard about them till people will jump to their defence. You know I've tried this before, because I'm not from here, I can say 'oh bloody place is you know full of drugs people, every time you walk in the street you can smell cannabis all the time. They all look the same, they all give these sort of rap responses which I can't understand. Customer service is pathetic, you go into shops, the people put up with just rubbish customer service'. And I say these things and there comes a point when you just make something up just to get a response...and then they might come in – 'ah well hang on, hang on, what you talking about...' Then they'll start slowly coming to its defence. But you wouldn't do that in Newcastle, you wouldn't get two sentences down and they'd be at you...Now I don't know if that's your civic pride barometer - if you slag something off till it kicks back."

The notion of a 'civic pride barometer' is significant here, for it suggests that civic pride might be something that is measurable through certain proxies – in this case a proxy based on how much someone is willing to come to a city's defence if it is being threatened or mocked in some way. There is also a notion here of civic pride being put to certain thresholds - points beyond which civic pride is activated and 'kicks back'. I will explore what this might mean further in the next chapter and what the idea of coming to a city's defence and intervening in civic affairs ultimately says about civic pride and the people who engage with it. But here once again it seems Nottingham is portrayed as a city not

only with a weak or under-recognised regional and cultural identity, but a city that lacks strength and conviction its own civic attitudes.

What is interesting here is that this image of Nottingham being somehow slow to defend itself, or weak in its sense of civic pride, does not entirely dispel the notion of Nottingham being a bolshie city - but in fact confirms it in some ways. One would expect a bolshie city, a city of rebels, of fighters, of free-spirits, to be fiercely proud and therefore quick to come to its defence. This holds true in many ways as I have observed in the previous chapter. But this sense of Nottingham having a weak sense of civic pride also serves to show how Nottingham citizens are to some extent bolshie against their own bolshiness. Precisely because, rather than in spite, of, Nottingham's lack of a regional identity or tribal element, people in Nottingham tend to internalise this as a *matter of pride* – as a kind of reinforced negativity that allows them to offset the need to talk up the city. In other words, there is a mutual relationship here between a lack of status on the one hand and an unwillingness to confront or reverse this lack of status on the other - which reflects much of what bolshiness is. One could argue that this is a characteristic element of the East Midlands character more broadly – a tendency to internalise a lack of status as a source of pride, as though to deflect any expectations that it might need to change (see: Stobart 2001). This speaks to the broader notion that regional identities are contradictory, fragmented and at times negatively self-reinforcing (Jones 2013). This is a key source of frustration for many civic leaders in Nottingham, but for ordinary citizens it is, in some sense, a way of being appropriately local and locally appropriate. Nottingham's lack of regional obviousness might be bad for business, but socially it forms a shared joke or irony, which then becomes embodied and reinforced in everyday attitudes and behaviours. As councillor Ian, mentioned in Chapter 6, put it: "I think Nottingham understates itself... it's proud to understate itself actually."

One particularly astute observation of this came from Alan, the writer from *LeftLion* magazine. He understood something in Nottingham's double personality, between its bolshiness and rebelliousness on the one hand and a reluctance to talk itself up positively on the other - which, he suggests, has turned into a kind of Nottingham sensibility and refrain:

"So I think there's always been a sense of rebellion in Nottingham but I don't think

that Nottingham has ever been very good at standing up for itself. Very good at shouting at other people and telling them what to do, but it doesn't seem as good at actually promoting and talking about itself. And I wonder how much that comes out in the attitudes, the kind of gentle sarcasm, the not taking yourself too seriously."

For Alan then, Nottingham people have internalised this regional sense of bolshiness but in two, rather contradictory ways; people are comfortable 'shouting at other people and telling them what to do' on the one hand, but are not 'good at actually promoting and talking about [the city] on the other. When under threat pride emerges forcefully, but when people are required to summon a sense of pride for more positive reasons, people revert to a more guarded posture, as though to resist any pretensions of arrogance or hubris. This might be a fairly common trait in all cities, perhaps one which defines part of the British character (see for discussion: Wind-Cowie and Gregory 2011). Instead of being confident behind the city's virtues, people in Nottingham revert to 'gentle sarcasm' and 'not taking yourself too seriously'. This reflects perhaps both a lack of confidence in the city, and, conversely, an aversion to being 'loud and proud' like other cities appear to be.

Humour was not something that most participants mentioned about the city, and it would be difficult to assert that there is a distinctively 'Nottingham humour' or 'East Midlands humour'. But as I have noted, this bolshie and ironic refrain seems to be an integral feature of the East Midlands identity, even if it is a somewhat jovial and reactionary one (Shore 2014; Sillitoe 1987). Nottingham does have a number of comedy clubs and since 2009 has held a Nottingham Comedy Festival each year with co-ordinated events across the city. The *LeftLion* magazine is perhaps the most valuable empirical source for understanding the Nottingham humour, because of the way it both talks up and talks down the city, using all kinds of local idioms and dialect-speak to comedic effect. The implicit sub-text of what the *LeftLion* magazine to some extent conveys is a sense that Nottingham people *could* be more proud, but often (actively or reluctantly) decide not to be, which itself becomes a kind of bolshie and ironic pride. I asked Alan to sum up what he is most proud about the city:

"Well I guess really, if I'm as proud of my city as I am, I should be saying literature. I should waffling on now about all the great figures that have come out of here.

But I think I'm actually gonna say humour. That for me is the thing that gets you through, every day. And maybe I've just encountered more odd kind of humour. I mean the other day up Mansfield Rd, [I witnessed] a guy being pulled on a bike by two huskies because he couldn't be arsed to pedal. I don't know why that makes me proud. I love it because on one level it's ingenious and on another it represents a lack of ambition."

The success of the *LeftLion* magazine and the kind of cultural cachet it has forged in the city – it is distributed for free in many shops, pubs and venues, and has a digital version online – is reason to believe that people are still interested in local identities and local culture despite (or because of) the more global and celebrity-driven world we live in. Local humour in this case works as both a symptom of and antidote to a weak regional identity – which itself becomes a kind of reclaimed pride. There is certainly potential here to develop a more sustained argument and analysis on the relationship between humour, identity and pride in cities – in terms of how places come together through shared jokes and ironies (cf. Clavane 2011; Maconie 2007).

This section has shown how wider regional imaginaries are embodied in everyday attitudes and behaviours, challenging regional geographers to think more seriously about how regions and regional identities are experienced and produced in everyday contexts and internalised in both positive and negative ways (Bennett 2013; Bonnett and Alexander 2013). The analysis suggests that civic pride is not always a strong, assertive and confident sentiment or value, but something which gets internalised and externalised in more subtle and understated ways – at times to the frustration of civic leaders. The fact is that people in local government or in the city's business sector are often more invested in, and therefore anxious about, promoting a good image in order to improve the city's prosperity, maintain their own reputations and legitimacy as people working in the public realm, and to increase wider civic engagement. Local citizens, or at least people outside of these more official civic domains, on the other hand can more easily rest their high ideals and dumb down civic pride (and therefore deflect the need to talk up the city). It is hard to determine precisely what Nottingham 'lacks' at this regional level - identity, confidence or pride. To some extent it is all three, but we might rather see this as precisely what people are proud of about Nottingham, as though it has become a shared irony that resonates with the kind of bolshie image Nottingham people aspire to in some ways.

Other Civic Identities Within and Beyond Nottingham

I now want to examine how civic pride can be configured and scaled in more localised ways across different communities and municipal boundaries. While civic pride may be something which primarily refers to the city-wide scale, there are multiple other civics to attend to in the city, which (re)configure and (re)scale what civic pride is, and means, and where and how it is produced. The premise here is that people do not simply live in 'Nottingham', but live in particular areas and communities in Nottingham, and may therefore identify with, belong to, and be proud of, a specific part of Nottingham. Furthermore, what Nottingham is, as a geographic, territorial entity, is not entirely straightforward to determine, because Nottingham is a metropolitan city that sprawls over and encompasses a number of municipal areas (i.e. it incorporates places outside of the official city boundaries). Examining how civic pride at a city-wide scale relates to civic pride at a more localised community level, and how this then gets produced within and across different municipal boundaries, allows us to observe the relational dynamics of civic pride and how it is 'built up' through multiple, connecting civics. It also highlights the potential discontinuities in civic pride, and how civic pride in and for Nottingham can yet again be weakened or disrupted through these multiple and fragmented configurations of the city.

This approach builds on wider literature within urban geography that has focussed on understanding the plural geographies of urban identity (Darling 2009; Kearns and Forrest 2000; Jones 2013), and how place-based identities and forms of belonging are made multiple, hybrid, diffuse and diverse, and operate across different scales and contexts (Massey 1994; Wind-Cowie and Gregory 2011). The point I want to make in this part of the chapter is that civic actors are highly aware of the internal diversity of the city's communities, but this does not mean that civic pride necessarily suffers as a result. Many participants were proud to detail their intimate knowledge of the city. This reflects the fact that many people's experience of civic life is at this localised scale, and local people are proud to 'defend their turf' and celebrate difference as a *positive* aspect of civic pride (Wind-Cowie and Gregory 2011).

What follows is a discussion about different geographical communities in Nottingham and

the different ways people perceive and experience civic pride and civic identity within the city. I then examine the influence and impact of municipal boundaries within and around the Nottingham area, and how different civic identities and urban processes (re)shape and (re)configure people's perceptions of civic pride and the overall cohesion of the city. I end this chapter with a discussion about Robin Hood and his role in the regional identity of Nottingham. Although a number of the debates about Robin Hood appear quite separate from issues of internal diversity and the regional geography of Nottingham, in other ways Robin Hood, as a figurehead for the city, represents a microcosm of Nottingham's regional issues and ambitions, reflecting both Nottingham's potential as a city and its relative timidity and hesitancy to take pride in itself.

Nottingham's Spatial Heterogeneity

As I noted in Chapter 2, for civic identities to exist a city or community must be to some extent politically and geographically bounded and socially defined - even if this obscures internal differences and the porosity of these boundaries themselves (Bridges 1994; Savage et al 2005; Forrest and Kearns 2001). The city produces both real and imagined boundaries within which a broader civic identity emerges; in this case, a Nottingham-wide civic identity. However, just as people identify with, relate to and belong to the city in different ways, so there is, in reality, no 'one' civic culture, but a set of civic cultures that make up the city – multiple civics based in multiple neighbourhoods, communities and cultural groups. Scale and context are important therefore in how civic pride is framed and constructed, because they determine the parameters around which people experience civic life, act and intervene in the civic sphere, and define a particular sense of civic pride. For when one asks 'are you proud of where you live?', this could be the street one lives, the neighbourhood, the community, the town, city or even nation, depending on the context of the question and who is asking it.

Participants acknowledged how Nottingham contained a wide variety of identities, ethnicities, class groups and environmental qualities within and across different areas of the city. Anyone who knows Nottingham well, would likely remark upon the differences between, say, some of the inner-city housing estates like St Ann's, the Meadows and Sneinton, wealthier areas such as Wollaton and the Park, and more isolated communities

like Clifton and Bulwell at the southern and northern extremities of the city boundaries - all of which have their own internal diversity. Then there is the close proximity of suburban areas like West Bridgford, Beeston and Carlton, which also represent distinctive communities but which are situated in different municipal areas. So when confronting the question of civic pride, not only is there a question of spatial variance and internal diversity, but also a question what exactly constitutes 'Nottingham' geographically and what is counted as officially (and unofficially) 'Nottingham'. How did participants express these differences and what is at stake here?

On the first question of spatial variance across the city, there are, as in any other city, a number of distinctive areas and communities that are well-known to local people and which form part of people's mental map of the city. Many of the most distinctive areas were formed from older parishes and sub-divisions of land and territory from Nottingham's early development throughout the second millennium. But some areas were Victorian-built housing areas and estates, many of which – like the Meadows and St Ann's - have since gone through demolition and upgrading throughout the 20th century. The present structure of the city is subdivided by the city council into 20 area wards (for which each councillor is elected to represent) which largely correspond to how the city is colloquially known, although in some cases wards cover multiple residential communities (for example, the Berridge Ward covers Sherwood Rise, Hyson Green, New Basford and Forest Fields). To an outsider such small variations across different wards and communities may mean very little, but they might be important to those people living there – indeed a matter of pride. For example, Duncan, the councillor mentioned in Chapter 6, has represented the Bulwell Forest ward for a number of years (along with two other councillors). He recognised civic pride as partly a 'territorial thing', which is not just about pride for Nottingham, but within Nottingham as well:

“You know I represent a ward in the north of Nottingham, which has three different communities within it. It has Highbury Vale, Rise Park and Top Valley. And if you say to somebody in Rise Park 'oh well Top Valley, Rise Park, same thing really', you know they'll bristle. You know we are very parochial in the way that we think about place. I think you know partly civic pride is that - it's pride in the concept of your team, you know, in the place that you're from.”

Another participant, Charlie, who works as an engineer at the Green's Mill Windmill in Sneinton (which is part of the Dales ward), also recognised this distinction between areas, but framed the city in a peculiar way. Asked whether he thought there were differences between inside the official Nottingham boundaries (the city) and outside the official boundaries, Charlie replied:

“it's not in the city and out the city, it's Meadows, it's St Ann's, it's Hyson Green...I know they're all kind of surrounding the city but the city as far I'm aware, the city is just where they all go in and mingle. There's no real identity with the middle of the city.”

So here, the city refers to what is in fact the city centre, and people within the areas surrounding the city merely 'go in and mingle'. Because of this Charlie perceives 'no real identity in the middle' – which could either mean there is no 'Nottingham identity' or no city centre identity that is distinctive. Other participants commented on how in areas like Clifton and Bulwell, on the southern and northern extremities of the city, respectively, their relative distance to the city centre meant that these places had formed their own smaller communities; to the extent that the people who live there talk about 'going *into* Nottingham' (to go shopping for instance). Beneath the wider imaginary of Nottingham and what a sense of 'Nottinghamness' means then, there are smaller civic communities that are equally important to people's sense of identity.

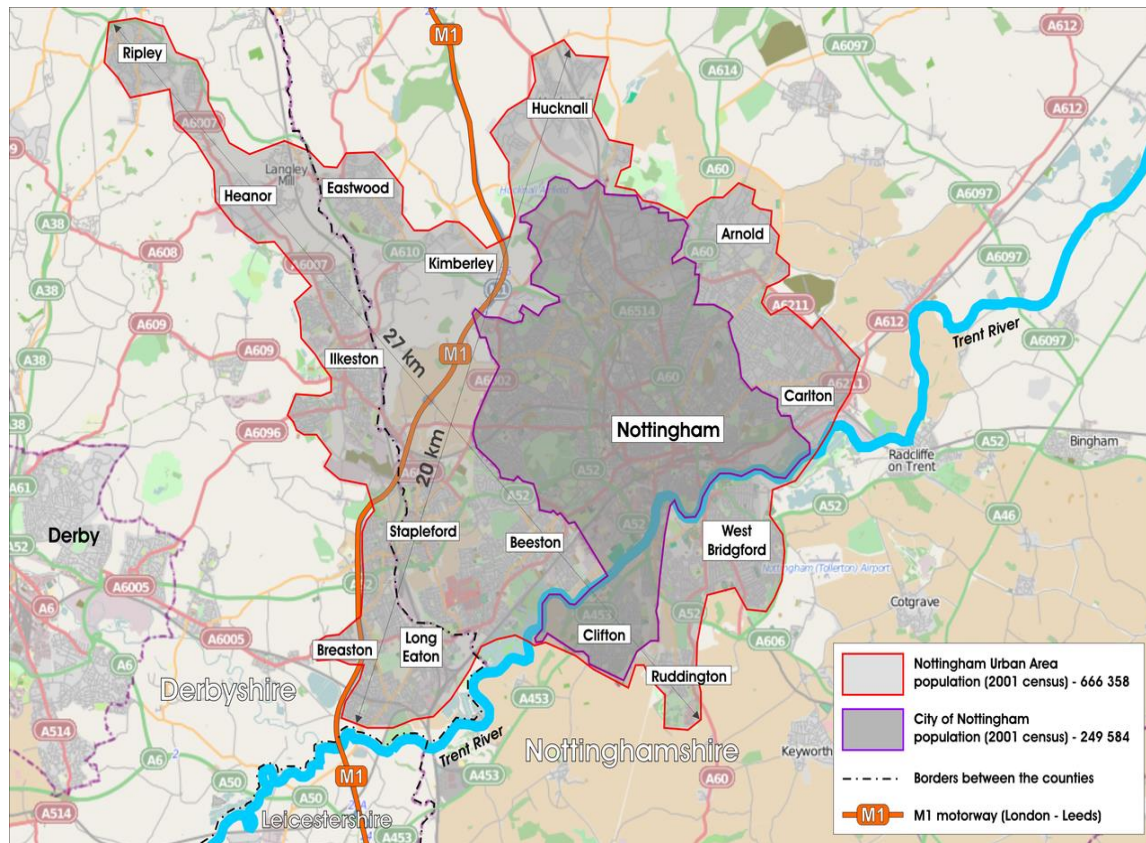
It could be claimed that people value the local scale of civic life more than at the city-wide scale, for it is at this scale that residents have a more substantive and personal experience of 'home', of neighbours and neighbourliness, community spirit and engagement. This is where, in theory, the 'friendly city' can be observed by people on a day to day basis. The local, like notions of home and community, has historically represented a site of comfort and security, and represents, in a civic sense, the scale at which many people feel the greatest sense of ownership and capacity to engage with others (Blunt 2005; Morgan 2009). Conversely, it is also the scale in which different forms of privatism, social isolation and indifference between neighbours occurs – as though the local can also be a space precisely for where civic life is 'rested'. Understanding the nature of the relationship between local civic pride and city-wide civic pride tends to get overlooked in the institutional and architectural traditions of civic pride literature (Briggs 1963; Hunt 2004),

and represents another scale in which civic pride is produced and contested (Sennett 2008). For most participants it seemed that local community and city-wide identities were not incommensurate with each other, but rather just different scales or contexts in which to express civic pride and engage in the civic sphere.

The second question of what exactly constitutes Nottingham is a question of what is civic pride's spatial reach? How far – in scale and size – does Nottingham's civic pride extend? And therefore to what communities and areas does it refer to beyond the official city boundaries? Councillors and council officers may be familiar with the precise administrative boundaries of the city, but this is not something many ordinary citizens living and working within the city or those who commute from other areas – in the county of Nottinghamshire, or even beyond - would necessarily be aware of. But in what ways does this issue matter for civic pride and is it to the benefit or hindrance of Nottingham as a city?

The key issue in Nottingham centres on the relationship between the broader metropolitan area of Nottingham and the variety of municipal areas that it encompasses. There are different ways to describe the Nottingham metropolitan area - the functional economic area, the travel-to-work area, or the Nottingham Urban Area - which in the latter's case is the area used by the Office for National Statistics (see next page and Figure 2 from Chapter 4). The Nottingham Urban Area incorporates a number of municipal areas, with the city of Nottingham at its centre. The map below shows how the zig-zagged and pinched nature of the official boundary lines for Nottingham city form an uneven geography of contact points and points of convergence across different parts of the surrounding Nottingham Urban Area. The Nottingham Urban Area covers a population of about 730,000 residents compared to the city's 300,000 residents by 2011 census records - note how the population of both areas have risen since the last census record in 2001.

Figure 5 - Map of Municipal Boundaries around Nottingham



Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nottingham_Urban_Area (© Plamen Agov - studiolemontree.com)

The map shows how the Nottingham Urban Area even extends into parts of East Derbyshire (for example into Ilkeston and Long Eaton), as well as the municipal boroughs of Ashfield to the north (encompassing Hucknall), Broxtowe and Erewash to the west (encompassing Beeston and Ilkeston respectively), Rushcliffe to the south/south-east (encompassing West Bridgford and Riddington) and Gedling to the east/north-east (encompassing Carlton and Arnold). One can see that particularly for places like West Bridgford, Beeston, Arnold and Carlton, there is some degree of ‘municipal conflation’ where the county boroughs that they are located in are really an extension of Nottingham’s metropolitan sprawl (and in West Bridgford’s case it has the unusual quality of being closer to the city centre than many northerly parts of the city like Bestwood and Bulwell, despite being in the borough of Rushcliffe). Of course these municipal boundaries may mean very little on an everyday, functional level for people travelling in and out of Nottingham city, and in fact may bolster Nottingham civic pride because of the city’s ability to draw in wider areas - possibly at the expense of other boroughs within Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire. In fact, Ronnie, a former MP in Nottingham (the city has three

parliamentary constituencies), expressed how this arrangement - both the relatively tight city boundaries and the influence of other surrounding areas - actually served to strengthen, as he put it, the “overlap between civic and community pride” in the city, where the city centre served as a focal point for different municipal areas and identities to come together (in contrast somewhat to Charlie’s view, quoted earlier in the chapter).

There are a number of ways in which Nottingham city benefits from this arrangement of course. It draws consumer spend from shopping, retail and leisure, it has enabled new partnerships and coalitions to form (such as the Chamber of Commerce) and has helped cities and towns across the East Midlands to develop more strategic regional infrastructure planning (including, most notably in recent years, the development of the Nottingham tram network). It also allows for a range of communities to feel part of Nottingham and interact with it (and use its services), despite those communities not being in the official city boundaries. This is true of a lot of major cities that have relatively high levels of sprawl – but it is a difference made more stark in Nottingham by the relative ease with which people in non-city areas can commute into Nottingham across relatively short distances (as in the West Bridgford case).

But the fact that several municipal boundaries exist around the city is problematic in other, more material and economic ways. For municipal boundaries demarcate the allocation and distribution of a number of government services, duties and obligations – for example relating to council taxes, local elections, service provision – which can generate an uneven geography of inequality itself (ESRB 2014). The problem for Nottingham is a tendency for middle-class groups to migrate to suburban areas such as West Bridgford, Arnold and Beeston, or further afield to places such as Ruddington, Bingham or Southwell. These areas may contribute private capital and consumer spend in the city (and some families may send their children to school in the city, but live outside it) - but they do not contribute public money through taxes or contribute to the city council’s core services and events. Again this scenario is true of many cities, however it is the level of proximity and overlap between different municipal boundaries that makes Nottingham’s case particularly problematic. It means the city-proper loses out on a significant amount of tax revenue and has to cover a much larger welfare budget relative to other jurisdictions. One councillor noted how Nottingham City Council had sacrificed its relatively weak income base for greater municipal autonomy as a ‘unitary authority’ (see Introduction to

Nottingham). I was also told anecdotally that a significant number of influential council officers, business people and professionals who work in the city centre tend to live outside the official boundaries. So while they may work in the city, and have sense strong of and commitment to civic pride, they may invest little financially in the city (in taxes or housing investments for example), and in some cases may not always be aware of local developments that are happening in the city. As Keith, a community organiser for Nottingham Citizens (a civic advocacy group in the city) expressed:

“I think those administrative boundaries...Because each local authority is trying to foster its own identity, can be damaging [you know] to a natural and organic identity of a place.”

While the distribution of resources and services is one thing, what this shows is that civic identity and civic pride in Nottingham are perhaps troubled by a certain ‘cartographic anxiety’ (Tomenay 2013) that seems to echo the uncertainty surrounding the East Midlands. More broadly, it reflects the fuzziness of regions and boundaries and the different impacts they have on places (Harding et al 2006). The relationship between municipal boundaries and civic pride raises an important point. For while it has become commonplace within the literature to talk about the fluid and plural nature of social identity and belonging within cities and neighbourhoods as they relate to individual and collective experiences of ‘place’ broadly defined, the question of different *municipal belongings* has been less studied, particularly in terms of how this relates to civic pride and different civic communities. There is more to be gleaned here from studying how forms of identity and belonging are generated through, but also emerge independently of, the institutional, legal and organisational parameters of community boundaries, city boundaries, municipal boundaries and city-region boundaries, which themselves are under constant tension and reworking. Understanding the winners and losers of such political arrangements and spatial configurations is an important point of contention here, and a basis for future research, within wider debates about social justice in cities. Civic pride seems to emerge through, but also be situated within, different relational and scalar processes and dynamics, which further challenges the idea that civic pride is a singular and shared concept or value within the city.

Robin Hood – A Symbol of Pride or Embarrassment?

To end this chapter on the regional geography of civic pride I now want to examine the issue of Robin Hood. There is no easy way to locate the Robin Hood question. Few cities can be said to be associated with such a well-known folk hero as Robin Hood, and it would be no exaggeration to say Nottingham has gained an international reputation as the (de facto) 'home of Robin Hood'. But Robin Hood is also somewhat of a burden for the city, and there are doubts over whether he should be celebrated and invested in. The evolving and shifting nature of Robin Hood and his relationship with Nottingham is complex and contested, and there are no easy answers as to whether he represents a symbol of fierce pride or minor embarrassment. Examining the relationship between city icons (or in this case, fictional heroes) and civic pride is critical for observing how cities both celebrate and mock their own fictive identities and reputations, and use city icons to promote particular agendas in the city (Lindner 2006). It also illustrates how cities invest considerable time, capital and energy in promoting local icons in the hope of boosting a city's image and regional status – and equally how this can unwittingly generate a kind of 'best laid plans' syndrome that fails to deliver on its promise. Robin Hood can be said to reflect many of the hopes, aspirations, anxieties and frustrations in Nottingham, and represents both a source for civic pride and a problem for civic pride in the city.

Two key questions that I want to raise here are: firstly, what can Robin Hood do for Nottingham as a city trying to establish its status and identity regionally, nationally and even internationally? And secondly, what kind of cultural politics are invested in Robin Hood and how can Robin Hood be used as a vehicle for civic pride? In unpacking these questions, and drawing on some of the ideas raised above, I argue that Robin Hood forms a useful and important microcosm for exploring and representing civic pride issues in Nottingham, and further highlights Nottingham's rather uncertain and slippery regional identity and character.

Finding Robin Hood in Nottingham

As my introduction to Nottingham outlines (Chapter 4), Robin Hood represents both an icon for the city and a source of disappointment and embarrassment. For while there are a

considerable amount of books, television series and films about Robin Hood and his connections with Nottingham, the extent to which people are proud of Robin Hood in Nottingham (and moreover *show* this) is difficult to tell or determine. On the one hand, one could observe a bit of a revival of Robin Hood in recent years - not only with possible redevelopment plans at Sherwood Forest in north Nottinghamshire (where plans for a new tourist centre have been proposed, but at the time of writing have been put on hold due to funding issues), but also in terms of a variety of developments that are happening or have happened within the city and within popular media. For example, within the council's plans to build a new History of Rebellion tourist facility at Nottingham Castle, they have announced that Robin Hood will play a central role in the project's main themes and activities, as a figurehead for the city and as a symbol of rebellion (Nottingham Post 2014b). The Castle itself already hosts a well-attended annual Robin Hood Beer Festival and a Robin Hood Pageant - a day of Robin Hood-theme entertainment with various ('medieval-style') food and drink stalls. More widely meanwhile, Ridley Scott's 2010 feature film *Robin Hood* and the 2006-2009 BBC series *Robin Hood* have also brought more attention to Nottingham (though typically as a mocked-up, medieval, wooded city with a castle). The on-going disputes over the regional 'origins' of Robin Hood - particularly in terms of the rival claims made between Nottinghamshire and Yorkshire (see: Bradbury 2012 for historical discussion of this) - also suggest that Robin Hood continues to inspire both academic and popular interest.

The city council already have an official 'Robin Hood' employee on its books (expenses paid at least, I gathered), working as an ambassador for the city and attending some of the city's major events. He (both the legend and the person dressed up as Robin) acts in other words as the city's mascot, bringing a certain mock-pantomime quality to Nottingham's civic ceremonies and occasions. It is as laughable as it is laudable (see, for minor mention: Participant Observation 3). But for all the interest, activity and enthusiasm surrounding Robin Hood, the city and the city council have had a mixed relationship with the legend in recent decades. At times the city council has been seen to value, promote and celebrate Robin Hood as a key part of the city's history and a key element of the city's tourist pitch; at other times Robin Hood has been cast as a more marginal figure, a mythical sideshow to Nottingham's 'real history', or simply a character for young children to enjoy. While there has been a wealth of events and activities based around Robin Hood in recent years, there is very little physical evidence of Robin Hood's presence in the city; the Robin Hood statue

outside of Nottingham Castle remains the only permanent fixture the city has. The statue is quite iconic for the city, and is used in a lot of tourist material and policy documents. The only purpose-built facility the city has ever had to celebrate the legend is the now-defunct 'Tales of Robin Hood' centre (located a stone's throw away from the statue, on the Maid Marion Way ring road). Built in the late 1980s, the centre was initially a relative success and a real draw for tourists. But over the years it eventually struggled to maintain a good revenue base and by the end failed to keep up rent payments to its landlord Tesco (which has a store next door) – and subsequently closed in 2009. It is difficult to assess then the extent to which Robin Hood has real purchase as an urban (civic) icon in Nottingham, and whether Robin Hood is someone-something that local people are proud of and want to celebrate and defend.

'It's Robin Hood, Robin Hood, Robin Hood' – Stealing from the Rich, Giving to the Civic

Participants predominantly shared the view that there was considerable tourist value in Robin Hood for Nottingham, but were split in terms of whether he represented a source or symbol of civic pride. Some participants were proud of Robin Hood and his connections with Nottingham and Nottinghamshire because he had made the city and county world famous – the world has come to know Nottingham and Nottinghamshire through Robin Hood. Others felt a certain unease or embarrassment over Robin Hood - a sense that 'there was much more to Nottingham than "Robin Hood"'. One negative view came from Roger, of the Nottingham Civic Society, who said "I mean I'm always tired of the Robin Hood bit...Nottingham citizens are so proud of Robin Hood, I think that's a very sketchy kind of thing." Another participant, Odin, an entrepreneur who works in the Sherwood area of the city, thought it was a rather 'boring' symbol for Nottingham, one that reflected a lack of inspiration in the city:

"it's Robin Hood, Robin Hood, Robin Hood and that's a bit...yeah...it's a bit ho-hum, it's a safe bet really. From my point of view it's a bit tedious."

For other civic leaders and business people I spoke to however, capitalising on this almost synonymous link between Robin Hood and Nottingham holds such a cultural cachet and economic potential that they felt the city would be foolish to ignore. 'When people talk

about Nottingham they think of Robin Hood' was an almost reflex response that immediately came to mind when asked about civic pride. Henry, the previously mentioned former Lord Mayor, thought Nottingham should take ownership of this historic association and make it a matter of pride:

"If you mention Nottingham they'll say Robin Hood. So who wouldn't want him to be the son of Nottingham, who wouldn't want to have him as theirs? Yorkshire have been trying to get him forever, and they're not gunna get him neither!"

It could be easily to over-analyse this statement and discuss the imagery of the 'son of Nottingham' and build some kind of parental narrative about Nottingham trying to protect its unwieldy protégé from 'defecting' to Nottingham's historic enemy - Yorkshire. But it is nevertheless a clue into understanding Robin Hood's overall net worth, a sense in which there are both cultural and economic gains at stake in claiming ownership over the legend. On the one hand this is a matter of regional (cultural) civic pride - about how the world has come to know the city of Nottingham through Robin Hood, the kind of ambassadorial role that Robin Hood plays for the city, and the friendly rivalry between Nottinghamshire and Yorkshire over where Robin Hood originally came from. Alongside this regional (cultural) pride, on the other hand, is the potential for Nottingham to exploit this connection economically and use Robin Hood as a draw for tourism. Robin Hood is not merely a literary or civic symbol therefore, but a ready-made marketing brand for Nottingham (and equally for Yorkshire in the form of an airport at Doncaster – Robin Hood Airport).

Despite the ambivalence and divided opinion over Robin Hood, it was felt by a number of participants that the city should promote Robin Hood anyway, regardless, in order to bring tourists and visitors, and increase consumer spend in the city. As a number of councillors and businessmen suggested, given that Nottingham has in some ways struggled to assert a strong regional identity, the city needed 'to use the cards it had been dealt', and take whatever it can from Robin Hood (see here: BBC 2013b; Heeley 2011).

What Can the City do with Robin Hood?

Branding the city on the back of Robin Hood is not so straightforward however, and what I

want to argue here is that it is in many ways a double-edged sword. One civic pride problem creates another civic pride problem. The fact that Robin Hood is to a large extent fictional (there are some alleged historic references to his existence) is in some ways a key strength – Robin Hood can be moulded and mobilised for a range of purposes to suit different contexts. Precisely because there is little concrete proof that he existed at all, Robin Hood and his fictional association with Nottingham will remain indefinitely, giving both the city and the character a timeless quality. However, as a civic symbol for Nottingham, the fact that Robin Hood is (largely) fictional also means that there is nothing in particular to really protect or promote within the fabric of the city – there are no sites of heritage value, nothing to put under conservation protection, beyond the local public value, say, of the Robin Hood statue (unless, of course, one considers Robin Hood more a matter of ‘cultural and literary heritage’ rather than ‘history’ per se). Equally, the many hundreds of tales and stories that have been told about Robin Hood distort how much people really know about him and the other characters he encounters; the ‘Robin Hood story’ is no single, legible cultural text for Nottingham to know, and be able to share together (except perhaps in the broad, moralistic sense of fighting for justice, and escaping the law). One participant informed me that this was one of the issues raised by the Heritage Lottery Fund in the first round of applications for the History of Rebellion development bid – that Robin Hood did not qualify as traditional ‘heritage’ that needed public money protecting and promoting, and that more of Nottingham’s ‘real history’ needed to support the bid (see: Nottingham Post 2013).

But as one participant, Harold, astutely told me, from folklore to film, Robin Hood has proven to be is not one single character, but a morphological figure, moulded for particular purposes and particular audiences at particular times. Harold has worked for long time as an ambassador for the city and does city tours for visitors. Across the tales and stories, Robin Hood has adopted a range of identities and popular causes; from being a figurehead of class struggle (‘stealing from the rich to give to the poor’), of green politics and environmentalism, of nobility and chivalry, and also, as Harold put it, a more comedic and mischievous ‘lad’ – a kind of ‘asbos and arrows’ figure. What he has perhaps not represented historically is character of cultural diversity, where Robin Hood and the fictional landscape he inhabits is usually one of (white) Anglo-Saxon origins (although it could be argued that there are many different ‘Robin Hoods’ across the world in the outlaw folk tradition, to the extent that certain elements of the Robin Hood character are

almost universal in nature).

Indeed there remains a rare quality of all outlaws and folk heroes to somehow transcend cultural difference, and be ‘whoever you want him to be’. Through many of the themes associated with Robin Hood– most notably his links with class struggle, the welfare of the poor, the spirit of rebellion, his liminal character – it is possible to see how Nottingham imagines itself through Robin Hood. He has become a performative and allegorical figure for Nottingham’s history and identity – something which, as I have already noted, fits well with Nottingham’s sense of bolshiness and independence. Observing the malleable ‘characterology’ of Robin Hood and his relationship with the city is therefore key to understanding the evolving dynamic between civic pride and local symbols and characters – that through Robin Hood we have a window into how Nottingham imagines and promotes itself (Lindner 2006; Suttles 1984).

Victor, who manages a local museum in the city, thought the city should use Robin Hood as an inspiration for social and political change. Like the iconic Guy Fawkes, Robin Hood costumes are often donned by political protesters across the world. Robin Hood has also been vaunted recently for the international political movement campaigning for a ‘Robin Hood Tax’ - a tax which campaigners want levied on financial transactions in the banking sector. Victor thought that this association of Robin Hood with radical politics and social justice could fit well with the Nottingham identity and the city’s aspirations. He felt Robin Hood should be part of Nottingham’s ‘journey’ as a city:

“For me Robin Hood kind of stands out, especially at this time, this dark time of a Tory government, dare I say...Robin Hood kind of stands out as a radical figure of egalitarianism basically. And I’m all for that. You know I think some of themes of Robin Hood are very, very strong. And I think Nottingham needs to...I mean there is this big thing about Nottingham being a ‘world class city’, as Nottingham City Council describe it. I think it’s got a journey to become a national city. But I think we need to be less like other cities and have our own sense of identity. And it’s there, it is there...and I think Robin Hood could be part of that.”

Victor’s comments suggest that there could be a range of opportunities for and benefits from promoting Robin Hood, and these could help build the identity and profile of the city.

Robin Hood has the potential to not simply be an icon or a brand for the city, but a vehicle for social and political change – indeed part of Nottingham’s ‘journey’ as a city, to use Victor’s words. This kind of hopeful (one might say idealistic) narrative echoes this sense of Nottingham being on the ‘precipice’ of something more, something better, and becoming ‘finally’ known as a major, national city.

The metaphor of a kaleidoscope might be a useful way to understand some of the symbolic meanings at work here - between Robin Hood, Nottingham and civic pride. Viewed statically (i.e. looking down the kaleidoscope, without twisting the end), Robin Hood represents Nottingham’s ‘tunnel-vision’; a sense that Robin Hood might be an attractive image to brand and colour the city with, but at the same time lures people into a kind of local fatalism about whether Robin Hood will ‘make or break’ the city. But then, when the end of the kaleidoscope is twisted, the picture we see of Robin Hood inside the viewing chamber looks different. From viewing Robin Hood more statically as a brand for the city, the perspective changes to viewing Robin Hood as a regional symbol of pride, an advocate for green politics, or a political icon for progressive change. People twist the kaleidoscope to find the picture they think is most attractive, and see the values they want to see. And yet Robin Hood remains all but an immaterial ‘optic’, a fictional object of desire, which can easily be left alone and forgotten (and takes up little space in the city); but may nevertheless be kept and stored away for future use. He is but a ‘civic toy’ for Nottingham to play with, but one which may have serious consequences for the fate of the city.

Whatever the merits and pitfalls of Robin Hood, it seems likely that he will at least continue play an ambassadorial role for Nottingham – he is how people come to know the city, and why tourists continue to visit it. The *LeftLion* magazine is once again useful here, for all its Nottingham(ly) eloquence. In one edition, different writers and editors take turns to discuss the history and meaning of Robin Hood and assess what role he might have in the city’s future. Al Needham, one of the magazine’s editors, claims that while important in his own right, Robin Hood should be a route to, or a gateway into, the real Nottingham; and that *through* Robin Hood, Nottingham can celebrate its own (proper) history and culture:

Have your medieval villages and jousting and whatnot, but let’s keep it ‘round the Castle and out of the city centre, please. Let’s get more tourists in, but strictly on

our terms. And let's celebrate Robin Hood, but let's also do likewise for the scores of world-renowned Nottinghamians who actually existed. Robin Hood was always about the benefit of the common folk of Notts; let his legacy reflect that. (LeftLion 2010: Issue 34)

Needham's words challenge us to think about the balance, relationship and-or tension between honouring the city's fictional icons and honouring the city's (lived, real) icons and whether this requires some kind of spatial planning in terms of where these icons are honoured and celebrated in the city. Implicit here is a warning that going too far with Robin Hood might result in the city under-investing in Nottingham people ('the common folk of Notts') and undermining their contribution to the city.

In similar ways to Arthur Seaton from *Saturday Night and Sunday Morning*, Robin Hood's ambiguous relationship to the city seems to mirror the ambiguous ways in which the city understands itself; the city is proud of Robin Hood and yet too bolshie to do much about it. Overall this shows how a city can be both unified and divided over what citizens can and should be proud of and how a vast range of local, regional, cultural, economic and political narratives and agendas can be absorbed into one local icon or hero. Robin Hood is a complex but gestalt figure in this sense because Robin Hood represents both a collage of different ideas, values, practices and agendas and a unifying figure that seems to represent more than the sum of its-his parts. As Lindner argues, through 'allegories, anecdotes and legends' urban populations establish their own cultural image of who they are and what the city represents – but these images are under constant change and inflection, and are as much subjective as they are collective. True to form then, Robin Hood is both an alluring and elusive character, both benefitting the city, but also the cause for major civic headache over what the city 'should and shouldn't do' with Robin Hood. A key (practical) question might be whether the city council, or some other tourism enterprise, ever produces a 'Robin Hood Strategy' to guide future development in the city, or whether Robin Hood will in fact always remain 'ungovernable'.

Indeed, and as a final point on Robin Hood, outlaw figures historically and by definition of the very term 'outlaw', have always been elusive - they follow their own pattern of logic and fable, they escape the truth, so to speak. But their stories continue to speak certain truths about society and the localities they inhabit in both important and subtle ways (cf.

Knight 2012). So even if Robin Hood is an 'embarrassment' for some people in the city, and has failed to become a proper symbol of civic pride - he nevertheless continues to be a source of debate, story-telling and civic banter in Nottingham. Whether people like it-him or not, Robin Hood is part of the regional identity of the city and the city can benefit from that. In that sense Nottingham would rather have Robin Hood than not - but he remains as elusive as the city itself.

Conclusion

While civic pride is normally constructed around being proud of the city that one lives in, as though the city is a singular urban community, the city is in fact inhabited by a range of civic communities and identities, and these identities can be scaled and positioned in different ways. From one's local neighbourhood, to one's city or region, to one's nation - there are a range of scales (and therefore geographical contexts) across which people feel proud and express their (civic) identity. These civic scales are not necessarily zero-sum nor mutually exclusive; rather they are connected and co-produced, and for many, it seems, pride at one scale can influence and determine pride at another scale. This suggests we can understand civic pride in relational, dynamic and scalar ways (Jonas 2012). However, as I have shown, a strong sense of pride at one scale can at times be juxtaposed with a weaker or less certain sense of pride at another; suggesting that civic pride is sensitive to the context in which it is being talked about, and takes on a range of emotional and political trajectories.

This chapter has highlighted how different local, regional and municipal identities and boundaries shape and mediate different narratives and experiences of civic pride. In unravelling these narratives and experiences, the analysis has shown how people in Nottingham appear somewhat uncertain over the city's identity and its regional status within the nation, and this plays out in some of the discourses, styles of refrain and types of behaviour that citizens seem to exhibit. The relatively confident and proud ways in which people describe Nottingham as a friendly and bolshie city contrast with the ambiguous and frustrated feelings people have about Nottingham's status and reputation at a regional and national level. The fact that Nottingham is both a Core City and a more

provincial East Midlands city, depending on which one of these is emphasised, seems to fuel a debilitating narrative that the city is always on the precipice, neither here nor there, neither North nor South, neither celebrating Robin Hood nor disowning him and giving him up - which leaves some civic actors feeling that the city falls, or has fallen, short of its potential. This in turn is perhaps symptomatic of the wider Midlands syndrome – of believing in, being paranoid about, and to some extent complicit in, the region's existential crisis, which seems to be caught in a logjam between jealous aspiration to be like other places, and a bolshie resistance to conformity (Daniels and Rycroft 1993; Shore 2014).

At a more localised scale, the diversity of communities in the city and the intersecting nature of municipal boundaries across Nottingham serve to show that beneath the romanticism of civic pride – that the city is somehow 'cohesive', 'unified', and discretely bounded – is a city of diversity, plurality and territorial fuzziness, within and across which there are multiple civic (or urban) prides. People are perhaps as much proud of their local communities as they are their city - but as I have suggested, these different scales or types of civic pride add to, rather than detract from, the city's collective civic mindedness, even if they sometimes result in people thinking and acting in rather parochial (or 'locally appropriate') ways.

A different tack this chapter could have taken would have been to discuss how far different cultural and ethnic identities in the city also reshape and alter people's perspectives of civic pride, and how issues of region and scale might be viewed through different cultural and ethnic lenses. One observation I found for instance was that people from more minority ethnic backgrounds - often people with a familial history of overseas migration to the area – were often keen to detail their relationship to, and their pride for, Nottingham through this kind of lens and narrative. It was almost as though the effort and struggle to move to and integrate in the city, and yet still retain one's cultural or ethnic identity and background, was a source of both personal and civic pride for these participants. Civic and cultural identity were (once again) not incommensurate in this sense – people were proud of both identities. But equally people were eager to mark out the distinction between them (between one's civic community and one's cultural, religious or ethnic community for instance), almost as a matter of pride in itself (Wind-Cowie and Gregory 2011; Kearns and Forrest 2000). With more space I could have unpacked some of these ideas further. Certainly understanding the translocal nature of identity and belonging, and the

autobiographical 'pathways' by which people come to identify and take pride in a particular city could form one area of future research (see for example: Waite and Cook 2011, or Fortier 1999).

The regional geography of civic pride is important because it highlights the interconnectedness of place, scale, community and political aspiration, and the variety of ways in which civic pride is produced, mediated and negotiated. While some people might harbour a bolshie and ironic pride in the fact that the East Midlands is somewhat of a fuzzy (outlier) region that struggles to assert itself on the national stage, for a number of civic actors, this is a problem and a future challenge for Nottingham to confront – not least because they feel the city's status and future prosperity is at stake. This regional lens therefore shows how a range of different civic values and aspirations converge and diverge across the city, and how civic pride becomes a rather contested, fragmented discourse and political value. Many people are proud of Nottingham as a city, but want different things for it – and one person's source of pride is another person's source of frustration.

Participant Observation 3: The Grand Opening Ceremony of the Nottingham Goose Fair

It was not the show, it was the tale that you told

Tom Norman⁶

I arrived into Nottingham Station in typical grey October weather, ready to attend the Grand Opening Ceremony of the 719th Goose Fair at the Forest Recreation Ground. The Goose Fair has a long tradition in Nottingham both as a market fair and a pleasure fair. Dating back to the 13th century, the name refers to the traditional trading of Geese on the feast day of St Matthew. The fair is a busy mix of local and regional farmers and tradesmen selling food and wares, stall holders offering games and prizes, travelling showmen and ride operators - and each the year the occasion is marked by an official opening ceremony carried out by the Lord Mayor and other civic dignitaries. The fair used to be held in the Old Market Square until it was decided in 1928, during the construction of the new Council House, that the space was inadequate. So the fair moved just north of the city centre to the Forest Recreation Ground on Gregory Boulevard. I have vague memories as a child, as many Nottingham children do, of being at Goose Fair with my family, filled with a sense of excitement and adventure at what might be there. It was the smell of toffee apples and candy floss as much as anything else. My sense of connection with Goose Fair, being at least 10 years since I'd been there, had really only been kept alive through reading Alan Sillitoe's *Saturday Night and Sunday Morning* (see Chapter 6) where the fair plays a key role in the book's finale. In a number of Sillitoe's works the Goose Fair is used as a figurative stage on which life in Nottingham unfolds. For Sillitoe the fair was a site of unleashed energy, spontaneity, a cauldron of risk and chance, and was as good a time as any for the factory workers of Nottingham to escape the humdrum of working life and go have a good time. For Sillitoe the fair brought 'a crowd that had lost all idea of time and space, locked in the belly of its infernal noise', as he wrote in *Saturday Night and Sunday Morning*. Like Sillitoe himself, a certain spirit of the event will live long in the collective memory of the city (Geertz 1993; Quinn 2005), even if to the outside observer, the Goose Fair is a funfair like any other.

⁶ Cited In: Howell and Ford (1992: 2)

When I arrived, I walked down the hill to try and find where the opening ceremony was; for as parochial as these things tend to be, there was very little I could find out beforehand, online or in local news, of exactly where it was being held on the site (though perhaps proper Nottinghamians just ‘knew’ where it was). I noticed a man walking along with a gold chain and black jacket, recognising he was not *the* Lord Mayor of Nottingham, but some sort of dignitary. I thought to ask him where the ceremony was. He plainly told me to go over to the Big Wheel. I remember thinking that this particular dignitary, who was perhaps a Lord Mayor for another of Nottinghamshire’s county councils, didn’t seem as enchanting – in that theatrical, Dickensian kind of a way – as I would have hoped, though afterwards I noticed him chatting to one of the ride operators for a while as though the people at the fair had some kind of special rapport with each other.

At the Big Wheel everyone had gathered. Civic dignitaries, the Lord Mayor, the Town Crier, and even the council’s own ‘Robin Hood’ led the stage; while the crowd, maybe 200 strong, consisted of local school children and older folk in the main. The rest of the city were presumably at work, given it was a Thursday morning, and the occasion did not warrant time off work. At 12 o’clock, the city’s official Town Crier (who is Tom Huggon – see Participant Observation 2), in full regalia stepped forward to the microphone and bellowed out ‘Ladies and Gentlemen, Boys and Girls!’ in that classic pantomime voice, and proceeded to invite the dignitaries to observe their ceremonial duties. First, the portfolio holder for Leisure, Culture and Tourism for Nottingham City Council gave a short speech in which he greeted everyone and remarked ‘This is one of my favourite duties of the whole year...I can see faces out there who come year upon year’, after which he proudly announced the new £2 million ride to be launched this year. Clearly he seemed proud to perform his civic duty, although we could invert this and suggest his civic duty was to ‘perform’ pride for the auspices of the occasion (see: Hochschild 2003; Bennett 2013).

After the first speech, the Council’s Chief Executive stepped up to read the official Goose Fair proclamation, which was historically required to declare the fair as legal:

“Goose Fair 2013, whereas several prescriptive rights and franchises are by drivers, royal charters and letters patent ratified to the citizens of this city, among which a fair is to be yearly held and kept forever on the feast day of St Matthew the

Apostle, which fair by an order of the secretary of state, under the Fairs Act of 1873, be held on the first Thursday in the month of October. It shall continue during the two following days and no longer in each year. Now therefore the Right Worshipful the Lord Mayor doth hereby publicly proclaim that the said fair shall be held and kept accordingly on the third and fourth days of October instant, and doth hereby require that all cattle, goods, wares and merchandises brought and hither to be sold shall be exposed to public view and sold in the open fair and not otherwise, and that no horse, mare or gelding shall be sold at this fair but which shall be duly vouched for. God save the Queen!”

Again it is not so much the specificity of this proclamation that is important, but the ritualistic nature of it, and theatrical way in which it is delivered. The inclusion of ‘God Save the Queen’ in the proclamation is interesting. It struck me at the time as sounding very old-fashioned. As Michael Billig (1995) describes, these subtle ‘flaggings’ of national belonging are reminders of how civic pride at the local level can be interwoven with other scales and forms of pride (cf. Purvis 2009); indeed one could question how much this was truly a ‘Nottingham’ – as opposed to ‘English’ or ‘British’ – event, in certain respects. I was unable to learn how old the proclamation is, though its reference to Victorian Britain probably links it to that era. I again took a moment to ponder how much people took pride in the Queen and in the nation, or whether people simply enjoyed saying ‘God Save the Queen’ in that theatrical kind of way (for more on British patriotism see: Wind-Cowie and Gregory 2011).

Then finally, the Lord Mayor took to the stage to read a short speech, in which she claimed ‘Goose Fair will always be a major event in our city’s calendar and evokes so many memories for people associated with the city of Nottingham’. With a prompt to the school children gathered round the front near the stage, she led the countdown to the ringing of the ceremonial bells, and that became the official opening of the 719th Goose Fair. As cheers and smiles rung out across the crowd and stage, I could only think that this was civic pride at its warmest and least arrogant (even if it was a tad silly to see Robin Hood and the Lord Mayor proceed to the Giant Wheel for their obligatory ‘first dibs’ on the rides...).

As a matter of historic contrast, it is interesting to note that J.B Priestley in his *English Journey* wrote somewhat scathingly of the Goose Fair when he visited Nottingham,

commenting that 'I could not honestly feel I had been attending a genuine popular festival...for all its glitter and blare and ingenuities...It is at heart, cheap, nasty, sordid. It offers no grand release from ordinary reality. It does not expand a man. It cannot light the mind in retrospect' (Priestley 1934: 148-149). This might be the incontrovertible truth of civic pride in many ways - that parochial practices are not always easily or readily appreciated and understood by outsiders (Tomenay 2013). People take pride in that which other people do not understand. Priestley may still be right – that the 'glitter and blare' of the fair is, to the objective outsider, a 'cheap, nasty, sordid' affair. But set within its own historic and local context, the Goose Fair is, and should be, valued for the civic role it plays in Nottingham and in the way it brings the city together. It is not, I am sure, to everyone's taste, even in Nottingham. But as a key part of the city's heritage and civic culture, it does retain a certain charming (kitschy type) quality that will no doubt continue to be honoured and celebrated in years to come. As one participant put it, the Goose Fair is "a delightful mix of tradition, pageantry, legal formality, community involvement and pottiness: which is an essential part of civic pride here in Nottingham."

Chapter 8: Redefining Civic Pride Within and Beyond Nottingham

A proud community is imperative for good governance. Personal civic pride is a prerequisite for a proud community.

Gildenhuys (2004: 117)

Introduction

So far I have looked at how civic pride can be analysed through what people are proud of about Nottingham and how civic pride connects with identity, belonging, urban image and culture, and the struggle for municipal autonomy and regional status. Key ideas have thus far focussed on Nottingham as a friendly city and a bolshie city, and the regional, spatial and cultural ways in which the city can be scaled and framed. These narratives can be shown to be incomplete and contradictory in a number of ways, but provide critical lenses with which to understand civic culture and civic identity and how they are perceived and experienced differently by different groups and individuals. There are many tensions and contradictions between how people imagine the city on the one hand, and the lived experiences of the city on the other. A key point then is that civic pride discourses tell us as much about how people want to imagine the city as they do about how people actually experience the city. But equally, civic pride is something which can be appropriated and reappropriated for a variety of purposes; it is a malleable vehicle for extracting all kinds of social, political and economic value from the city and its citizens. This involves both progressive and conservative discourses and practices, and can represent and serve some people more than others. Much of the analysis so far reveals how part of the nature and dynamism of civic pride is to hide, suppress or transform the very tensions and contradictions that arise from these processes, and that this speaks to its highly dialectical qualities (the constant battle between pride and shame, image and reality, feeling and action). By bringing to attention the emotional meanings of civic pride and the moral antagonisms it involves – particularly its relationship to ideas of shame, integrity, belief and

conviction – I have offered a number of original insights into the multifaceted and embodied nature of civic pride, and shown how pride the emotion reflects and mediates the way in which civic pride is imagined and operates within places.

What I have broadly attempted to do in the previous three chapters is look at the geography of civic pride from the perspective of what people are proud of about Nottingham and the issues and tensions which Nottingham represents as a city. By contrast, my intention for this chapter is to examine civic pride as a more abstract, everyday (political) value that shapes the way people think and behave. As I have noted, there is a significant degree of difference between what people are proud of locally in Nottingham and how people understand the term civic pride in more general, abstract terms. Although I think it is possible to say that things like friendliness and bolshiness can be understood as characteristics of local civic life in Nottingham, these do not quite equate with how people define civic pride and relate to the term more broadly. In fact, a key point of divergence I identified in my analysis – and the point of focus for this chapter - was that when participants spoke about Nottingham and its civic identity, they often referred to them in more collective terms, assuming more of an embodied 'we'; but when participants defined civic pride as a term, as a principle, they tended to individualise it and consider it more a matter of personal responsibility than a collective one. Following on from this point, this chapter examines how certain forms of self-reflexivity are involved when people define, embody and negotiate civic pride. I argue that civic pride can be understood, both within and beyond Nottingham, as a set of both personally-formed and collectively-sustained values and principles that guide people's attitudes about and behaviours within their city and community.

The analysis in this chapter is useful for sketching out how research on civic pride might extend beyond this thesis and be applied to other contexts. Firstly, by examining civic pride at a more personal, subjective level and understanding the normative values underpinning civic pride, it is possible to reframe civic pride beyond its traditional remit of local government, local institutions and urban elites, and develop an understanding of civic pride as something that individuals and groups embody and 'do' on a daily basis. Through this we can begin to see how the participants of this study are (or at least profess to be) highly civic-minded people and have through time internalised civic pride as a matter personal conviction and civic responsibility. Here I again show that pride, as an emotion

and value, often shapes how people think and behave and influences how people carry this conviction and responsibility. Secondly, the analysis also helps showcase how civic pride can also be thought of as a form of governmentality, structuring and conditioning people's attitudes about and affinity towards citizenship and belonging. This aspect is relevant to recent debates around austerity and the Big Society in Britain, and raises the question of whether promoting civic pride locally provides a useful basis for fostering a more engaged (and responsible) urban citizenry. Overall, I contend that civic pride is difficult to define and explain precisely, and develop discrete policies for, but should be understood as a productive (personal and collective) value, which is often embodied and practiced in rather tacit and understated ways. I show that participants in Nottingham articulate and express their civic pride in and for Nottingham in locally specific ways, but recognise how civic pride is a value which transcends Nottingham and forms a broader urban ethos and set of principles.

Defining and Embodying Civic Pride: General Values and Concepts

In all of the interviews, I asked participants what they understood by the term civic pride, how they would define it, what they associated with it, and what they felt civic pride meant to them personally and generally. For most participants civic pride meant *something*; for some it was term which related to (or suggested images of) lord mayors, city councils and grand buildings, for others civic pride was a more general term relating the identity and status of the city. Some participants expressed how civic pride represents (among other things) a value of local responsibility and engagement, while others understood the term as more of a general question ('what do I like about Nottingham and what am I proud of?'). There was also some confusion and hesitancy over what civic pride meant (in the abstract), what it ought to mean and what kinds of people and practices it represents. As I show below, civic pride was constructed in both quite simple and complex ways.

Some participants defined civic pride in relatively concise terms. Henry, the councillor and former Lord Mayor and Sheriff of Nottingham, told me for example that civic pride is about “being proud in the city that you live, proud of the buildings that you have, proud in the environment and the spectacle”. As a long-standing councillor, and as a former civic dignitary, Henry spoke to me with a confidence and authority that few other participants matched. Although Henry uses here the preposition ‘being proud *of* the city’ (of the buildings, etc), the way he communicated his feelings and thoughts about civic pride throughout the interview, suggested that he also recognised how civic pride is also (therefore) about taking pride *in* the city as well – as though to be responsible or mindful over the city as well. As I show throughout much of this chapter, this coupling of feeling and action is critical for understanding the holistic nature of civic pride. The notion of having pride in the ‘spectacle’ of the city was not something he expanded on, but may suggest how civic actors value the more ‘enchanting’ aspects of urban life – that civic actors are absorbed in the spectacle of cities (cf. Watson 2006).

Sally, the student mentioned in Chapters 6 and 7, defined civic pride in the following way:

“So it’s about being proud of where you live and because of that you kind of care about where you live as well. You don’t litter or like you just take care of where you live and what you do, and get involved in stuff in the community.”

This definition also links feeling and action - where because you are proud about where you live, you also care about where you live and ‘get involved in stuff in the community’. The emotional and the political are therefore closely linked, which together say something about Sally’s relationship with, and responsibility to, her local community. This reflects a basic tenet of much emotional geographies work; that political subjectivities are often lived and produced through emotional connections with place (Anderson and Smith 2001; Davidson et al 2007). Irene, the volunteer from the Meadows Community Gardens, objected to the idea that people do civic and community-based things for ‘pride reasons’ (see Chapter 5), but had some sense of what term meant:

“Well it is about having a feeling about where you live and having confidence in the people who are leading the city and what’s been done for the city is in the main positive.”

There are similar themes here of emotion, belonging and responsibility condensed into this definition, but there is also the quality of 'confidence' that she feels is important. As psychological studies have shown, pride is often linked to feelings of confidence - usually this is because in behavioural terms, pride often enhances people's self-esteem and self-worth, which then increases their sense of self-efficacy (see: Tracy et al 2010). But here Irene frames confidence in relation to 'having confidence in the people who are leading the city' and being positive about what is 'being done for the city' - suggesting that civic pride is also linked to a sense of trust in the city's institutions. She also evokes the notion of 'having a feeling about where you live', which is perhaps not so much a vague assertion that civic pride means some, or any sort of, feeling, but rather that civic pride implies that one has a special sensitivity for, or a sense of care and concern over, where one lives (Creswell 2009).

Across these more concise definitions, civic pride links aspects of feeling, belonging, engaging, having trust in others and caring about the place one lives. It is a concept or value that seems to condense a range of elements, subjectively defined and articulated, but which centres on a broad, normative notion of being proud of, and taking in, the place that one lives. These participant definitions of civic pride contrast for example with Wood's (2006: 169) definition of civic pride as a 'shared and cohesive city image', and carry a rather different tone to Kim and Walker's (2012: 95) sense that civic pride 'refers to an individual's positive mental reconstruction due to the enhanced image of their community'. Broader themes such as urban image, municipal autonomy or regional identity (for instance) are patently absent in these participant definitions; here civic pride is more about *personal* responsibility and agency, rather than anything to do with collective (civic) identities, political autonomy or rivalries with other cities. Civic pride is about positive, non-conflictual feelings and values that individuals (citizens) embody rather than anything to do with 'us' and 'them'. But of course why would people want to express these more negative, more exclusionary inflections of civic pride, especially if they feel it might reflect badly on them? As I have shown in relation to civic identity in Nottingham, there is a recurring tendency for people to relate to civic pride in ways which appear positive and virtuous - to the extent that people feel they are defending their own reputation and integrity when they are talking about civic pride and the city they live in.

More complex and developed definitions of civic pride emerged from other participants. These responses begin to show more of the processes and mechanisms by which civic pride is practiced and embedded in people's lives, as well as the kind of values underpinning them. Edward (the council officer, who in Chapter 6, if we recall, reflected on Nottingham's relative 'timidity' compared to his home city of Newcastle) explained to me what he considered the key elements of civic pride are:

"I think generally people have got to have a sense of belonging, so they've got to be connected. And it could be via heritage, it could be [via a] new business...And it's about generally sharing a sense of responsibility, and taking some ownership in creating the environment in which they operate. Whether you've got money or you haven't got any money, it shouldn't make anyway difference, you should have the same sense of basically loving a place...and you're gunna challenge things that disrupt that. So I think it's about that cultural glue that binds people together."

Here, Edward starts by referring to how a sense of belonging relates to a sense of being 'connected'. There are different ways to be connected (for example through heritage of one's family, or through working for a local business), but the point he stresses here is less the emotional connection per se, and more the active and tangible connections that 'bind people together'. This might in the first instance assume that if someone was not employed, had no family connections and did not engage in civic life (or was in some way marginalised or excluded from society) then they would not have a sense of civic pride or be able to develop it (cf. Wind-Cowie and Gregory 2011). A key point then is that civic pride does not simply 'happen' and appear from nowhere, but is developed through time and through people's agency and desire to make connections and relationships within the city (Savage et al 2005). This point is again often underemphasised in literature on civic pride – that people's sense of civic pride evolves through time, as a lived and incremental process (and a privilege), rather than something that one simply assumes and adopts. Edward also suggests here that civic pride is about sharing a sense of responsibility and ownership in the place that one lives, echoing more classical definitions of citizenship and belonging (Cunningham 2011; Dagger 1997). As I suggest later, in other ways this also reflects a more neoliberal conception of civic pride – that civic pride is about empowering individuals and communities to rely less upon the state and to exercise their own authority and autonomy. At the end of the quote Edward finishes with how he thinks civic pride is a

value that should transcend people's wealth – that money 'shouldn't make a difference' – and that people should share 'the same sense of basically loving a place' and 'challenge things that disrupt that'. Edwards feels therefore that civic pride is not simply about being active and engaged in the city, but is also about being *assertive* and defending the city and the values which it stands for - no matter who you are, or how much money you earn. Given how in Chapter 7, we saw how Edward thought Nottingham was a relatively timid city compared to his home city of Newcastle, perhaps implicit in his definition of civic pride here is a challenge or a provocation for Nottingham to be more assertive and to stand up for itself as a city.

Working through Edward's definition of civic pride, we can see again how a range of elements are brought together and condensed in order to give an overall impression or image of civic pride. Edward's definition seems more processual and practice based than the more feeling and value-based definitions we see earlier in the chapter, but there is still a fundamentally holistic quality to civic pride that brings together what we might call the local, the emotional and the political. What is missing perhaps, or at least more understated, is the identity aspect (i.e. that civic pride implies being proud of one's identity as a city) - which, as I show later, perhaps indicates that participants value civic pride beyond a solely Nottingham-based remit, and see it more as a general civic value.

Let us take another example, this time from Rajiv, an interfaith worker in the city. He defined civic pride in similar ways to Edward, but made the slightly more assertive point that in order for civic pride to have 'any value' it must be based in one's active engagement with the city and the community. Note here a tinge of nostalgia as Rajiv's constructs what he sees as a more authentic notion of civic pride:

"I believe it has to be, to have any value, real civic pride, I go to those wonderful women from the 1920s and 30s, who were brushing down their own doorsteps. That to me is civic pride...when you get on your hands and knees and you do the dirty jobs, you clean the canals, that's where civic pride is. It's actively trying to make your city the best it can be. I think we all have a role to play, we should all challenge our institutions, we should challenge the council absolutely, and we should all do our bit..."

This is another complex quote and covers a number of issues around civic pride. Skeggs (1997) might suggest that Rajiv's reference to 'the wonderful women from the 1920s and 30s, who were brushing down their doorsteps' is a reference to how women of this period adopted such practices in order to claim social 'respectability' within the working-class estates of industrial Britain. Respectability, in Skeggs' reading, is a highly class-based concept related to qualities of style, taste, status and power, and has through time become a central marker of social and moral differentiation within English society, both at the micro (neighbourhood) scale and in wider society. To be 'respectable' is to show one's personal integrity, self-worth and status, but as Skeggs relates, it is also a matter of being able to conform social norms, 'fitting in', and proving to others that one has values and standards, particularly in the context of the home and local community.

We might suggest that small gestures like washing one's doorstep points towards more of a self-pride (being 'house proud' as it might be called) than something that produces or contributes to civic pride; but it is interesting to think about the confluence here of the domestic sphere and the civic sphere (Wind-Cowie and Gregory 2011). The implication would be that the look of one's house or front garden is a measure of one's values; a washed doorstep, a cut lawn or a tidy privet hedge – these things can imply one takes pride not just in their house but how they present themselves to others. As people attempt to maintain their respectability in this regard, such practices become the norm and this builds an expectation of neighbourly etiquette and doing things for benefit of the community - such that, in effect, enacting one's personal pride impacts on, and adds to, a wider community pride. There is a long literature on how communities generate such expectations and ideals, and create certain thresholds of respectability in order to regulate and control who and what belongs (Delanty 2003; Morgan 2009; Sennett 2008). But it is often because of pride, and underlying fear of shame and *being shamed*, that people feel obligated to act in civic ways, and whether by necessity or design, this can help contribute to a broader culture of civic pride. Rajiv intuitively recognises that civic pride is driven by individual acts that benefit the community as a whole; acts which require effort, perseverance, even some humility, as people take on the 'dirty jobs'. So where there's muck there's brass, but there could also be civic pride.

But in 'doing our bit', as Rajiv puts it, there is another side to civic pride that is less about smaller acts of civic duty and respectability, and more about challenging and intervening in

the city. As Anjaria (2009) notes, civic actors are not just complicit in the social order of the city, but are agitators of this order; they contest what they see as wrong, unfair or against their own tastes and preferences. They are capable of agitating certain ‘counter-civics’ against the established order (Askins et al 2012). This again reflects part of what I have understood as the bolshie nature of Nottingham’s civic identity, and suggests an important, but rather subtle, link between civic identity and civic pride. This is the sense that qualities such as friendliness and bolshiness are not just ‘what’ people in Nottingham are proud of but are also how people ‘do’ civic pride as well. But as I reflect later, the Nottinghamness – in other words, the local specificity – of civic pride is not always so evident in most people’s definition of the term, such that there is a gap between civic pride as an abstract value and civic pride as a value related to specific places.

Indeed if there is a quality of bolshiness within these definitions of civic pride, it is precisely in terms of what Rajiv’s suggests – challenging the city council and fighting for social justice. As the *LeftLion* writer, Alan, notes, it can be easy to distance oneself from civic pride as though it is the responsibility of someone else - that it is a matter for the council and big institutions. Echoing again this idea that Nottingham needs to assert itself better (see previous chapter), Alan constructs civic pride as a matter of self-determination and self-realisation:

“And I think that’s the point, you create the world you want to live in and that for me is civic pride. Yes there’s some gorgeous buildings in the market square, and yes the local council [in Nottingham] think the only thing to ever talk about is Robin Hood. But for me civic pride is an *attitude*.”

Civic pride is, in his terms, an ‘attitude’ based in a desire to ‘create the world you want to live in’. It is not something simply to gaze upon or moan about, but something which galvanises people to intervene and create a city of one’s desire – it is, in Lefebvrian terms, about reclaiming a ‘right to the city’. This is a more prefigurative definition of civic pride than most participants offered, but is equally evocative of a more ‘authentic’ and personally responsible version of civic pride. How far there is an implicit agenda here to claim agency over civic pride – to wrestle it from its institutional stranglehold – is something I will reflect upon again in the conclusion of this chapter.

A Composite and Holistic Ethos

Across all of the definitions and explanations of civic pride that have been raised here, civic pride seems to have a composite and holistic quality. The 'composite' describes its multiple and subjective nature and the range of ways it can be expressed and enacted; the 'holistic' describes the way in which each individual expression or enactment of civic pride represents a shared quality and purpose. Civic pride therefore represents something of an urban ethos; a set of feelings, practices and principles, articulated through different scales and structures, which represent the different ways people express and take pride in where they live.

Understanding Tacit Connections in Civic Pride

It would be false to suggest that all the participants I interviewed for this research were able to articulate what civic pride means in such clear and forthright terms. A significant number were less sure of what it means, or rather they perhaps understood something of what it means, but could not express this in words (Polanyi 1966; Katz 1999). This section explores the more tacit connections that people make with cities and civic pride; in particular it explores the more philosophical nature of how and why people develop a sense of civic pride. I want to argue that part of very fabric of how people understand civic pride in Nottingham - which is integral to its definition and meaning - is a certain intangible but rooted sense of place and place-valuing. As I phrased it earlier, I think civic pride in many ways constitutes a kind of complex folding of the local, the emotional and the political that reproduces a distinctive (and ultimately recognisable) civic value, but which can itself be expressed and understood in different ways. I want to suggest here that the more tacit, inchoate or imprecise ways people define and explain civic pride can help reveal some of the more subtle dynamics of civic pride working underneath this broader conceptualisation - dynamics which are at times difficult to pin down precisely, but are fundamental to how we should understand the power and role of civic pride.

Amongst participants that were less sure about what civic pride means (or at least were more aware of the ambiguity of the term), one participant suggested for example that civic

pride is a rather ‘a nebulous thing’, while another stressed that ‘it’s a bit of a vague term isn’t it really, I can’t really pinpoint what it actually means’. These kinds of responses were partly a reaction to its multi-faceted nature – that it *could* be mean lots of things, and at worst therefore meant nothing in particular (however no one expressed that civic pride was a useless or facile idea or term). The tacit element was evident however, and partly this was down to the inherent difficulty of communicating, in words, exactly what one felt about civic pride (or Nottingham for that matter). These issues of ‘feeling one’s way around’ particular ideas and places resonate with a lot of work in the emotional geographies literature (e.g. Bonnett and Alexander 2013; Ho 2009; Wood and Waite 2011;) and emphasise how strong feelings for something (or some place) do not always correlate with people’s ability to communicate precisely what they feel (if, that is, feelings can ever be ‘precise’) (Katz 1999). Another important point here is that tacit knowledges and connections are also produced and made apparent when people try to link their biography or life trajectory to where they are now, or when people try find the words to describe what their identity is, or why they feel a particular connection to a place (Massey 2005; Polanyi 1966). Although I do not intend to give a full and thorough account of Polanyi’s work on tacit knowledges, I simply want to acknowledge Polanyi’s central dictum here that ‘we can know more than we can tell’ is relevant for understanding civic pride; and helps explain how civic pride relates to certain ways of ‘knowing’ (and acting) rather than a discrete set of ‘knowledges’ (and actions).

There is also the issue of determining what it is specifically about a certain place that people connect with, and how people’s personal connections produce, shape or mediate people’s sense of civic pride. As I have suggested above, some people may not have a detailed explanation or narrative of why they are proud of where they live – they may simply be proud and perhaps even resistive or guarded about explaining ‘why’ they are proud (Wind-Cowie and Gregory 2011). But if we scratch under the surface of this, we can begin to assess what kinds of things people attribute to their sense of pride, and the real (and direct) or otherwise symbolic (and indirect) connections people make with particular places, sites and communities. A key issue here is that pride normally confers contribution, responsibility or ownership over something – as though one can or should only be proud of something if and when he or she directly affects it or contributes to its success (see for discussion: Tracy et al 2010). Otherwise this can be deemed as superficial, hubristic, or deceiving. So, in theory, if someone claims pride in something that happened in the past,

and they had no direct connection to it whatsoever, then this could be perceived as a rather superficial or inauthentic kind of pride. However, just as some have talked about the notion 'BIRGing' (basking in the reflected glory) in cities (see Chapter 2), whereby people claim pride in something that someone else has done or achieved (like being proud of a local sports team winning a championship), it seems that civic pride is often based upon and expressed through a range of connections that people make that are little to do with what they have contributed in the city, or what they can claim direct ownership for.

For instance, how do people come to feel a sense of pride in the buildings and public spaces of a city when they themselves have not contributed to the making of them, or necessarily even use them? Or why would people in Nottingham today claim pride in the industrial heritage of the city or the various rebellions the city witnessed in the 19th century? A person may for example say they are proud of Nottingham's architecture and take pride in them as public buildings; they may help the city protect them (through conservation), or wax lyrical about their qualities to people who visit the city (cf. Siderits 2007). But the buildings are not of their achievement, their labour or design; the person may not even have been inside all or any of the buildings they profess to take pride in. Somehow however, he or she nevertheless regards these buildings as important for themselves and for the city, and is part of how he or she understands civic pride and civic engagement (see Participant Observation No. 1). Of course developing tacit and indirect connections do not prevent people from engaging and contributing to the civic sphere in other ways. It is just there seems a slight contradiction or even a moral dilemma in the fact that people are proud of things they have not affected or contributed to. So how do people reconcile this? And is it again about (re)appropriating value out of something in order to promote or defend civic pride, almost on behalf of others or the city itself?

Sally, the student mentioned earlier, gave an interesting insight into how people negotiate these types of issues. She was born outside of the city and her family live in East Bridgford in Rushcliffe (about 10 miles outside Nottingham), but she went to a school in the city. Her explanation of why she has a sense of civic pride for Nottingham shows how tacit knowledges and connections seem to operate side by side with more direct and tangible claims. In contrast to her more concise (normative) definition of civic pride shown earlier in the chapter, this quote emphasises more of the 'Nottinghamness' of her civic pride, as she tries to explain the link between her personal (and symbolic) connections to the city

and her sense of civic pride. There is something lucid and astute in her observations that exposes the inherent ambiguity of civic pride:

‘It’s not like I was born in Nottingham. So it’s not like my history is it, but it’s kind of [a] sense of belonging. Because I take the most pride in things I’ve been involved in, in the city, like those concerts and stuff. We use to do some charity things and stuff. The lace...It’s just something to identify yourself, a feeling of belonging, an importance of the place, that it has a point to it, and there is a reason for it being there. It’s tricky cause it doesn’t really have an explanation why you feel pride, but you just kind of do...’

She went on to say:

“It’s hard to like pinpoint, what it is, or where it comes from, or why have it, it’s just kind of there, when you want it to be there. Yeah I don’t just walk through the city and go ‘oh I’m so proud to be living here’. But I guess maybe in the sense of pride of being in your city, is the fact that you can walk through and feel safe and feel happy, and feel kind of satisfied with what’s there and what’s on offer and not feel threatened...and maybe that’s the innocence of pride, that you don’t have to walk along and be really conscious of being mugged or something.”

It is worth analysing this closely. Sally begins by questioning the authenticity of her relationship to Nottingham (‘it’s not like my history is it’), and implies that she has developed a sense of civic pride despite not being born in the city. Yet because of being involved in the city and identifying with it in various ways (concerts, charity events, the history of lace in Nottingham), she retains the genuine article, so to speak (Siderits 2007; Savage et al 2005). She has developed civic pride via routes rather than roots to use to an oft-cited phrase, which for many civic actors in Nottingham is perhaps a more authentic and productive way of developing civic pride⁷. The way that Sally then qualifies this is also significant, and echoes some of the discursive tactics used by other participants to talk

⁷ I did not find any clear or direct correlation between people being born in the city and levels or even types of pride – although for people that were born in the city, and had have lived there a long time (some had even returned later in life) there was clearly something of a deep-seated emotional attachment that perhaps people who were born outside the city did not have in quite the same way.

about Nottingham's friendliness. For example, she feels obliged to qualify her sense of pride in Nottingham by appealing to the 'importance of the place' and that it 'has a point to it', and 'there is a reason for it being there' – suggesting a need to confirm in her own mind that there is logic, substance and legitimacy in her pride for Nottingham. Almost to offset the possibility that these claims themselves might be doubtful, she almost undoes her own rationale by saying 'it doesn't really have an explanation for why you feel pride, but you just kind of do'. This certainly reflects a level of honest doubt over the nature of her civic pride and the nature of the connections she has made with the city – something which other participants were less vocal about (or rather suggested more subtly). This could also - or instead - reflect something else. As Wind-Cowie and Gregory (2011) note in the context of nationalism, people are often guarded about accounting for or intellectualising their pride too much, as though doing so might expose its flaws or inconsistencies, or indeed make it more 'governable' or exploitable. I think however it is rather the ambiguity of the term more than Sally's bolshiness against 'intellectualising' civic pride that appears more apparent here, notwithstanding the doubt she harbours over the authenticity of her pride.

Another aspect of civic pride's tacit nature is that it is not necessarily something that is always active, present and immediately felt – people do not always think or act in 'civic pride terms'. Rather, as my participant observation pieces have suggested, civic pride becomes more visible and apparent in certain times and certain contexts. People may have a Nottingham identity, and are proud of the city, but civic pride only becomes important or manifest when people feel it is worth celebrating, promoting or defending – i.e. when there is occasion for it. In the quote above, Sally makes the case that she does not 'just walk through the city and go oh I'm so proud to be living here'. Walking through the city may of course inspire pride for some people, but one might reasonably assume that without adequate proof to the contrary, this is not a common occurrence for most people. Conversely, there may instead be a kind of comfort in knowing one can put their civic pride away (in the metaphorical cupboard, so to speak) and only retrieve and summon it 'when you want it to be there'. This suggests that pride might surface at particular times and within particular spaces that are appropriate and strategic. As Hochschild (2003) and others have discussed, there is a certain degree of emotional intelligence and strategy involved here in expressing and displaying pride in appropriate and context-specific ways - a kind of learnt behaviour of knowing when and where it is

important to express pride as a form of self-representation (Thrift 2004; Johnston 2007) (cf. Participant Observation 3). For of course when the opposite of this occurs, when someone is totally absorbed and enraptured by pride all of the time (for example, the football fan who always wears their home strip, and has a tattoo of the team's emblem, could be one such caricature of this) then people begin to question this person's judgement and in more serious cases their grasp on reality.

An important point is made at the end of the quote. Civic pride does not necessarily protect citizens from the threat of violence in the city, and may in fact lead to a lack of serious concern about the possibility of such a threat. 'Maybe that's the innocence of pride', Sally claims. This evokes another significant juxtaposition within the psychology of pride; not between pride and shame in this case, but in terms of confidence and vulnerability. As I have noted, pride and confidence seem to be two linked and mutually reinforcing emotions (Dyson 2006), but confidence in this case can also act as a kind of blind faith in the virtues of the city – a faith which is also a suppressed denial that the city's pride is at the mercy of violence ('being mugged' in this example). 'The innocence of pride' is a poignant phrase to evoke here, because there is on the one hand a kind of innocence of naivety at play, of being blissfully unaware of or oblivious to the dangers of the city (the actual extent of which will depend on where crime tends to happen and how it affects people psychologically). But there is also an innocence that slips into arrogance – a sense of indifference or of 'nothing like that happens in this town', which results in a denial of the city's dangers. The city council's attempts to deny or play down gun crime and violence in Nottingham could be accused of this, blaming 'lies and statistics' while using pride to protect itself from shame. What it suggests on a wider level is that for people to feel proud of where they live they must, to some extent, feel safe and secure; but few people cite safety and security as things to be proud of (they are rather taken for granted in that sense). Safety and security are therefore the tacit (unstated) conditions by which civic pride emerges and flourishes in places – and, as I discussed in Chapter 5 in relation to the Riots in 2011, civic pride can emerge when people feel threatened by something or when people feel that others are threatening the sanctity of their city and community.

Re-evaluating Civic Pride In and Beyond Nottingham

“Well immediately when you say it, it always makes me think of formal structures with a load of people in suits everywhere. But in reality yeah I suppose it’s more about, do you feel proud of where you live?” (Hazel, Community Worker from Lenton)

By examining the ways in which individuals define and explain civic pride as a term, it is possible to see how civic pride is a concept that resonates far beyond its historic connotations with local government, lord mayors and grand architecture, and constitutes something more personal, subjective, everyday, complex, tacit and normative. I have argued that civic pride can be defined as a composite and holistic concept, which folds together the local, the emotional and the political and represents a distinctive (but complex) urban (civic) value. Such images and traditions of local government and lord mayors do remain of course, and some of the definitions and explanations across this chapter and others recognise the importance of the institutional sphere for shaping and providing a political context for civic pride. I have also shown that civic pride also evokes all sorts of tacit knowledges and symbolic relationships people make with places. Civic pride, at this more tacit level, seems to generate a certain reflexivity amongst participants; a reflexivity of trying to understand and articulate the complexities of place attachment, local identity and why, and in what ways, people are proud of where they live.

Previous literature has recognised how civic pride can be a rather loose and amorphous term (Shapely 2011; Wind-Cowie and Gregory; Wood 2006), and the evidence from Nottingham seems to suggest likewise that civic pride is no fixed, rigid or prescriptive idea – it rather follows a more general set of ideas, practices and ideals. Virtually all participants evoked civic pride in this more ‘ethosy’ kind of a way, almost as though not to appear too judgemental over what constituted civic pride and what did not. By not narrowing down or being overly prescriptive about civic pride, perhaps participants were subtly indicating that people (should, do) have the agency and freedom to contribute to and enact civic pride in a variety of ways – in any way want they want in fact. But one could argue here that, beneath this, there is a tacit agreement amongst the people who value civic pride the most that certain acts and deeds should be honoured – perhaps voting in

local elections, volunteering, not dropping litter (picking up others' litter), attending community meetings and events and so on. For these are things that keep the fabric of society and the city together and - for these civic actors especially - make people feel proud about where they live.

A Civic Pride for Nottingham, or Anywhere?

Analysing civic pride at a more personal, subjective level is useful because it demonstrates that civic pride is a lived, embodied and practiced (everyday) concept and value, and yet also something which resonates at a wider, collective level. What is noteworthy however is that there is a degree of divergence between what people understand by the term civic pride and what people express pride in about Nottingham (i.e. Nottingham's civic identity). This is certainly more a matter of degree than a clear and striking difference; for as I have shown civic pride and civic identity overlap and intersect in a number of ways. For example, some of the salient features of Nottingham's civic identity identified in this research – its sense of friendliness, bolshiness, its relative timidity or lack of a strong regional identity – do shape how people define, practice and contest civic pride and civic life more generally. Clearly this overlap reflects the specific context of the research, and the influence of Nottingham in shaping people's wider views of civic pride. Place matters in matters of civic pride.

But as I have indicated in this chapter, participants tended to underemphasise the 'Nottinghamness' aspect, or the geographic specificity, of what civic pride is or aspires to, and instead express it in much more general ('ethosy') terms. Only a few people made any significant attempt to suggest things like 'well civic pride is about doing things that are truly Nottingham-related', or 'it is about supporting local Nottingham businesses and events', or 'it is about showing friendliness and bolshiness because that is *who we are* as a city'. One participant Nigel, who was born and bred in Nottingham and has worked in urban planning and regeneration in the city over the past few decades, did say for instance, when describing his sense of civic pride: 'I've got a passion for the city, I want it to do well, I want you to enjoy being here'. He also said 'I suppose in a way, well I am, a champion for Nottingham because I genuinely believe in it'. But few talked about civic pride as being driven by 'place champions' for instance. Many people clearly had

aspirations for Nottingham but not necessarily a narrowly-defined 'Nottingham-centrism' – which suggests that civic actors are not overly hubristic about the city's virtues, nor overly prescriptive about what the city should be; some participants were even willing to say it was rather superfluous (indeed impossible) to live one's life in purely Nottingham-ways (Featherstone et al 2012; Darling 2009).

In this sense, civic pride, and the values of citizenship, civic engagement and belonging that are associated with it, mean something far beyond Nottingham – they transcend Nottingham. I would go as far to say that although many people are loyal to Nottingham and take pride in their Nottingham identity, their capacity to think and act in civic ways could easily be transferred to other cities, and the fact that some participants were not originally from or born in Nottingham is to some extent testament to this. This also implies that civic actors value other people's civic pride in other places (and envy such pride).

The analysis in this chapter of civic pride as a term, or as a concept, goes far beyond the more cursory examination of the term given in many previous studies. There is also much qualitative difference in the themes emphasised here, compared to what other studies suggest about civic pride. For example Wood's (2006) emphasis on how civic pride relates to 'a shared and cohesive city image' was hardly picked up at all (although this aspect did resonate with how people described the city's civic identity), while Armstrong and Hognested's (2003) sense of civic pride as reflecting a kind of anti-national, localist discourse was also less emphasised in many of the participant definitions (although again these kinds of themes resonate with Nottingham's sense of bolshiness and independence). Shapely's (2012) sense that civic pride is about a language of aspiration and promoting the image of the city or town - as a kind of boosterist rhetoric - was partly reflected in the way participants talked about improving things and wanting the best for the city; but the tone and register of how people defined civic pride was far less grand and institutional in the way Shapely discusses the term. As I have mentioned, there was tendency for participants to talk about civic pride, in the abstract, more as a matter of personal responsibility than as a matter of collective responsibility - in part, perhaps, because it was a matter of personal pride to describe and detail one's civic pride.

An important intervention this chapter makes then is how civic pride often relates as much to the individual as it does to the community or the city. Literature on civic pride can too

often make it sound like a disembodied (abstract) concept, something that simply happens, or is an event to witness, rather than something individuals embody and experience on an everyday level (Wind-Cowie and Gregory 2011). This point about individual subjectivity and agency is critical, and resonates with a number of themes and debates discussed throughout this thesis - particularly in terms of how civic pride conditions certain forms of thinking and behaviour (as a type of governmentality), and how pride as an emotion or a virtue creates certain ideals and expectations for individuals and society to live up to.

By drawing away from a notion of civic pride as a kind of boosterist language used by local government, to sell the city's virtues or flaunt them in front of urban rivals, the material discussed in this chapter emphasises a more classical conception of civic pride as a political virtue based in citizenship and belonging. The responsibility and agency to be 'a good citizen' resides with the individual, even if individuals themselves are inculcated within and conditioned by a variety of social norms and expectations about how one's participation contributes to the higher social good (Cunningham 2011). Civic pride becomes this fundamental link between the self and the city. It is important to observe how this link gets coloured and framed through certain historic and class-driven ideas about self-improvement and self-government; from ideas of working-class respectability, to a kind of Victorian sense of middle-class aspiration and civic duty, to a more neoliberal understanding of civic pride – that civic pride implies a kind of 'Big Society' type of construct based in people's ability to be self-enterprising and independent (of the state) (Hunt 2004; North 2011; Stobart 2004). In many ways, (re)constructing civic pride in these ways, precisely through these historic and class-based lens, means that civic pride becomes a discourse of (re)appropriation and self-edification. It is possible to argue therefore that participants in Nottingham define civic pride in these more singular and self-edifying ways precisely in order to invest in themselves as agents of power and responsibility – to value themselves *as citizens*. This is why it is possible to think about civic pride as a form of governmentality.

Governmentality and Civic Pride as Policy

To end this chapter, I want to briefly flesh out this last point because I think it has important implications for future research on civic pride and its role in policy. As I

discussed in Chapter 2, civic pride constitutes a form of governmentality because of the way in which it carries a set of expectations and ideals that impact and shape the individual in civic ways. Through various means of 'persuasion', to use Thomas Bridges' term, civic pride produces a civic kind of subjectivity - which aims to 'shape, sculpt, mobilise' (Dean 1999: 12) people into more productive (and more proud) citizens. Civic pride persuades and conditions citizens in various ways; through spectacle (events, buildings, celebrations), through leadership and inspiration (from civic leaders, the city's forefathers/mothers, or local celebrities) but also through a variety of discourses and practices – for which policy plays a role - which invest a degree of agency in individuals and communities to have both freedom and responsibility over where they live and how they govern themselves.

The Coalition's push for localism and the Big Society has perhaps been the most direct intervention from central government around these ideas in recent years (Clarke and Cochrane 2013; North 2011). In chapter 3, I framed my analysis of localism more in relation to local government and municipal autonomy, but it is clear that the Coalition's wider agenda is to encourage more citizens and communities to engage in civic life and be more responsible for local services and welfare provision (North 2011). To recall the quote I used earlier from Eric Pickles, localism is about 'empowering communities and individuals, enabling them to solve their own problems' (Vision for Cities Speech 2011). Given the post-2008 economic recession and the austerity measures that have been rolled out across central and local government in its wake, localism and the Big Society have been controversial issues. For some they form an important new agenda for reviving local democracy and increasing civic engagement; while for others this agenda has simply been botched onto an ideology of austerity - a neoliberal tool to legitimate the slow destruction of the welfare state (Featherstone et al 2012; Evans et al 2013). The implication is, in the context of civic pride, that if people show more civic pride – that is, if people develop a greater sense of responsibility and ownership over where they live – then communities will no longer need the same level of welfare spending, because services and resources can be provided for by local citizens instead of the state (DCLG 2010). In this scenario, the welfare state will (slowly, but surely) be replaced by a volunteer state of proud and industrious citizens (i.e. the Big Society).

In Nottingham people were rather more circumspect over what the Big Society meant for the city and for society as a whole. Roger, of the Nottingham Civic Society (see: Chapter 7),

was indignant about the Big Society, not because of its principles, but because of the way it has been flouted in a context of austerity:

“Well I think I’m really against the so-called Big Society because I think it’s just a...well the concept, I’m not against the concept of a society in which voluntary groups play a role or all sorts of different roles within the community, you know I think that’s how communities work. But I think it’s a bit of cheek for the government to slash funding and then expect volunteers to step in.”

He was frustrated in particular that the city council - due to budget cuts of their own - had recently cut their financial support for the Civic Society’s Heritage Open Days event (see Participant Observation 1). A city councillor, Janet, held a similarly negative view, but recognised that buzzwords were par for the course in politics, and that the Big Society was no new invention, but a re-appropriation of an existing ‘socialist’ principle:

“I mean the Big Society is almost an example of Cameron and his Cameroonies nicking a concept of socialism, just as we’ve [the Labour Party] now pinched one nation Toryism... Cameron sort of pinched the idea of hug everybody and the Big Society.”

Henry, the former Lord Mayor, similarly thought that the Big Society was just a matter of political spin from the Tories, and that the ‘Big Society’ already existed, and has done so for a long time:

“Nevermind about this Big Society rubbish, it’s been out there and strong forever. People do things for nothing. And I say they’re right across the ward and they dedicate their lives to actually working for the community. They’re not mentioned, they’re not given honours, they just do it, cause it’s the right thing to do.”

Henry’s words are important because they emphasise that for many people, civic engagement is not done to placate any political agendas, nor do people volunteer (simply) for their own self-gratification or acclaim - but because they believe ‘it’s the right thing to do’. Participants did not appear to be willing to dis-engage with their communities, or discourage others from volunteering and participating in civic life, simply in order to

protest against the Tories – starving the city’s neediest in order to make a point. While this may sound rather unsurprising, it shows how civic pride is - emotionally, morally, politically ‘locked in’ - for many civic actors. But of course while this may reflect a kind of bolshie resistance to the government’s agenda, on the other hand it does exactly what the government wants citizens to do (i.e. to be more self-governing). As Roy (2009) notes on the principle of ‘civic governmentality’, the ‘ethics of the self’ is of critical importance here, because it encourages people to believe in and express their individual agency as a free-thinking (politically uncompromised) citizen, but in such a way as to obscure the fact that one’s freedom to act and one’s burden of responsibility to others might be actually constrained or weighed down by, and ultimately productive for, the state (see also: Rose et al 2006). In civic pride terms, people are perhaps too bolshie to give any ground or credit to the Tories (or Coalition), even if, underneath this, they agree in principle that a more engaged (self-governing) society is a healthier one.

Participants were nevertheless worried about future funding for third sector organisations and community groups. I was told for instance that some cultural and ethnic community organisations and venues, which tend to cater for specific demographic groups, were under increasing pressure to ‘mainstream’ their services to a broader demographic, and integrate their services with existing services in the city. I sensed a willingness to push on and be resilient (and manoeuvre where one could) from those intimately involved in community organisations, but also an underlying anxiousness to send off more and more grant applications for more funding, and a desire for more volunteers to be involved (and in effect, do more).

As we speculate about possible post-recession, post-austerity scenarios, what kinds of local policies might emerge that use or promote civic pride in Nottingham? And what purpose would they serve? The possibilities are manifold, and many already exist. At a city-wide level, it would be hard not to imagine urban image and marketing campaigns not continuing in the city, and using increasingly sophisticated and wide-reaching communication platforms (particularly social media) to promote the city to an increasingly global market. Indeed in 2012 there was a campaign launched called ‘Get Nottingham Trending’ led by local businessmen and civic leaders in the city which used Twitter to promote the city and get people to share what they like about the city. At a more local level, things like litter campaigns around local neighbourhoods have been important in

some communities in Nottingham and will likely continue to be so as council services are more under pressure. In Sneinton, for example I was told there is a campaign called 'Right Up My Street' that has formed recently to encourage residents to do litter picking days around local streets. There might also be wider structural changes that could be made to encourage civic pride and civic engagement in the city: better education in schools about Nottingham history and culture, local citizenship and local democracy; campaigns to encourage organisations and companies to have 'civic pride days' (in the same way some organisations have 'volunteer away' days); or initiatives which encourage a greater sense of direct shared ownership in the city – such as co-operative housing movements, more direct democracy and decision-making by citizens and communities, more residents associations, or – through the new localism legislation – more neighbourhood plans. (Of course, more radically, this might also include more occupations and protests in public spaces, more public art and graffiti, and other kinds of 'reclaim the streets' type initiatives).

All these possibilities resonate with the idea that civic pride can be expressed, promoted and defended in different ways – through people, through policies, through education, through funding and so on. There may be much to dispute over what constitutes a discrete civic pride policy, initiative or campaign - and one person's source of pride may be another person's source of shame (graffiti for example). As I discussed in Chapter 6, pride itself is a word that seems to have different connotations to different people, and can generate a range of opposing or contradictory narratives about the city. The years of austerity, since 2008, have perhaps told us that many of these policies, initiatives or campaigns are needed now, even while city councils are under significant pressure to prioritise spending on welfare, services and infrastructure (rather than on 'civic pride' per se). This may therefore lead to the emergence of more grassroots movements in future years (such as co-operatives, resident associations, protest groups and so on), and more community-led (self-funded) civic initiatives and activities. But these developments themselves will depend upon people's individual and collective capacities to organise and campaign effectively – and will require people to decide what kind of civic pride people collectively aspire to.

This is again the critique of localism that Featherstone et al (2012) and others have advocated – that local inequalities and an uneven geography of skills, capacities and needs will dramatically undermine the effectiveness and inclusiveness of local initiatives, and

perhaps worse perpetuate the myth that structural change can happen at the local level, without accompanying changes to the wider economy (see also: North 2011; Wind-Cowie and Gregory 2011). Meanwhile, for all these largely positive (pro-social) initiatives, campaigns and policies in the coming years, civic pride might also be 'policed' and mobilised in more negative and restrictive ways – more police crackdowns on rioting and protests, fines for littering and graffiti, negative press in the media, and other kinds of 'shaming' tactics that expose anti-social, 'anti-civic' behaviour. For every moment of civic pride on one street is a moment of civic shame or civic shaming going on in another street; such is the dialectical and contradictory nature of cities (Harvey 1996). Any future research agenda around civic pride and its relationship to policy would therefore have to consider the different ways civic pride is *managed* both positively and negatively, and whether civic pride is perceived as a problem or a solution (or both).

Conclusion

This chapter has examined how people define and embody civic pride as an everyday concept and value, and the different ways people connect with and contribute to the city. The analysis has attempted to think about civic pride in the abstract, and what civic pride might mean both within and beyond Nottingham. The analysis complements previous literature on civic pride that has noted its more amorphous and elusive qualities (Wind-Cowie and Gregory 2011; Wood 2006). But it also extends our understanding of civic pride by demonstrating how, despite certain ambiguities inherent in the term, civic pride represents a highly composite and holistic term and value - an urban ethos that is practiced and defended in a range of ways. I have shown that civic pride ties together the local, the emotional and the political in complex and powerful ways, and that as a topic of debate for geographers it draws together a range of urban, cultural and emotional geographies literatures and ideas, and brings them into conversation and collision. The normative and (at times) high-minded or moralistic ways in which participants defined civic pride in the abstract (or as a personal value) contrasted with the somewhat less certain and more tacit ways in which participants understood their relationship with and connections to Nottingham. This suggests that civic pride can be embodied and practiced in ways that people are not always aware of nor can articulate easily. The analysis also reveals how

there are complex relationships between what people are proud of about Nottingham and how they understand civic pride as a more general value, to the extent that Nottingham's identity as a friendly and bolshie place, for example, did to some degree fold into how people defined and expressed or practiced civic pride, but this identity aspect was not always or inevitably integral to how civic pride was understood as a concept or how what people felt responsible for. For these civic actors at least, civic pride resonated as much with more classical notions of citizenship and belonging as it did with any particular place.

In the context of austerity, localism and the Big Society, civic pride appears to becoming a more explicit priority in many cities as local government budgets are being cut and local welfare and service provision are under threat. As I have shown in this chapter, civic pride conditions citizens to think and act in certain (civic) ways, and it is on this basis that localism and the Big Society are being mobilised – in the hope that it will both reinvigorate civic society and reduce the welfare budget. This is why I think it is productive to think about civic pride as a governmentality mechanism that links pride (the emotion) to civic pride (the value or principle) in ways that bring individuals citizens and communities into a wider ethos and political project. Nottingham is doing much to express, promote and defend civic pride, but the significance of and challenges for civic pride reach far beyond Nottingham, and many of the themes and issues raised in this chapter about civic pride would no doubt resonate with many other cities and communities.

Chapter 9: Conclusion

This thesis has presented a cultural geography of civic pride in Nottingham. It has aimed to challenge geographers to think about civic pride in more theoretically and empirically informed ways and has offered a number of original insights about what civic pride means, how it is perceived and experienced locally, and what its overall role is in cities. Civic pride is a composite and holistic urban ethos, encompassing a range of feelings, ideas, discourses, practices and policies. In short, civic pride is about being proud of, and taking pride in, where you live, and connects with the variety of ways in which communities promote and defend their local identity and autonomy. Civic pride forms both an evaluative concept related to people's perceptions and experiences of the city (and what they value most about the city), and an aspirational concept related to how people imagine the city, romanticise it in certain ways, and want the best for it. Civic pride forms an emotive force that drives people to think, behave, act and mobilise others in civic ways, but it is also something which some people feel is lacking in cities and needs reviving. The presence of 'shame' in a city, and those qualities and characteristics which make people less proud of a city, can also form a key driving force behind civic pride, because it can be those very negative things in the city (and the shame that comes with them) that encourages people to intervene and resist.

I have explored what civic pride means through the very people that believe in and value civic pride the most. While this may not be entirely representative of Nottingham as a whole, this group of participants provided me with a rich account of the city, and I am certain many of the issues raised in this thesis would be relevant to all communities in Nottingham and beyond. The findings of this research resonate with and build on previous research on civic pride – particularly in terms of how civic pride relates to questions of urban image (Bennett 2013; Harvey 1989), community cohesion (Jones 2013), history, memory and identity (Bonnett and Alexander 2013), citizenship and belonging (Cunningham 2011; Dagger 1997), and regional and national politics (Armstrong and Hognested 2003). What is distinctive however about my findings, aside from the fact that I have examined a somewhat under-represented city and regional area of England, is that I have developed a much more detailed analysis of what civic pride is and means, how it is perceived, experienced and contested by different individuals, groups and organisations,

and ultimately how civic pride and civic identity fold together in complex ways. Unlike previous studies, I have shown how civic pride takes on a range of forms and expressions, and demonstrated that issues of scale, relationality and inter-urban competition are critical to how civic pride is produced and contested. I have also made an explicit attempt to explore the emotional meanings and implications of pride itself, showing how there are certain parallels and relationships between pride the emotion and civic pride the value. While this emotional focus departs from more traditional approaches to urban theory, it resonates with a growing interest in emotional geographies work, and demonstrates how emotions both reveal and hide forms of power, identity and inequality in cities (Anderson and Smith 2001; Ho 2009).

It is important to remind ourselves of what civic pride means at its simplest and purest – to have pride in your city. This does not mean it is a simple concept or feeling about cities – but rather that civic pride is in many ways all-encompassing; it is vague not because it is necessarily confusing, but because it saturates a multiplicity of meanings, uses and values. As such it is much more evocative and expressive than it is prescriptive and definitive. But in peeling away the multiple layers of its meaning, and understanding closely how people perceive and experience life in the city, civic pride can be understood in more nuanced and dynamic ways – it forms both an individual and shared feeling and value; different people and organisations in the city promote and defend civic pride in different ways; some narratives of civic pride appeal more than others, while some narratives seem to purposively or conveniently hide or disguise certain contradictions or inequalities. Civic pride is an empty vessel for the city in that sense – it can be moulded and crafted in different ways to suit different purposes and create different types of value.

In examining the different ways Nottingham imagines itself as a friendly city, a bolshie city and a city with a rather ambiguous regional identity, I have shown that Nottingham represents a distinctive case study for examining civic pride and civic identity. Nottingham is in many ways unique and defies any simple categorisation. However a number of the themes and issues raised throughout this thesis would no doubt be applicable to other places and communities. One could imagine for instance that many people who live in cities would like to claim their city is ‘friendly’ or fiercely independent; or that their city is forgotten or ‘misunderstood’ somehow by the rest of the nation. There is something particular, and at times peculiar perhaps, in how people perceive and experience smaller

and medium-sized ('second-tier') cities – and perhaps cities more generally of the Midlands and the North – which sit on the edge of a number of urban and regional hierarchies (Daniels and Rycroft 1993; Hall 1997; Shore 2014). At times it is as though such cities feel an inferiority complex to other, larger cities and struggle to assert themselves regionally or nationally. At other times, such feelings of smallness or ambiguity can be reappropriated in order to claim a more 'authentic' civic pride – one which grounds itself in the idea of being 'better not bigger' (see: Bell and Jayne 2006). It can be easy of course to romanticise such differences and distinctions between places – but as I suggest below, this is precisely what civic pride is often about.

Relationality, Reflexivity and Subtlety – The Underlying Geographies of Civic Pride

Amongst these more general findings, and following on from the point I have just raised, one important finding is the degree of relationality involved in how people construct civic pride and civic identity. The scale at which civic pride is imagined and mobilised, and the boundaries within and across which civic identities are made and remade, significantly shape and condition people's sense of civic pride. Inter-urban competition, historic rivalries and various metrics of comparison, also shape and condition civic pride in various ways and give it added meaning and reality. For geographers this may not be a surprising finding – that civic pride is relational, dynamic and comparative – nor indeed a particularly original claim. But unlike more extreme forms of nationalism (or indeed forms of NIMBYism), civic pride appears more subtle, more inwardly positive than outwardly negative, and in many ways reaches across these different scales, boundaries and rivalries as much as it polices them. My sense is that people who value civic pride, and who have certain loyalties to particular places, often like to detail, exaggerate and at times satirise apparent differences between places, simply for the sake of civic pride – which is as much about banter and debate as it is any kind of realpolitik of 'us versus them'. This can however result in people forming unrealistic and false images and perceptions of places, and can serve to brush over, or make light of, the uneven geographies of wealth and opportunity between places. The more subtle point here is that engaging with civic pride requires a wider knowledge of and sensitivity to people and places beyond where one lives; for it is only through a relational sense of how different communities, different cities

and different regions compare and contrast that civic pride comes to matter, or at least matter as something to celebrate and defend.

A more neutral and perhaps more progressive notion of civic pride would be one that is less based in, or driven by, competition and division between places, and more about valuing the city in and of itself, creating opportunities, welcoming others in, and fostering civic engagement and solidarity. In this way, civic pride might simply represent a value and a vehicle for people to come together and celebrate the city's identity and autonomy, as well as share common issues and concerns. This would be a more inclusive, open and creative civic pride, but which still has a place-based focus (cf. Darling 2009; Featherstone et al 2012). This would not foreclose the possibility of city-regions and regional alliances emerging, where multiple civics and civic identities are brought together under a shared project or vision. One aporia here is whether civic pride can only function if cities continue to be separate, localised (semi-sovereign) territories (and hence based on some sort of spatial exclusion or limit of responsibility), or whether civic pride can accommodate more of a fluid and trans-local vision or purpose. The practice and proliferation of 'city twinning' would be one example of this already in existence, although whether city twinning represents anything of a more progressive politics of place that addresses questions of social justice, or whether it is merely another type of commodified urban image strategy, is another question (for some discussion, see: Jayne et al 2013).

For all the local complexities that civic pride in Nottingham represents, I have also argued in this thesis that civic pride is not necessarily a kind of 'one-city-centrism'. People that have civic pride and believe in its inherent value can, in a sense, carry their civic pride wherever they go and appreciate other people's civic pride. But while civic pride is mobile in that sense, it often takes time to develop and nurture, and depends not only on the connections people make with the city and the different ways people engage with it, but also on people's quality of life, their agency and willingness to get involved, and the kind of personal values which people bring to civic life. People's social and demographic background will inevitably shape the kind of skills and opportunities they have to engage, and this may also determine what kind of community (cultural, ethnic, neighbourhood, lifestyle) people choose to express their civicism and show their pride. From the basis of the participants involved in this study, it might be easy to suggest that civic pride tends to be associated with educated middle-class types, or with people with high levels of social

capital (that is – people that are confident in engaging with others, who can operate across a range of social and political networks, and have developed trust amongst the people they live or work with) (Wind-Cowie and Gregory 2011). One area of this research that I could have explored further is the role of personality, and whether certain types of personalities and behavioural traits predispose people to being involved in civic life (and what then makes civic actors or activists distinctive). This would resonate with a lot of current thinking around theories of ‘capitals’, Bourdieu’s notion of ‘habitus’ and the class-driven ways in which civic pride is produced within and reflective of the social order.

Methodological Reflections and Future Research Directions

Using a range of (qualitative) methods and data sources was important because it helped me understand the complexities of civic pride and allowed me to develop a more rounded and nuanced analysis. The interviews in particular brought together a rich set of ideas, arguments, stories and examples with which to analyse and give colour to people’s perceptions about and experiences of civic life in Nottingham, and allowed me to connect civic pride with a range of personal insights and values. This enabled me to explore the relationship between the personal and the political, individual pride and civic pride, and helped give the analysis a certain ‘arc’. The participant observation was useful in similar ways, but also offered something different, both experientially and analytically. By attending a Heritage Open Days event, the Nottingham Civic Society Christmas Lecture and the Goose Fair Opening Ceremony, I was able observe and experience personally what civic pride was like ‘in the moment’ (as it were), and examine civic pride as a lived and performed phenomenon. I chose events which I felt were more or less celebratory of Nottingham and which would offer a more tangible and visible insight into what civic pride meant to people in Nottingham (as well to me, as an ‘outsider’, returning to my home city). They were on the whole useful because they gave me an opportunity to reflexively consider my relationship to Nottingham and critically explore the ways in which civic institutions and groups stage civic pride as a spectacle or a performance.

I could have taken a somewhat different direction over participant observation. For example, I could have observed events like community planning meetings of various kinds (neighbourhood meetings, city council meetings etc.), and analysed how civic pride forms

out of participatory political processes (cf. Jupp 2008). Another direction could have been to observe different types of spaces and sites in the city (city parks, public squares, shopping streets etc.) and to explore how civic pride is expressed through space and through spatial practices – indeed how spaces and spatial practices themselves become appropriated for civic pride reasons (cf. Watson 2006). Both of these possibilities would have painted a somewhat different picture of civic pride and rendered a new set of insights.

The secondary resources that I used in this research – which ranged from policy documents to newspaper reports to film and fiction – were certainly useful for showing how civic pride circulates within the political and cultural fabric of the city, and how it is represented and mobilised within policy and local media. Certainly one could suggest that a more detailed discourse analysis, methods of deconstruction (Derridean “methods”), forms of literary and film analysis, and even more archival work about Nottingham could have informed the findings of this research, or taken it into a different (but equally valid) direction than I otherwise took it. A more thorough analysis of what Alan Sillitoe means for the city of Nottingham, and the legacy of his writing, could be one future thesis in the making for instance.

As far broader directions for future research are concerned, I have a number of suggestions. Firstly, there is clearly room for exploring how different types of people perceive and experience civic pride, and how factors of gender, age, race, ethnicity, disability, and so on, impact on civic pride. Wind-Cowie and Gregory’s (2011) study of pride and British patriotism has already dealt with some of these issues at a national scale, but there is clearly room within the literature to pursue a more local and urban approach. While this research adopted an exclusively qualitative methodology, it is conceivable that various types of quantitative, statistical analyses could be used to explore some of the relationships between say civic pride and different socio-economic characteristics (see: Wind-Cowie and Gregory 2011; or partially, Groothuis et al 2004; Wood 2006).

Indeed future research exploring any kind of relationship between civic pride and some other discrete variable (or other proxies of civic pride) would generate a range of useful discussions. Understanding civic pride’s relationship to things like voting, volunteering, attitudes towards litter, buying from and supporting local firms and businesses and so on,

will certainly be of interest to both academics and policy-makers interested in how civic pride mobilises citizens to act and behave in socially productive or locally meaningful ways. In fact, generating discussions and building a better evidence base of the possible impacts and benefits of civic pride will to some extent help solve the issue of how to use civic pride within policy, because people might be persuaded that it is a good thing, with material impacts and benefits. In hindsight, this research could have benefited from a more explicit engagement with some of the smaller campaigns, initiatives and policies happening across the city that are using or promoting civic pride in some way (such as those mentioned at the end of Chapter 8), particularly to illustrate 'what works' and what kinds of activities and organising principles produce successful or positive outcomes for civic pride in local areas.

Wider issues such as neoliberalism, localism, the Big Society and multiculturalism will also form some of the key terrains over which civic pride will be contested and mobilised in the coming years. Geographers might consider how these issues might be productive for or disruptive to civic pride, and how civic pride works through and helps (re)produce a number of competing ideologies and political agendas. With this, some consideration might be made as to the relative merits, or overall balance, between more official, institutionalised kinds of civic pride, promoted and defended by city councils for instance, and more grassroots kinds of civic pride, at the neighbourhood level, and what kind of synergies and tensions might form from this (see: Featherstone 2012). A key question is can cities and local communities become more independent, autonomous and self-sufficient if central government withdraws funding and forces urban populations to fend for themselves? Would that be a more 'authentic' civic pride? Or is civic pride actually about demanding more from central government, resisting the cuts and advocating more devolution to cities?

A wider, more historical question for future research would be – what is different or unique about civic pride now, as compared to other historical eras? Some might argue the post-industrial city has become far too plural, global, consumerist and digital for us to even conceive of civic pride in the same way as we have done in other eras. The shape, form and character of cities has changed so dramatically, we perhaps need a new vocabulary and set of explanatory frameworks to understand civic pride. While this may hold true to some extent, I perhaps prefer the perspective that civic pride has gradually evolved over

time and traces of the past are already and always part of the present; and that part of what civic pride is, is to look to the past to inform and sanctify the present. What is perhaps most striking about most major cities in England, the UK and beyond is the sheer globalism they incorporate, and in turn the increasingly global nature of civic pride itself. The fact is that not only is the world 'out there', and people increasingly interact with people and places across much farther distances, but the world is within the city itself now (Boland 2010a; McClay and McAlister 2014). But does the idea of promoting, say, a 'global urban pride' really cut it, and would this kind of collective banner actually inspire people to think and act in locally meaningful ways? The world is not so wonderfully global for some of course; and for others, the global has gone too far. As such, perhaps it is time to re-value our relationship with places, and find mutual solutions to common problems across more tangible scales (McClay and McAlister 2014; Tomaney 2013).

The city-state model of the ancient polis, as an island of autonomy, independence, and perhaps territorial if not political stability, able to control its own economic affairs while staving off the threat of its enemies, seems, of course, not only no longer possible, but no longer desirable. And yet, as with more recent nostalgia for British cities to return to a Victorian spirit of civic pride, such an aspiration for autonomy and independence seems to still haunt the present somehow, as though we have become fearful of the end of cities as distinctive, sovereign territories. It is clear that civic pride is not dead, if evidence from Nottingham is anything to go by. But as Llwyn (2011) and others have noted, it is perpetually perceived to be in a state of loss, mourning or corruption – as though the older ideals have been lost, buried or cast off too keenly in the name of progress (see also: Cunningham 2011; Dagger 1997). But if we are to know anything of pride, as an ideal or a virtue, it is continually aspirational and self-motivating, perhaps to the point of never being satisfied. Whether capitalist, socialist, conservative or progressive, civic pride is about, as my participant James put it, 'creating the world you want to live in'. And so if people want a less global, a less fluid and a less commodified city – a return to the city-state model – then things may change. But whether they change for the better or worse is another matter.

'You Can Go Your Own Way' – the Future of Civic Pride for Nottingham

I want to end this thesis with a brief evaluation of what the future of civic pride for Nottingham might be. Nottingham has much to be confident and optimistic about in relation to civic pride, but, as I have shown, it continues to stand at somewhat of a crossroads on a number of issues. As a Nottingham-born person myself it might be easy to say 'well, Nottingham has lots to be proud of and there are many people doing good things for the city – so civic pride is in good health'. In some ways this is true; and if civic pride has any future, in Nottingham or elsewhere, then people must acknowledge the good deeds people do for their cities and communities, and celebrate successes when and where they occur. But there are clearly a number of serious challenges Nottingham faces; issues which mean the city ought not to rest too easily on its laurels – not least in terms of jobs, deprivation and crime. The city council in particular is under significant pressure to deliver on a range of economic and social issues and rebuild hope and pride in the city. Everything from austerity, localism, urban regeneration, the possible implications of the History of Rebellion project at Nottingham Castle, Robin Hood, or the how the East Midlands region as a whole might collectively assert itself – all of these issues, and many others, will shape the future wellbeing of the city, and in turn the future of civic pride.

Although the community and civic leaders I interviewed might have constructed a particular vision of the city and a particular version of civic pride from a particular point of view, the city as a whole might still embrace friendliness and bolshiness as qualities which define the city's identity and bring the city together. Citizens, community groups, the city council, cultural actors, businesses, artists and activists all have a role to play in contributing to and developing the city. But doing this successfully will require understanding how the city works collectively; it will require tapping into the city's collective psyche, mood and refrain, and finding connections between the past, present and future. As the quote from Wayne Burrows suggests (from Chapter 6): 'one day, the council might even replace their slanty Ns and 'proud and ambitious' logos with something more fundamental to the city's sense of itself'.

The fact that Nottingham finds itself at the crossroads on many issues, appears at times confused over which way to turn, and remains stubbornly ambiguous, is in my opinion, precisely what the city needs to embrace and take pride in, in some respects – even as it

aspires to something more. Spending time in Nottingham, talking to the people who live there, visiting its venues and reading the pages of the *Nottingham Post* or *LeftLion* magazine, one can detect something important in the heart of Nottingham that is about being both a big *and* a small city – rather than being neither. It enjoys its relative provincialism at the same time it takes pride in being a member of the Core City group for the UK. It is a city that has confidence in its economic power and cultural vibrancy, and yet also thinks it is being forgotten or misrepresented by the rest of the country. Daniel, the arts and culture researcher and consultant mentioned in Chapter 6, seemed to agree that what he liked about Nottingham was its lack of ‘obviousness’ and that “it’s big enough to have everything that you’d want, but not so big that you feel swamped by it”. His impression was that precisely because of the reputation issues Nottingham has had, and because of the fact that the East Midlands is often a forgotten or misrepresented region, it has had to ‘work harder’ as a city to assert itself and has, as a result, benefited from not being lured into any kind of city hubris:

“I think it’s just I like places that are not obvious. All the places that are famous or supposed to be nice or supposed to be big and clever, most of them, sometimes they’re a bit full of themselves. You can go to some places and feel they’re very complacent about their attractions and their identity and so on. Whereas I think places like Nottingham have to work for what they’ve got and I quite like that.”

Daniel’s comment in many ways sums up what civic pride in Nottingham is all about. Not least it reflects a critical point about how urban populations fashion their views about civic pride to fit their local context and circumstances, and make it known to others that ‘our civic pride is an *authentic* civic pride’.

I accept, along with many others, that social justice should be at the heart of urban politics and should shape civic aspirations. But I also think that if people care about cities, and the uniqueness of people and places, people should defend, celebrate and promote values such as civic pride. We should not let civic pride blind us to what is wrong or unjust about the cities we live in (lest it becomes a civic pride before a civic fall). Rather we should honour civic pride in order to honour people and places, and let pride be a virtue that we all carry and share. Nottingham has plenty of people who care passionately about the city and honour civic pride in these kinds of ways. But it is the city as a whole that needs to

embrace these ideas and values, participate in making, promoting and protecting civic pride, and, whether loudly or humbly, take pride in Nottingham as *a friendly, bolshie East Midlands city*.

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Appendix 1: Participant Information Sheet (Sample)



UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

Gy10tac@leeds.a.cuk

Tom Collins

School of Geography

University of Leeds

University Road

Leeds

Participant Information:

I would like to invite you to participate in a PhD research project that looks at civic pride in Nottingham. I am interested what different individuals and organisations feel about Nottingham and how much the city inspires a sense of identity and belonging.

Through an interview lasting around 1 hour, I would like participants to discuss, through a range of questions, what their relationship with Nottingham is and whether people feel a sense of pride in the identity and character of the city. It is also interested in how different civic and community groups fit within a wider picture of Nottingham and Nottingham culture.

In providing your insights on these issues, you will benefit the research by contributing first-hand experiences of civic pride and help develop an understanding into what causes people to feel proud, what feeling proud about a city means and whether this feeling motivates people to engage in community life. This may later inform policy and practice for local authorities and community groups.

All data will be recorded on a dictaphone, transcribed manually, and selected quotes may be used in the write up of the research, seen only by myself, my two supervisors and an examiner. All responses will be anonymised and kept confidential.

Please feel free to ask any questions regarding the research.

Appendix 2: Participant Consent Form (Sample)

Title of Research Project: A Cultural Geography of Civic Pride in Nottingham

Name of Researcher: Tom Collins

Tick the box if you agree with the statement to the left

- I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet explaining the above research project and I have had the opportunity to ask questions about the project.
- I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw [between Oct 2012-Dec 2013, during the period of data collection] without giving any reason. In addition, should I not wish to answer any particular question or questions, I am free to decline.
- I give consent to this interview being recorded using a Dictaphone and my anonymised responses published and discussed within the PhD thesis.
- I understand that the original transcripts will be kept confidential and secure.
- I agree for the anonymised data collected from me to be used in related future research publications
- I agree to take part in the above research project

.....
Name of participant

.....
Date

.....
Signature

.....
Lead researcher

.....
Date

.....
Signature

Appendix 3: Participant List with Given Pseudonyms

Alan – LeftLion Writer	Samson - Student
Ben – Student	Simon – Community Worker (Sneinton)
Catherine – Artisan (Sherwood)	Terry – Councillor
Clive – Councillor	Victor – Museums Worker
Daniel – Arts and Culture Researcher	Wendy – Civic Society Member
Daphne – Faith Leader (Hyson Green)	-----
Duncan - Councillor	
Edward – Council Officer	
Gerry – Media Company Owner	Other participants who helped inform
Hazel – Community Worker (Lenton)	the analysis but were not directly
Harold – Civic Ambassador	quoted:
Henry – Former Lord Mayor	
Ian – Councillor	- Other Students
Imran – Community Worker (St Ann’s)	- Other Council Officers
Irene – Community Worker (Meadows)	- A Former Deputy Crime and Police
Janet – Councillor	Commissioner for the County
Joe – Church Pastor	- Two Trade Union Workers
Keith – Nottingham Citizens	- A Local Broadcaster
Michael – University Lecturer	- A Local Activist
Max - Local Surveyor	- Other Community Workers
Nasser – Community Worker (St Ann’s)	- A Local Artist
Nigel – Entrepreneur	- A Notts County Football Coach
Odin – Entrepreneur	- A Member of the Nottingham Poetry
Phillip – Councillor	Society
Polly – Experience Nottinghamshire	- A Church Priest
Rajiv – Inter-Faith Worker	- A Local Stained Glass Craftsman
Roger – Civic Society Member	
Ronnie – Former MP	
Sally – Student	