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"Drawing lines on a map": English Regionalism and Regional Identity in Post-war Yorkshire and Humberside

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In Post-war Yorkshire and Humberside

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Abstract

The failure of either a regional tier of government, or a strong and coherent regional political movement to emerge in England – in contrast to the Post-war devolution developments in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, not to mention Europe – has led to the general dismissal of regionalism as a significant political force in England, and led to its characterization as the 'dog that never barked'; merely the preserve of a handful of committed regionalists. This thesis builds on recent scholarship in Post-war British history, broadly categorized as the 'new political history', to challenge these traditional narratives. It explores how regional identities were constructed and articulated in a number of official, semi-official and unofficial spheres. It also considers how these interacted with central government and other interests. It does so through a number of case studies, or 'core samples', exploring various dimensions of regional action in different contexts. These include regional economic development and industrial promotion agencies; local government; airports and other transport considerations; and regional arts policy. The thesis focuses on Yorkshire and Humberside, a region that has not received much scholarly interest with regards to regionalism, but which has been considered prominently on literature exploring 'the North'. Through this case study, this thesis highlights not only the potency of regionalism and regional identity, but also its complexities, contingencies and constraints. Through its core samples into economic planning, regional boosterism, local government reorganisation, transport and arts policy, this study adds additional perspectives to on-going historical discourses in contemporary British and European history. It also provides some insight into contemporary political concerns around the re-emergence of identity politics. It argues that complex, pluralist and distinct regionalisms – as were articulated and mobilized in Yorkshire during this period – form an important and often neglected dimension of contemporary British history that requires more concerted study.

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List of abbreviations

ABC   Association of British Counties

AEU   Amalgamated Engineering Union

ACGB   Arts Council of Great Britain (Arts Council England (ACE) from 1994)

ABC   Association of British Counties

BAA   British Airports Authority

BBC   British Broadcasting Corporation

BEA   British European Airways

BOAC   British Overseas Airways Corporation

BSSA   British South American Airways

CUEP   Central Unit for Environmental Planning

CAA   Civil Aviation Authority

DEA   Department for Economic Affairs

DOE   Department for the Environment

DTI   Department for Trade and Industry

ERCC   East Riding County Council

ERA   East Riding of Yorkshire Archives

EYAG   East Yorkshire Action Group

EPB   Economic Planning Board

EPC   Economic Planning Council

EEC   European Economic Community

GLC   Greater London Council

MCC   Metropolitan County Council

GDP   Gross Domestic Product

HBB   Humber Bridge Board

HCC	Hull City Council
HHC	Hull History Centre
IT	Inclusive Tour Package Air Holiday
IDC	Industrial Development Certificate
LHA	Lincolnshire and Humberside Arts
LAA	Lincolnshire Arts Association
LEP	Local Enterprise Partnership
LGBC	Local Government Boundary Commission
MOD	Ministry of Defence
MP	Member of Parliament
NVALA	National Viewers' and Listeners' Association
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
NEDC	North East Development Council
NEPC	Northern Economic Planning Council
NLA	North Lincolnshire Association
NWEPC	North West Economic Planning Council
RAF	Royal Air Force
RAA	Regional Arts Associations
RAB	Regional Arts Board
RDA	Regional Development Agency
RDC	Rural District Council
SDA	Scottish Development Agency
WDA	Welsh Development Agency
NWIDA	North-West Industrial Development Association
TCPA	Town and Country Planning Association
TNA	The National Archives
TUC	Trades Union Congress
TGWU	Transport and General Workers' Union
UKIP	UK Independence Party
UDC	Urban District Council
WRCC	West Riding County Council
WYAS	West Yorkshire Archive Service
WYCC	West Yorkshire County Council
YAHADA	Yorkshire and Humberside Airport Development Association

YHDA	Yorkshire and Humberside Development Association
YHEPB	Yorkshire and Humberside Economic Planning Board
YHEPC	Yorkshire and Humberside Economic Planning Council
YAA	Yorkshire Arts Association
YCSS	Yorkshire Council for Social Service
YRS	Yorkshire Ridings Society
YTV	Yorkshire Television

Statement of Copyright

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Overview

This thesis explores how individuals, institutions and organisations have responded to regional initiatives, or articulated a collective regional identity or purpose, broadly from the end of the 1950s – when the British government began to debate and implement reforms on a regional basis – through to the mid-1990s; a time when the New Labour government sought to refocus on a new 'wave' of 'regional policy'. It will do so by considering various economic, social, political and cultural dimensions of several focused case studies, or 'core samples', as a means of re-evaluating general assertions regarding the relative 'success' or 'failure' of regional initiatives and action. In doing so, the thesis seeks to empirically establish certain aspects of the nature of regional identity in England. It applies the 'regional' paradigm to consider broader historiographical debates on-going within historical scholarship on twentieth-century British politics and culture. These include issues surrounding perceptions of national 'decline'; the challenges and paradoxes of increasing 'affluence' in the late twentieth-century; the erosion of popular trust in traditional political parties and political processes, and the increasing 'privatisation of politics'; as well as the supposed increase of 'post-materialist' and anti-modernist sentiment amongst the general population. It will also assess the role of the regional in the context of the increasing literature on conceptions of national identity in the UK; namely constructions of 'Britishness' and 'Englishness'.

As a means to analyse these broad themes, this study focuses on the 'region' of Yorkshire and the Humber; also referred to as Humberside. This region has produced some scholarship largely focused on regional institutions and actions, though relatively

little in comparison to other accepted regions in England. This thesis focuses on the region itself, rather than as part of a comparative study. More specifically, this thesis primarily explores – through the prism of 'regionalism' – how the city of Kingston-Upon-Hull and the area of Humberside, as sub-regional centres of population, have engaged with the idea of a regional framework for government, economy and all aspects of life – from transport to the arts – over the latter part of the twentieth century. The regional framework adopted by Hull and Humberside differed from the 'great city-regions', such as Manchester, Birmingham, Sheffield, Liverpool, Leeds, and Newcastle, because of its unique location on the River Humber, relating both to Yorkshire and Lincolnshire.

This introductory chapter will focus first on discussing the broad theoretical considerations and issues related to the terms 'region' and 'regionalism' as used in the scholarly literature across a number of disciplines. In doing so, it will establish how 'regionalism and 'regional identity' are defined and problematised in the context of this research. It will then look at the particular British – or rather English – context for regions and regionalism, and evaluate how regions have been perceived; not only in scholarship on regional issues, but also in studies concerned with national territorial politics and identity.

This Introduction then moves on to explain why Yorkshire and Humberside have been chosen for an historical exploration of regionalism and regional identity; the relative merits of such an endeavour; and why a sub-regional focus on Hull and East Yorkshire (or Humberside) forms the basis for several of the dimensions explored within this thesis. As these regional case-studies are also intended as a means to consider wider questions, trends and themes of modern British history, this introduction provides a wider context for the themes covered by this thesis.

The Introduction concludes with an overview of the content of each of the chapters to follow, alongside the methodology adopted, and summarises some of the key findings and arguments emerging from this research.

1.2   In search of the 'region', 'Regionalism' and 'regional identity'

I

'Region' remains a highly fluid and contentious term for delineating forms of spatial organisation, but it is also practically necessary for both academics and policy-makers. 'Regions' and 'regionalism' can variously be applied to huge transnational areas; formal and informal trading blocs such as the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation, Mercosur, and the European Union.[1] Defining transnational 'regions' as 'a group of countries with a more or less explicitly shared political project' has proved useful in analyses of an increasingly multipolar and globalised political economy.[2]

In the sense used here, however, 'regions' are conceived of as a subnational territorial unit. This in itself provides little assistance in definition. Defined 'negatively', as Michael Keating terms it, the region is conceptualized as 'intermediate between state and

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[1] For examples, see Morten Boas, Marianne H. Marchand and Timothy M. Shaw (eds.), *The Political Economy of Regions and Regionalisms* (Basingstoke, 2005).

[2] Bjorn Hettne, 'Globalization and the New Regionalism: The Second Great Transformation', in Bjorn Hettne, Andras Inotai and Osvaldo Sunkel (eds.), *Globalism and the New Regionalism* (Basingstoke, 1999), 1, 6-7; Marie-Claude Smouts, 'The region as the new imagined community?', in Patrick Le Galés and Christian Lesquesne (eds.), *Regions in Europe* (London, 1998), 30-31.

municipal government'.[3] It is generally accepted that regions themselves – as economic and cultural phenomena – are not given shape by, or do not relate easily to formally designated administrative boundaries; but formalized spaces and institutions are not irrelevant to defining regions. As Keating remarks:

> Regions cannot be delineated simply by topographical criteria. Their extent and shape will depend on what functions they are to fulfil, and on patterns of political mobilization which give political issue in itself, since the drawing of the boundaries can alter not only the social context of regionalism, but the political power balance in regional institutions.[4]

Regions are thus multidimensional constructions, which gives them a chimerical quality. As Adrian Green and A. J. Pollard summarise, 'regions are slippery, their definition varying with perspective and subject, and this kaleidoscopic quality makes them difficult to grasp historically'.[5] This fluidity, and a certain vagueness in the manner by which the term 'region' is applied in a British context, has led to the argument that 'it is now virtually impossible to isolate an unambiguous definition of [either the city or] the region'.[6]

This slippery quality, particularly in the English context (discussed further below), has meant that regions have been considered by academics from a variety of economic, social, political and cultural perspectives. As in studies on the nation state and nationalism, the region has been identified and defined for both its material qualities, and its more imaginative cultural aspects. In Britain and Western Europe, the economic diversity of regions and their functional distinctions have been a focus of much

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[3] Michael Keating, *The New Regionalism in Western Europe: Territorial Restructuring and Political Change* (Cheltenham, 1998), 79.
[4] Ibid., 80.
[5] Adrian Green and A.J. Pollard, 'Introduction: Identifying Regions', in Adrian Green and A.J. Pollard (eds.), *Regional Identities in North-East England* (Woodbridge, 2007), 4.
[6] John B. Parr, 'Cities and regions: problems and potentials', *Environment and Planning A,* 40 (2008), 3009.

scholarship on the inheritance of early industrialization,[7] particularly the extent to which regions have been remade by the post-Fordist reorganization of national and local economies through processes of globalization and the increasing power of international institutions.[8] These questions have been fundamentally informed by the 'problem' of increasingly uneven growth that has provided the context for regional economic policy since the 1930s.[9]

This literature has struggled to engage with cultural studies in a discourse on the region; or with studies that have focused on identity and belonging as influenced by place. This failure to relate studies of policy to studies of culture has been in part influenced by the desire of those in the humanities to avoid the possible generalizing tendencies this would entail – eschewing any notion that 'a region consists of a certain clutch of features that mark everyone from the region in the same way', and avoiding monolithic definitions of place and coherent social groups.[10] The result has been that regions have been defined and explored through an eclectic range of dimensions and perspectives. Yet, outside of various edited collections bringing together several distinct studies, there are few multidimensional interdisciplinary studies of a single regional case study.[11] In Britain,

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[7] For example, Pat Hudson, 'The regional perspective', in Pat Hudson (ed.), *Regions and Industries: A perspective on the industrial revolution in Britain* (Cambridge, 1989), 13-18; Christopher M. Law, *British Regional Development Since World War I* (London, 1980); Gerald Manners, David Keeble, Brian Rodgers and Kenneth Warren, *Regional Development in Britain* (Chichester, 1980).

[8] For example, Keating, *The New Regionalism in Western* Europe, 136-160; Neil Brenner, *New State Spaces: Urban Government and the Rescaling of Statehood* (Oxford, 2004); Andrew Popp and John Wilson, 'Business in the Regions: 'Old' Districts to 'New' Clusters?', in Richard Coopey and Peter Lyth (eds.), *Business in Britain in the Twentieth Century: Decline and Renaissance* (Oxford, 2009), 65-81.

[9] Allan Cochrane, 'Spatial Divisions and Regional Assemblages', in David Featherstone and Joe Painter (eds.), *Spatial Politics: Essays for Doreen Massey* (Chichester, 2013), 88.

[10] Wendy J. Katz and Timothy R. Mahoney, 'Introduction: Regionalism and the Humanities: Decline or Revival?', in Timothy R. Mahoney and Wendy J. Katz (eds.), *Regionalism and the Humanities* (London, 2008), xiv.

[11] Such collections on region and on specific regions have been produced by historians, historical geographers and other professionals in the humanities – particularly in the early to mid-2000s, and particularly focused on Northern England or North East England: See Bill Lancaster, Diana Newton and Natasha Vall (eds.), *An Agenda for Regional History* (Newcastle, 2007); Green and

disciplinary pluralism has characterised regional studies, which has tended to add to the lack of clarity in defining regions and regionalism. As James Hopkins argues, pluralism in approach was a central feature of the Regional Studies Association, established in the 1960s against the Regional Science Association's more theoretical foundations.[12]

The eclectic nature of territorial organisation and power – whether expressed through a self-conscious regionalism or not – has produced several classificatory theories and frameworks through which to study and define regional space. These have tended to be primarily underpinned by economic analysis; such as John Meyer's typologies of 'homogeity', 'nodality or polarization', and as 'programming or policy-orientated'.[13] Researchers such as John B. Parr have attempted to problematize and update these types further, through topographical distinctions such as 'city-regions' and 'policycentric/pluricentric urban regions'.[14] In some cases, other dimensions have been used to provide classifications: Peter Aronsson, for example, posits categories of regional articulation in cultural forms – such as 'winning regions', 'resisting regions', or 'attraction landscapes' – in the context of Sweden.[15]

Within such conceptions of the region and regionalism, scholars also consider acknowledged power dynamics between the regions themselves, drawn primarily in economic terms but also extending to social, cultural and political dimensions and structures. Ascendant in this order are the truly globalized regions, almost uniformly

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Pollard (eds.), *Regional Identities*; Christoph Ehland (ed.), *Thinking Northern: Textures of Identity in the North of England* (Amsterdam, 2007); Katharine Cockin (ed.), *The Literary North* (Basingstoke, 2012); Neville Kirk (ed.), *Northern Identities: Historical Interpretations of 'The North' and 'Northernness'* (Aldershot, 2000).
[12] James Hopkins, 'Translating the Transnational: American 'Science' and the British Regional Problem', *Contemporary British History,* 27, 2 (2013), 179-180.
[13] John R. Meyer, 'Regional Economies: A Survey', *The American Economic Review,* 53:1 (1963), 22.
[14] Parr, 'Cities and regions', 3014, 3017-8.
[15] Peter Aronsson, 'The old cultural regionalism – and the new', in Bill Lancaster, Diana Newton and Natasha Vall (eds.), *An Agenda for Regional History* (Newcastle, 2007), 254-255.

urban in pattern – 'world-' or 'mega-cities' whose economic successes are tied to their nation states – including London, Paris and New York.[16] Areas within Europe, on account of both their advantageous geographical position and strong economic performance have been cast as representing 'core' regions, usually encompassing one or more 'global' city-regions. A celebrated example being variants on Roger Brunet's so-called 'blue banana', encompassing South-East England and the Paris, Randstad and Rhineland regions.[17] In contrast, those areas whose economies are not as developed as those of the 'core' regions have been characterised as 'peripheral' regions. in Europe, these have tended to be located on the geographical edges of Western Europe. Beyond these general binaries, however, finer distinctions have been identified. Ronald Martin notes how, in the UK context, some have preferred to see the national geography reflected in a fourfold conception of an 'inner-' and 'outer core', and an 'inner-' and 'outer periphery'.[18]

Interregional core/periphery models are themselves supplemented by the perceived hierarchy of identified city-regions. Martin Rhodes, for example, emphasises that in economic terms 'there are winners and losers and centres and peripheries even in the

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[16] See Patricia Garside and Michael Hebbert, 'Introduction', in Patricia L. Garside and Michael Hebbert (eds.), *British Regionalism 1900-2000* (London, 1989), 13.

[17] See: Brenner, *New State Spaces*, pp. 184-189; Michael Wegener, 'The changing urban hierarchy in Europe', in John Brotchie, Mike Batty, Ed Blakely, Peter Hall and Peter Newton (eds.), *Cities in Competition: Productive and Sustainable Cities for the 21st Century* (Melbourne, 1995), 139-160.

[18] Ronald L. Martin, 'The contemporary debate over the North-South divide: images and realities of regional inequality in late-twentieth-century Britain', in Alan R.H. Baker and Mark Billinge (eds.), *Geographies of England: The North-South Divide, Material and Imagined* (Cambridge, 2004), 21: '... an 'inner core' (roughly that area within a 60-mile radius of – or one hour's train commuting time of London); an 'outer core' (within a radius of roughly 60 to 120 miles of London, and including the rest of the South East, the easternmost past of the South West and the southern parts of the East and West Midlands); an 'inner periphery' (within a radius of roughly 120 to 300 miles of London, and including the rest of the South West and the two Midlands regions, Yorkshire-Humberside, and the North West and North East); and beyond that an 'outer periphery' (of Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland).

core German regions.'[19] Parr sees a 'two-level hierarchy of city-regions', citing distinctions within the English West Midlands and Scotland.[20] Within global city-regions themselves, it has been argued that ever more complex spatial hierarchies have formed, relating to intra-metropolitan income distribution and demographics.[21] Such frameworks emphasise the importance of the regional concept as part of a 'mediating' process of space, as part of what John Allen terms the 'relational' nature of power.[22] Power is therefore exercised and distributed unevenly between regions, but also – importantly – within them. Such complexity is often simplified as part of the process of analysing regions; they are presented as homogenous entities, neglecting the 'doily of regional development'.[23] Relational approaches to space have more recently presented a challenge to these social constructions of regions, with Martin Jones and Michael Woods arguing that now 'geographies are made through stretched-out and unbounded relations between hybrid mixtures of global flows and local nodal interactions that are interconnected'.[24]

With the end of the Cold War, and an increasingly globalized and neoliberal economy, the region – particularly within the European context – has received political ascendance as a means of promoting industrial specialism and mitigating competition amongst local authorities. The 'rise of regions' has been argued by Keating as a necessary response to the need for 'the management of change and to modernization in the new market

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[19] Martin Rhodes, 'Introduction: the regions and the new Europe', in Martin Rhodes (eds.), *The regions and the new Europe: Patterns in core and periphery development* (Manchester, 1995), 3.
[20] John B. Parr, 'Perspectives on the City-Region', *Regional Studies,* 39:5 (2005), 562.
[21] Allen J. Scott, John Agnew, Edward W. Soja, and Michael Storper, 'Global City-Regions', in Allen J. Scott (ed.), *Global City-Regions: Trends, Theory, Policy* (Oxford, 2001), 18-21.
[22] John Allen, *Lost Geographies of Power* (Oxford, 2003), 11.
[23] John Allen, Doreen Massey and Alan Cochrane (eds.), *Rethinking the Region* (London, 1998), 70.
[24] Martin Jones and Michael Woods, 'New Localities', *Regional Studies,* 47:1 (2013), 34.

conditions'.[25] Regions within states have been increasingly seen as the ideal unit of action within supranational or 'world' regions; such a project in general falls under the rather broad church of what has been termed the 'New Regionalism'.[26] In the context of the European Union, this has been seen in efforts towards a formal or informal 'Europe of the Regions' from the 1980s.[27] As such, this has also increased theoretical scholarship on the nature and construction of sub-national regions. These efforts have focused primarily on ascertaining the key dimensions for capacity building in regional institutions. The 'new regionalist' literature has been primarily institutional in its focus. Regional 'visions', particularly those straddling national boundaries, have been seen as 'driven by the technocratic perspective of public officials, with little or no involvement either from communities or businesses'.[28]

Inherent within this literature, however, and even nominally visible, is the sense that these institutional mechanisms and forms of regionalism are essentially 'new' in their conception. The re-emergence of the 'region' has supposed that such networks or associations do not have a strong history or lasting legacies. In a sense, 'old' regionalism has not been analysed as a means to critique or contribute to more contemporary discourses. The dynamics of recent regional forms have been generalised as different from the 'corporatist predecessors' of the past – 'regionalism worked from the national down to the regional scale' – inferring that the shift has been fundamental rather than

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[25] Keating, *The New Regionalism,* 83; James Wesley Scott, 'Systemic Transformation and the Implementation of New Regionalist Paradigms: Experiences of Central Europe and Latin America', in James W. Scott (ed.), *De-coding New Regionalism: Shifting Socio-political Contexts, in Central Europe and Latin America* (Aldershot, 2009), 20; Kenichi Ohmae, *The End of the Nation State: The Rise of Regional Economies* (London, 1996), 80.
[26] James Wesley Scott, 'Introduction', in Scott (ed.), *De-coding New Regionalism*, 7; R. Bond and D. McCrone, (2004) 'The growth of English regionalism? Institutions and identity', *Regional and Federal Studies*, 14(1), 1–25.
[27] Iain Deas and Alex Lord, 'From a New Regionalism to Unusual Regionalism? The emergence of non-standard regional spaces and lessons for the territorial reorganisation of the state', *Urban Studies,* 43 (2006), 1849.
[28] Ibid., 1861.

inherited.[29] Such a notion is not, however, uncontested. It has been pointed out by many that the role of the nation state, not merely for practical reasons, is still an important one in discussions of regionalism.[30]

The malleability of the region, but also its necessity as a unit of organisation and experience for understanding economic, social, political and cultural change, is demonstrated not just by the publications produced on the subject, but also by the reluctance of editors to impose their own definitions on authors. James W. Scott's note that contributors 'eschewed a unitary theoretical format: each author presents their own perspective on regionalization and institutional change', is indicative of the approach taken in almost all cases.[31] The bulk of the scholarship produced towards new understandings of regionalism has also remained in the realm of the theoretical. Its empirical data, when used, is primarily quantitative in form. Some academics have pointed to the unsteady foundations that such indicators provide for conceptions of regionalism.[32] Imprecise definitions of regionalism have also meant that this literature has rather ambiguously overlapped with other theories of geopolitical organisation, such as narratives surrounding the 'new localism', that has argued that local authorities have themselves been increasingly empowered to pursue market-oriented approaches as 'spaces of neoliberalism'.[33] In addition to this, within studies of regions and regionalism 'whether theoretical, political, cultural or whatever, there is always a specific focus'.[34]

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[29] Kevin Ward and Andrew E.G. Jonas, 'Competitive city-regionalism as a politics of space: a critical reinterpretation of the new regionalism', *Environment and Planning A,* 36 (2004), 2124.
[30] Ward and Tomaney, 'English Regions', 475.
[31] Ibid., 6.; Scott, *De-coding the New Regionalism.*
[32] Smouts, 'The region as the new imagined community', 30-31.
[33] Nick Clarke, 'In what sense 'spaces of neoliberalism'? The new localism, the new politics of scale and town twinning', *Political Geography,* 28 (2009), 496-497.
[34] Allen, Massey and Cochrane, *Rethinking the Region,* 2.

The predominance of economic indicators both in analysis and theoretical work therefore only provides a partial 'portrait of region'.[35]

II

Regional 'identity' remains intrinsically linked to regionalism, but is not always considered in terms of how it has been mobilised and politicised. The relationship is difficult to elucidate: the existence of a regional identity (or identities) does not inevitably predict its operationalization on a regional scale.[36] Again, what is generally emergent from the literature that considers regional identity is that a workable definition for comparative purposes remains elusive.[37] In the widest sense, a regional identity can be seen as the collective construction of a commonality associated with place on a regional scale; 'a regional identity… is a sense of belonging, an awareness of similar traits among people living under similar conditions, or not coincidentally, of how their cultural patterns are distinctive in comparison to other regions or places'.[38]

The cultural construct of identity has meant that narratives, or aspects, of regional identity have been drawn from 'miscellaneous elements'; such as ideas on landscape, dialects, regional novels, and forms of historical production.[39] Collective identities are understood as contingent and multidimensional in form; constructed from and/or competing with other forms of belonging such as class, gender and ethnicity. Institutions, boundaries and frameworks of governance also have a complex relationship with

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[35] Ibid.
[36] Keating, *The New Regionalism,* 90-91.
[37] John Tomaney and Neil Ward, 'England and the 'New Regionalism''. *Regional Studies,* 34:5 (2000), 474.
[38] Katz and Mahoney, 'Introduction', xi.
[39] Anssi Paasi, 'Region and place: regional identity in question', *Progress in Human Geography,* 27:4 (2003), 477.

regional identity, their existence in turn serving either to give form to existing cultural identities, or to strengthen a sense of community. Cultural forms of collective performance, either originating from these official sources or from other bodies, are important in generating a sense of belonging to a wider 'imagined community', as regional identity – as much as national identity – stems from the image of communion rather than lived experience. As part of these processes of identity formation, it is important to emphasise the role that academics also play in the 'legitimation, representation and emasculation of territories'.[40]

Keating has argued that three elements exist in the analysis of regional identity as political elements (or politicising forces):

> the first element is the *cognitive* one, that is people must be aware of such a thing as a region, and of its geographical limits. This in turn requires a knowledge of other regions, with which the home region can be compared and from which it can be differentiated. People must also be aware of a region's characteristics, although they may differ on which ones are salient... A second element is the *affective* one, that is, how people feel about the region and the degree to which it provides a framework for common identity and solidarity, possibly in competition from other forms of solidarity, including class and nation. This provides a form of interpretation of the cognitive element, and links to the third element, the *instrumental* one, whether a region is used as a basis for mobilization and collective action in pursuit of social, economic and political goals. These goals may include the attainment of regional autonomy, or they may be focused on more immediate social and economic policies, to be achieved through the existing structures.[41]

In examining the issue of regional identity, it is argued that the difference between regional identity as manifested in 'regional consciousness' and in the 'identity of a region' must be made in analytical terms.[42] This distinction is perhaps more problematic in practice than might at first be presumed. The collective consciousness of the sociospatial is constructed not only 'from below', but also 'from above', in the form of

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[40] Natasha Vall, *Cultural Region: North East England, 1945-2000* (Manchester, 2011), 3.
[41] Keating, *The New Regionalism,* 86; my emphasis.
[42] Vall, *Cultural Region*, 5; Green and Pollard, 'Introduction: Identifying Regions', 17; Paasi, 'Region and Place', 478.

'territorial control/governance' – and this construction is discursive.[43] This therefore means that the identity ascribed to a region from those outside can inform the regional consciousness of those within the region, and *vice versa*. As John Tomaney and Neil Ward argue regarding North East England's perceived prosperity gap from 'the South': 'ironically, it is these conditions – and the sense of economic injustice they generate – that underpin the region's recent assertion of its cultural and political identity.'[44] To fully attempt to disentangle these two constructions is therefore complex and potentially misleading.

1.3   The 'English Question': English regionalism and regional identity in contemporary and historical perspective

I

The British context for regionalism serves to further complicate an ambiguous and fractured concept. Unlike European counterparts, Britain has had no strong constitutional federalism, such as the German *Lander* governments that represented the 'vanguard of Europe of the regions', or the semi-federalism of France and Spain.[45]

In Britain, public campaigns for greater political devolution have primarily come from the minority nations of Northern Ireland, Wales and Scotland. These campaigns became

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[43] Paasi, 'Region and Place', 476.
[44] Tomaney and Ward, 'England and the 'New Regionalism'', 476.
[45] Arthur Benz, 'German regions in the European Union', in Patrick Le Gales and Christian Lequesne (eds.), *Regions in Europe* (London, 1998), 111.; Christopher Harvie, *The Rise of Regional Europe* (London, 1994), 61-63. Other states such as Italy and Belgium also had strong decentralized regional structures: Stefaan De Rynck, 'Civic culture and institutional performance of the Belgian regions', in Patrick Le Gales and Christian Lequesne (eds.), *Regions in Europe* (London, 1998), 199-218; Ronaldo Bagnasco and Marco Oberti, 'Italy: 'le trompe-l'œil' of regions', in Patrick Le Gales and Christian Lequesne (eds.), *Regions in Europe* (London, 1998),150-165.

more vociferous in the 1960s, with Welsh and Scottish nationalist parties winning Westminster seats in Carmarthen and Hamilton by-elections respectively.[46] Both the Scottish National Party and Plaid Cymru began to make lasting gains in local elections in this period, and this combined upsurge was instrumental in the establishment of (what would become) the Kilbrandon Commission on the Constitution in 1969.[47] Michael Hechter's 1975 'internal colonialism' critique – arguing that the Celtic Fringe had effectively been economically peripheralised and culturally marginalized by the dominant English core – reflected a dissatisfaction with the constitution of the Union that was also apparent in the politics of nationalism within the UK.[48] With rising support for nationalist political parties came greater decentralization through a combination of administrative devolution and cultural nationalism. Joe England has documented how the creation of the Wales Trades Union Congress (TUC) in 1974 came amongst a succession of institutional innovations, from the Welsh Office in 1964, the Welsh Arts Council and Language Act (1967), to the creation of tourism and sports bodies and an industrial development agency in the 1970s.[49] In Scotland, institutional moves were even more pronounced and, as Jim Phillips has articulated, were actively promoted by industrial interests to try and smooth class tensions from the 1960s onwards.[50] These economic, political and cultural forces eventually led to democratic devolution through the creation of the Scottish Parliament and Welsh Assembly in the late 1990s. The pattern of the 'regions' within England, however, has remained decidedly problematic. As Brian Hogwood remarked in the early 1980s, the English regions were characterised by 'a

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[46] J.P. Mackintosh, *The Devolution of Power: Local Democracy, Regionalism and Nationalism* (London, 1968), 148; Jim Phillips, *The Industrial Politics of Devolution: Scotland in the 1960s and 1970s* (Manchester, 2008), 38.

[47] L.J. Sharpe, 'Devolution and Celtic nationalism in the UK', *West European Politics,* 8, 3 (1985), 85-86.

[48] Michael Hechter, *Internal Colonialism: The Celtic Fringe and British National Development* (Berkley CA, 1975), esp. chapter 5, 127-163.

[49] Joe England, *The Wales TUC, 1974-2004* (Cardiff, 2004), 1.

[50] Phillips, *Industrial Politics,* 184-185.

complete absence of a coherent definition of their boundaries, their size or even the concept of a region'.[51] Such circumstances were exacerbated by the manner in which the functional administration of national governance were territorially divided in a chaotic, *ad hoc* and un-sociological manner.[52]

Despite the issues inherent in defining both regionalism and regional identity, a broad consensus has formed surrounding the extent to which these concepts have provided a political force in British – or more appropriately, English – politics. Scottish historian Christopher Harvie's 1991 article entitled 'English regionalism: the dog that never barked' argued:

> Whatever European salience the English regions have achieved in terms of fashion or entertainment (think Liverpool in the 1960s), this has never extended to politics. So, to activate decentralization in England entails overcoming a history and a culture which have – as much as politics and social policy – marginalised it.[53]

The moniker of 'the dog that never barked' has, in many ways, come to characterise subsequent scholarship on the English regions; reference to the phrase has continued to surface in the work of academic and political commentators alike.[54] When the possibilities of increased devolution within England have been proposed and debated, as

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[51] Brian Hogwood, 'Introduction', in Brian W. Hogwood and Michael Keating (eds.), *Regional Government in England* (Oxford, 1982), 2.

[52] Brian Hogwood and Peter Lindley, 'Which English Regions? An analysis of regional boundaries used by government', *Studies in Public Policy,* 50 (1980), 26-28.

[53] Christopher Harvie, 'English regionalism: the dog that never barked', in Bernard Crick (ed.), *National Identities: The Constitution of the United Kingdom* (Oxford, 1991), 105.

[54] See Bond and McCrone, 'The growth of English regionalism?', 2; John Mawson, 'The English Regional Debate: Towards Regional Governance and Government?', in Jonathan Bradbury and John Mawson (eds.), *British Regionalism and Devolution: The challenges of State Reform and European Integration* (London, 1997), 180; Sally Wheeler, *Corporations and the Third Way* (Oxford, 2002), 140; Jonathan Bradbury, 'Introduction', in Jonathan Bradbury (ed.), *Devolution, Regionalism and Regional Development: The UK experience* (London, 2008), 8; Thomas Leuerer, 'Re-thinking Northern Politics? Northern England and Devolution', in Christoph Ehland (ed.),*Thinking Northern: Textures of Identity in the North of England* (Amsterdam, 2007), 36; David S. Moon and Øivind Bratberg, 'Why the Welsh Said Yes, but the Northerners No: The Role of Political Parties in Consolidating Territorial Government', *Contemporary British History,* 28:3 (2014), 319; Tomaney and Ward, 'England and the 'New Regionalism'', 476.

a potential solution to the multi-faceted issue dubbed 'the English Question', it has invariably become an adjunct to the more vociferous debates surrounding claims of self-determination – or greater devolved powers – for the 'Celtic Fringe'. Public and academic interest in the subject has clustered around the 'Irish Question' of the late-nineteenth/early-twentieth century; the emergence as a political force of Scottish and Welsh nationalism in the 1960s and 1970s; and the devolutionary settlements made by New Labour to the three minority nations of the Union in the late 1990s. The promise to the Scottish Parliament of increased powers – including the possibility of devolving greater control over taxation – following the referendum over Scottish independence in 2014, also appeared to reopen public discourse on the politics and identity of English regions (with policy even moving pre-emptively towards greater regional control).[55] These waves of interest in the regional question in an English context have therefore not been the result of a groundswell of indigenous expression for greater acknowledgement of sub-national distinctiveness.

Various reasons have been advanced for this lack of strong regionalism from within England. An apparent lack of enthusiasm for devolution in England amongst senior bureaucrats, key institutions and the general public in the 1970s provided a crucial context for not adopting the devolution advocated in the Kilbrandon Report.[56] Academics and commentators on this subject highlight the long enmeshing of the state with Englishness in a manner that favours unionism, and which thus marks regional

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[55] Though the debate surrounding 'Englishness' as a political force and regional devolution has been given new impetus following the referendum result of September 2014, and the two years leading up to the vote. Policy related research on this issue includes Richard Wyn Jones, Guy Lodge, Alisa Henderson and Daniel Wincott, *The Dog that Finally Barked: England as an emerging political force* (Institute for Public Policy Research, January 2012); Richard Wyn Jones *et al., England and its two Unions: The anatomy of a nation and its discontents* (Institute for Public Policy Research, July 2013). Research published after the referendum has emerged from on-going studies of city-regional devolution, such as the City Growth Commission's 'Devo Met' proposals: *Unleashing Metro Growth: Final Recommendations of the City Growth Commission* (RSA, October 2014), 24.

[56] Sharpe, 'Devolution and Celtic nationalism', 90, 97.

government as 'un-English'.[57] The synonymy of Englishness with Britishness – and its cultural institutions such as the monarchy and the BBC – has effectively served to remove the impetus of an 'other' which any effective political regional expression could be articulated against, despite the supposed peripheralization of areas outside of the South and South-east of England.[58] Linda Colley's influential work on the formation of British national identity in the wake of England's union with Scotland in 1707 asserts that the prolonged wars against the French over the following century, alongside unifying cultural forces such as the Protestant religion and the conscious fashioning of the monarchy, rendered a contrast with Britain's continental neighbour more decisive than any internal disputation.[59]

II

History as a discipline has thus generally aligned with other fields in defining their geographic space of study. Historians of England have generally been comfortable in designating and studying 'economic regions', particularly with regards to the Industrial Revolution. In the North of England in the nineteenth century, for instance,

> Tyneside was different from the West Riding [of Yorkshire] and as different again from the Lancashire cotton region… Diversity between regions was evident in the way new manufacturing and commercial interests were regionally based and attempts to organize national movements came to nothing.[60]

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[57] Peter J. Taylor, 'The meaning of the North: England's 'foreign country' within?', *Political Geography,* 12:2 (1993), 144.

[58] Taylor, 'The meaning of the North', 136-155; Krishan Kumar, *The Making of English National Identity* (Cambridge, 2003), 226-239. The traditional Westminster political parties with their appeal to national unity could also be included amongst these institutions; Leuerer, 'Re-thinking Northern Politics?', 48; Stuart Rawnsley, 'Constructing 'The North': space and a sense of place', in Neville Kirk (ed.), *Northern Identities: Historical Interpretations of 'The North' and 'Northernness'* (Aldershot, 2000), 15.

[59] Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation, 1707-1837* (Yale, 2009).

[60] Rawnsley, 'Constructing 'The North'', 6.

But even though economically definable regions were emergent in this period, most literature does not see this 'regionalisation' as manifesting in a coherent 'regional' political movement. A 'regional agenda' has been argued to be conspicuously absent from the politics of North East England throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, despite the region's broad economic integration.[61]

The significance of regions within Britain, has also been recognised following political devolution to Scotland and Wales. Even Colley has conceded, in a recent edition of *Britons,* that regional divides survived the creation of a single national identity.[62] Despite supposed uniformity, the apparent – and real – geographical differences that exist have not been dispelled, and these have been drawn along fairly consistent lines. As Peter Scott points out:

> Britain has always been a regionally divided nation. Throughout the middle ages the English counties to the south of the Humber, Trent and Mersey contained at least 80 per cent of England's tax paying population and five sixths [sic] of its taxable wealth. They were much more urbanised; with the exception of York and Newcastle, the south contained all of England's largest towns and the vast majority of its urban population.[63]

Yet still, as a well-spring for collective consciousness, regional identity's historical role has been downplayed by those who have explored it. Luis Castells and John Walton, in presenting North West England before World War II as a case study in contrast with the Basque Country, found that 'an overarching sense of regional identity, as expressed (for

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[61] Bill Lancaster, 'The North East, England's most distinct region?', in Lancaster, Newton and Vall (eds.), *An Agenda for Regional* History, 34-35.
[62] Colley, *Britons.*
[63] Peter Scott, *Triumph of the South: A Regional Economic History of Early Twentieth Century Britain* (Aldershot, 2007), 7.

example) in literature, politics or popular culture, was never in evidence' to complement

the identities provided by neighbourhood and town, nation and empire.[64]

The politics and culture of territoriality in the British state have been another factor in

downplaying regionalism and regional identity in England in modern British history.

Christopher Harvie argues that the reason for this was the power of the nation-state in

the early twentieth century, and its increasing intervention in the economy.[65] Jim Bulpitt

conceives of the British state as a 'dual polity', in which the functions of local authorities

and those of the Westminster administration work in autonomous and separate ways,

and have served to concentrate power in both the local and the national. The 'informal

empire' supposed by this relationship has served to both embed the local in a

relationship to the centre, and to supposedly suppress any larger intermediary territorial

tier of governance. This notion of the historical embeddedness of the local in the national

has been argued by Arthur Aughey to be the reason why the regional proposals of the

New Labour government in the late 1990s and early 2000s were unable to take hold,

occupying as they did the intermediate and indeterminate position between traditions of

local government and administrative centralism.[66] This is seen in regional histories of

identification with an immediate locality, or city, rather than with a broader regional

space. The 'Pals' battalions formed in the First World War in Lancashire, for example, all

but ignored a North West identity: they generated patriotic support for the war at

> neighbourhood, workplace and town level, for a national cause, through regiments
> that (incidentally) had county labels, sometimes laid claim to countywide virtues,

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[64] Luis Castells and John K. Walton, 'Contrasting identities: north-west England and the Basque Country, 1840-1936', in Edward Royle (ed.), *Issues of Regional Identity: In honour of John Marshall* (Manchester, 1998),60.
[65] Harvie, *The Rise of Regional Europe*, 26.
[66] Arthur Aughey, *The Politics of Englishness* (Manchester, 2007), 146-147.

used the traditional county figurehead of the Earl of Derby as a recruiting talisman in Lancashire, but hardly appealed to any broader regional sentiment.[67]

Regardless of the precise causes, modern British historians are confronted with the reality that – in a conventional political sense at least – there has been an absence of popular politicised regionalism in England. This normative idea of a highly centralised and unified political culture has also helped to marginalize regional studies within national narratives and historical investigations.

This lack of a regional focus to British historical studies perhaps also stems from the lingering tint of parochialism and amateurism around regional history as a serious academic subject. In 1970, John Marshall, whilst trying to dispel the image of a sub-discipline that was the preserve of the amateur enthusiast, still could only afford regional history the rather secondary role of 'both assist[ing] insight and add[ing] to knowledge'.[68] Where the regional is considered in modern British history, the tendency has been to do so from a predominantly statist perspective; as effected by national strategies. This has been particularly the case in economic terms, with histories of regional economic policy taking up a significant proportion of the analysis of post-war provincial economies, without affording any agency to the region. In these studies, regions are passive, 'top-down' creations; their treatment has not framed regional spaces – unlike more recent contemporary literature on regionalism – as discursive productions.

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[67] Castells and Walton, 'Contrasting identities', 57.

[68] John Marshall, 'Local and regional history', in Harold Perkin (ed.), *History: An Introduction for the Intending Student* (London, 1970), 110.

III

Within English historical study, one particular historical and political binary shorthand has emerged. Though regional histories considering specifically regional action and regional identity have been sporadic, the increasingly discernible economic binary between the 'core' region of the south east – or more often, 'the South' – has led an increasing number of academics and commentators to explore the 'North/South divide' within England. This binary has been increasingly used in academic writing since the 1980s, as a specific result of the measurable material differences between the South East and London with the rest of the country, a measure which had in part been facilitated by the increase in regional statistics since the 1960s;[69] as Danny Dorling writes: 'by the 1980s, reports on the North-South divide were dominated, not by travelogues, but by numbers'.[70] This work has focused particularly on the extent to which 'the North's' peripherality has led to an assertive or latent distinctiveness. Such studies have considered a wealth of varied sources in constructing and analysing Northern identity – including dialect, music, literature, 'political, economic and social material'.[71] They have tended to emphasise that, rather than being the product of more recent change, the differences across the divide have been historically enduring. Helen Jewell's study on the origins of Northern consciousness, though noting twentieth century regional economic decline as precipitating an awareness of relative hardship in comparison to the south, asserted that conscious Northern identity is 'as old as the hills'.[72] Neville Kirk's collection on the North and Northernness is presented as complementary to Jewell's work, but

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[69] Hogwood, 'Introduction', 19-20.

[70] Danny Dorling, 'Distressed times and areas: poverty, polarisation and politics in England, 1918-1971', in Baker and Billinge (eds.), *Geographies of England*, 54.

[71] Helen M. Jewell, *The North-South Divide: The origins of northern consciousness in Britain* (Manchester, 1994), 6.

[72] Ibid., 4-6.

takes the nineteenth century as its formative period.[73] Alan Baker and Mark Billinge's

volume on the material and imagined North/South divide asserts a historical continuity

in the Humber-Severn line drawn in Bruce Campbell's chapter on the 1080s, and by

commentators in the 1980s.[74]

Cultural and political studies seeking to chart English national identity, or 'Englishness',

in the wake of devolution within the United Kingdom have also argued that

'Northernness' represents a separate identity to 'true England'.[75] Though the concept of

distinct 'southern' and 'northern' metaphors for Englishness was coined by Donald Horne

in the 1970s, the endurance and longstanding nature of this dichotomy in the

imaginative geography of England (and of the UK) has been articulated in many forms.[76]

Stephan Kohl explored how literary tours of the 'North' – from H.V. Morton and J.B

Priestley to Bill Bryson and Robert Chesshyre – have not only judged it against the

'South' (which forms the basis for understanding England and Englishness), but have

also ascribed a moral dimension to its supposed inferiority.[77] Howell sees Southern

'populism' aligning with race and empire in the late nineteenth century to 'denigrate' the

provincial industrial North; 'with the South-East clearly identifiable as a cultural-political

synecdoche of Englishness.[78] The attendant counter to the dominant imagery of

southern England – and most specifically the Home Counties – has been the notion that

the North provides cultural authenticity that is lacking elsewhere, and is often the subject

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[73] Neville Kirk, 'Introduction', in Kirk (ed.), *Northern Identities*, x-xiii; Christoph Ehland also adopts a similar timeline: Ehland, 'Introduction: Northern England and the Spaces of Identity', in Ehland (ed.), *Thinking* Northern, 15.

[74] Alan R.H. Baker and Mark Billinge, 'Cultural constructions of England's geography and history', in Baker and Billinge (eds.), *Geographies of England*, 176.

[75] Simon Featherstone, *Englishness: Twentieth-Century Popular Culture and the Forming of English Identity* (Edinburgh, 2009), 101.

[76] Alan R.H. Baker and Mark Billinge, 'Material and imagined geographies in England', in Baker and Billinge (eds.), *Geographies of England*, 9.

[77] Stephan Kohl, 'The 'North' of 'England': A Paradox?', in Ehland (ed.), *Thinking* Northern, 93-115.

[78] Philip Howell, 'Industry and identity: the North-South divide and the geography of belonging, 1830-1918', in Baker and Billinge (eds.), *Geographies of England*, 86-87.

of self-fashioning, as Saler has argued with regards to the 'myth of the North' as the home of distinctly 'English' visual modernism against the 'cosmopolitan' South in the interwar period.[79]

Ultimately, this 'Northern' focus almost inevitably marginalises broader context and significance. Economic and administrative change is alluded to only in passing, during moments when it holds relevance. 'Time' is often passive to 'space' in these conceptions.[80] Dave Russell's work, for instance, locates the articulation of the 'the North' – or a traceable Northern identity – rather broadly in the inter-war years. The thematic manner in which aspects of 'Northernness' are explored by Russell means that an emergent and contextualised chronology of post-war developments remains elusive, with the ultimate message being 'the constancy of these representations, with the external image of the North over much of the 150 years covered by this book remaining remarkably similar to the pattern that was in place in 1840'.[81] In literary terms, Katharine Cockin brings to the fore the continuities of the 'Literary North' as a visceral, social-realist construction, opening her chapter on the subject by stating: 'some of the problems in the cultural engagement with the North, which were live in the 1930s, are still prevalent eight decades later'.[82]

Regardless of the observed continuities in the peripherality of the North in relation to the South (particularly in the twentieth century), approaches that downplay the complex changes in spatial definition, spatial relationships that have been driven significant

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[79] Dave Russell, *Looking North: Northern England and the National Imagination* (Manchester, 2004), 278; Michael Saler, 'Making it New: Visual Modernism and the 'Myth of the North' in Interwar England', *Journal of British Studies,* 37:4 (1998), 419-440.
[80] Agnew has highlighted this as a more general 'controversy' to have beset both local history and regional geography: John A. Agnew, 'Arguing with regions', *Regional Studies,* 47:1 (2013), 13.
[81] Russell, *Looking* North, 269.
[82] Katharine Cockin, 'Locating the Literary North', in Cockin (ed.), *The Literary* North, 240. Cockin, although acknowledging longevity of these images, does point to more recent fiction by Jeff Noon and Steven Hall as having the potential to 'relocate the North, defamiliarizing any putative forms'; 248-251.

economic and social changes, serve to isolate historical and humanities scholarship on regional identities from broader academic thought on regions. This is not to suggest that more contemporary regional studies have not also employed similar reductive conceptions. This manner of conceptualising England as divided (as Allen *et al.* argue in another context) serves also to mutually reinforce – through material and discursive modes – the South East (or 'South's') pre-eminent 'Englishness' at the expense of the North.[83] These imaginative geographies also present problems with the construction of Northern identities as synonymous with working class identities. This is not limited to class, but extends to politics. The situation appears to have been particularly problematic in characterising the political tropes of Thatcherism and New Labour as distinctly Southern, 'counterposed to what was regarded as the old and outmoded post-war culture of collectivism, welfare dependency and state subsidy identified as persisting... in the North'.[84]

As such, the growing literature on 'Northernness' has struggled with both partiality and generality due to the exigencies that such a broad categorisation requires. Though distinctions such as the 'near North' or 'deep North' have been employed in edited collections and other work written on this subject, the supposed culturally imagined nature of the North still belies implicit geographical bias. For example, though Robert Colls considers Jack Common, Catherine Cookson and Sid Chaplin as 'northern writers', their 'region' – as Colls himself states – is the 'North East'; embedded in the heavy-industrial nature of the area.[85] John Walton has suggested that Northumberland and Durham are 'sometimes treated as if they alone constitute the 'North', or represent an

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[83] Allen, Massey and Cochrane, *Rethinking the Region,* 17.
[84] Martin, 'The contemporary debate over the North-South divide', 40-41; Rob Shields, *Places on the Margin: Alternative geographies of modernity* (London, 1991), 208.
[85] Robert Colls, 'Cookson, Chaplin and Common: three northern writers in 1951', K.D.M. Snell (ed.), *The Regional Novel in Britain and Ireland, 1800-1990* (Cambridge, 1998), 164-200; John K. Walton, 'Imagining regions in comparative perspective: the strange birth of North-West England', in Lancaster, Newton and Vall (eds.), *An Agenda for Regional History*, 292.

imagined core of genuine Northern values.[86] Dave Russell, conversely, has claimed that – particularly regarding the realms of Northern identity emanating from music and sport – Lancashire and Yorkshire 'tend to dominate writing about the North'.[87] As has been pointed out in debates surrounding 'new regionalism', 'regions are as much about conflict and division as about cooperation and association, and indeed emphasis on the one aspect presupposes the presence or possibility of the other'.[88]

These drawbacks, the unwieldiness of the 'North-South' divide, and the internal complexities of the 'North', as highlighted by all, suggest that rather than taking an approach that draws the broadest conceptualisation of regional space as its starting point, a more nuanced approach may be more profitable. A focus instead on the interactions of regional or sub-regional areas within what is accepted as the North, considering how regions associate themselves with conceptualisations of 'the North' – and how these have changed over time – would possibly allow for the literature on identity to be integrated into the literature on the recent rescaling of state space. It is worth noting, however, that this approach is not entirely new to recent regional history. Natasha Vall's work on cultural policy in the North East of England has examined the complexities of projections of the regional image in a manner that has sought to link identity to administrative, functional and political actions and campaigns. Her work has also tried to site the North East as a whole within the wider North, arguing that the status of the area was 'as a periphery both within 'the North' and in the nation.'[89] John K. Walton's analysis of the extent to which the cultural development of a 'North West'

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[86] Walton, 'Imagining regions in comparative perspective', 292.

[87] Dave Russell, 'Culture and the formation of northern English identities from c.1850,' in Lancaster, Newton and Vall (eds.), *An Agenda for Regional* History, p. 272; Stephen Wagg and Dave Russell (eds.), *Sporting Heroes of the North* (Newcastle, 2010), ix.

[88] Ward and Jonas, 'Competitive city-regionalism', 2121.

[89] Natasha Vall, 'Regionalism and Cultural History: The Case of North-East England, 1918-1976', in Green and Pollard (eds.), *Regional Identities*, 207.

identity can be compared to the Basque region, also provides a promising starting point for future research on the changing nature of regionalism.[90]

But there is a fracture within the literatures that exist on regionalism: in the more recent theoretical work on regions – particularly on the 'new regionalism' – there is a lack of any empirical assessment of the theoretical constructs advanced. There is also something of a disregard for the history of regions, which tends to be assumed or even subsumed in efforts to emphasise the novelty of current events. 'Old' and 'new regionalism' has at times been differentiated not only temporally but ideologically, as an implicit means to disown regional history. For example, Keating argues that

> there are… some grounds for distinguishing between old regionalists, who tend to be localist, defensive and rooted in traditional political networks, including those of dependence and clientism, and new regionalists, who tend to be upwardly mobile, modernising in their outlook and pro-European.[91]

It must be stressed that, with rare exception, the fractures between old and new regionalism literature have been mutual. Historical studies have, on the whole, failed to relate constructs of regional identity to more functional theoretical discussions. As suggested above in relation to the scholarship on Englishness and northern England, regions have been abstracted from their physical and relational forms in the attempt to explore identities. This could be argued to be a function of broader ontological disputes surrounding regions in contemporary geography.[92] But though the shortfall of temporal and spatial contextualisation and contingency has led to criticism of new regional geography as a 'bad abstraction' or a 'chaotic conception', contemporary British history

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[90] Walton, 'Imagining regions in comparative perspective', 289-302.

[91] Michael Keating, 'From functional to political regionalism: England in comparative perspective', in Robert Hazell (ed.), *The English Question* (Manchester, 2006), 152.

[92] Agnew, 'Arguing with regions', 7-8.

has produced little to fill this gap.[93] Such a state of affairs has *de facto* emphasised the

deep-seated historical permanence of identity, and served to confirm broader narratives

of the English context that have characterised the more functional and political forms of

English regionalism as being 'the dog that never barked'.

1.4 Yorkshire

I

The two English regions that have drawn most research attention are the South West

(specifically Cornwall), and the North East. The South West has vied for both public and

academic attention as 'the most distinctive region in England'.[94] A long established –

though contested – Celtic tradition, alongside its geographical remoteness and cultural

differences (manifested, amongst other things, in language, literature, and landscape, all

explored by the University of Exeter's Institute of Cornish Studies) has meant that

historians – whilst highlighting commonalities with other regions – have suggested

Cornwall should perhaps not in fact be considered part of England at all.[95] And of the

non-Celtic regions of the United Kingdom, the North East of England has drawn some

recent concerted scholarly interest, particularly since the launch of *Northern History* in

1966[96] but undoubtedly quickened by the unsuccessful English devolutionary agenda of

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[93] As argued by John Lovering, quoted in Jones and Woods, 'New Localities', 34.
[94] Philip Payton, ''A Duchy in every respect un-English': discourses of identity in late modern Cornwall', in Lancaster, Newton and Vall (eds.), *An Agenda for Regional History*, 318.
[95] Hechter, *Internal* Colonialism, 64-65.
[96] A.W. Purdue, 'The history of the North-East in the modern period: themes, concerns and debates since the 1960s', *Northern History,* XLII, 1 (2005), 107-117.

the early 2000s, promoted by the New Labour government.[97] These studies have explored the emergence from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries of an 'industrial, commercial, social and cultural configuration focused on the Tyne at Newcastle', that in the nineteenth century would spill over the River Tees into North Yorkshire with the rapid industrial growth of Middlesbrough and the Cleveland Hills.[98] Termed by C.B. Fawcett as the 'North-Country',[99] its strong regional identity has been argued to be a product of both its historic pattern of heavy industry (shipbuilding, mining, engineering, iron and steel), but also its persistent economic underperformance in light of the 'decline' of these industries from the mid-twentieth century onwards.[100] In economic terms, it has been the region most synonymous with provincialism, occasionally grouped with Scotland and Wales as forming part of 'Outer Britain'.[101]

Russell and others have rightly asserted that the 'North' has not merely been passive in the process of its construction within the 'national imagination'; this process has included forms of self-assertion and self-expression.[102] To a greater extent than Cornwall, the North East has been assertive in both political and cultural terms, and has led to the region playing 'a disproportionate role in the debate' when examining the 'archaeology'

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[97] Much of this research was supported by the North-East England History Institute (NEEHI), a collaboration between historians at the region's five universities; from which grew the AHRC funded North-East England Research Centre.

[98] Adrian Green and A.J. Pollard, 'Conclusion: Finding North-East England', in Green and Pollard (ed.), *Regional Identities,* 213; Norman McCord, *North-East England: The Region's Development, 1760-1960* (London, 1979), 13; Thomas Faulkner and Jeremy Gregory, 'Introduction: Landscape and North-Eastern-ness', in Thomas Faulkner, Helen Berry and Jeremy Gregory (eds.), *Northern Landscapes: Representations and Realities of North-East England* (Woodbridge, 2010), 7-9.

[99] As referred to by C.B. Fawcett, *Provinces of England: A study of some geographical aspects of devolution* (London, 1919), 9.

[100] John Tomaney, 'In Search of English Regionalism: The Case of the North East', *Scottish Affairs* 28 (1999), 73-79; Robert Colls and Bill Lancaster (eds.), *Geordies: Roots of Regionalism* (Edinburgh, 1992); A.R. Townsend and C.C. Taylor, 'Regional Culture and Identity in Industrialized Societies: the Case of the North-East England', *Regional Studies,* 9:4 (1975), 379-393.

[101] Scott, *Triumph of the South,* 67; Law, *British Regional Development,* 224-229.

[102] Russell, *Looking* North, 4.

of the intellectual history of regionalism in England.[103] As Natasha Vall explores, in the late twentieth century there was a conscious attempt to align political and economic bodies with more cultural institutions, to promote an (inherently contingent) identity for the region based on selective cultural attributes.[104] In T. Dan Smith, as Leader of Newcastle City Council, the region also had 'arguably Britain's most prominent twentieth-century regional political leader', and in academic actors such Henry Daysh and John House, some of the most prominent theorists on English regionalism.[105] In pushing the region's claim, the Northern Region Economic Planning Council (NEPC) were adamant in their evidence to the Kilbrandon Commission that this area possessed a uniquely regional consciousness; an assertion that legitimised its stronger advocacy of regional devolution for the North-East, than for any other part of England. Even academic work considering the North East's self-conscious regional identity has been deliberately polemic in its origins, such as Robert Colls and Bill Lancaster's volume *Geordies: Roots of Regionalism*, emerging from 'the era of high Thatcherism', with memory of the 1984-5 miners' strike still fresh in the contributors' minds.[106] Colls and Byrne's chapters in particular sought to appeal to a distinctly north-eastern identity in light of the successive 'deaths' and 'rebirths' they saw the region as subjected to since the early twentieth century, and the perception that the constitutional settlement as it existed at the time offered no foreseeable resolution to current issues.[107]

Despite the failure of the 2004 referendum on regional devolution for the North East, analyses of this outcome have since cautioned against dismissal of the institutional and

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[103] John Tomaney, 'The idea of English regionalism', in Robert Hazell (ed.), *The English Question* (Manchester, 2006), 158.
[104] Vall, 'Regionalism and Cultural History', 205-207.
[105] Lancaster, 'The North East, England's most distinct region?', 35; Tomaney, 'The Idea of English regionalism', 159.
[106] Robert Colls and Bill Lancaster, 'Preface to the Second Edition', in Robert Colls and Bill Lancaster (eds.), *Geordies: Roots of Regionalism* (2nd edn. Newcastle, 2005), vii.
[107] Robert Colls, 'Born-again Geordies', in Colls and Lancaster (eds.), *Geordies* (2nd edn.), 1-30; David Byrne, 'What sort of future?, in *Ibid.,* 49-51.

political energy in this part of England. David Moon and Øivind Bratberg recently argued that the Labour Party's lack of formalised regional institutions that could be mobilised as a source of latent identity, in contrast to Welsh Labour in 1997, was an overlooked contributor to the resounding 'No' vote in 2004.[108] John Tomaney has highlighted the successive, primarily economically-focused institutions that sought to promote a sense of regional identity.[109] As Vall has contended, echoing Anssi Paasi, these setbacks for regionalism in the North East still highlight the complexity inherent in asserting an alignment between the imaginative geography and cultural institutions of the region (the identity of the region), and an inherent regional consciousness (regional identity).[110]

II

This thesis focuses specifically on Yorkshire. Yorkshire has itself been recognised as perhaps the only formal county that could be considered a region of England in its own right.[111] However, historic Yorkshire – vast in size – has not formed the basis for a cohesive administrative unit. The historic county is over 6,000 square mile in area, a size comparable to Wales, and bounded by the River Tees in the north, the rivers Humber and Don to the south and the 'Pennines barrier' to the west.[112] The vast extent of the county meant, as Fawcett highlighted in 1919, that even when the county was divided between three administrative councils in 1888, the West Riding and North Riding ranked respectively as the first and third largest council areas nationally.[113]

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[108] Moon and Bratberg, 'Why the Welsh Said Yes,' 318-340.
[109] Tomaney, 'The idea of English regionalism',163; Vall has also noted the continuity of the personnel in these changing institutions: Vall, *Cultural* Region, 12.
[110] Vall, 'Regionalism and Cultural History',181-183.
[111] Green and Pollard, 'Introduction: Identifying regions', 14.
[112] Harry J. Scott, *Yorkshire Heritage* (London, 1973), 13.
[113] Fawcett, *Provinces of England*, 140.

The paucity of scholarship considering Yorkshire represents something of anomaly when considering the centrality of this historic county in the literature on the identity of the 'North', and the longstanding local 'patriotism' that regionalists extending back to Fawcett (largely credited as the first geographer to attempt to establish the geographical determinants of administrative regions)[114] have claimed for Yorkshire.[115] Dave Russell's work on Northern identity has documented many professions of attachment, extending into the nineteenth century, noting that 'in 1875 one local writer argued, with the knowing hyperbole that typified much Yorkshire writing, that the county was 'the most birthproud member of the human race''. Russell,[116] in indicating the more 'problematic' exclusionary forms that 'Yorkshireness' could entail as equivalent to nationalism, also highlights similar sentiments about the county espoused in 1939 by William Harbutt Dawson, who claimed local patriotism proved 'an effective antidote to sentimental and irrational cosmopolitanism'.[117]

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[114] Brian C. Smith, *Regionalism in England: Its Nature and Purpose 1905-1965,* Acton Society Trust (1965), 8; Michael Keating, 'The debate on regional reform', in Hogwood and Keating (eds.), *Regional Government in* England, 237.
[115] Fawcett, *Provinces of England*, 38.
[116] Dave Russell, 'Sport and Identity: The Case of Yorkshire County Cricket Club, 1890-1939', *Twentieth Century British History,* 7:2 (1996), 213.
[117] Dave Russell, *Looking North,* 285.

Figure 1.1   The Association of British Counties Map of Yorkshire
http://www.yorkshireridings.org/files/ABC_Yorkshire_Map_v1-2.png (accessed 2 August 2017)
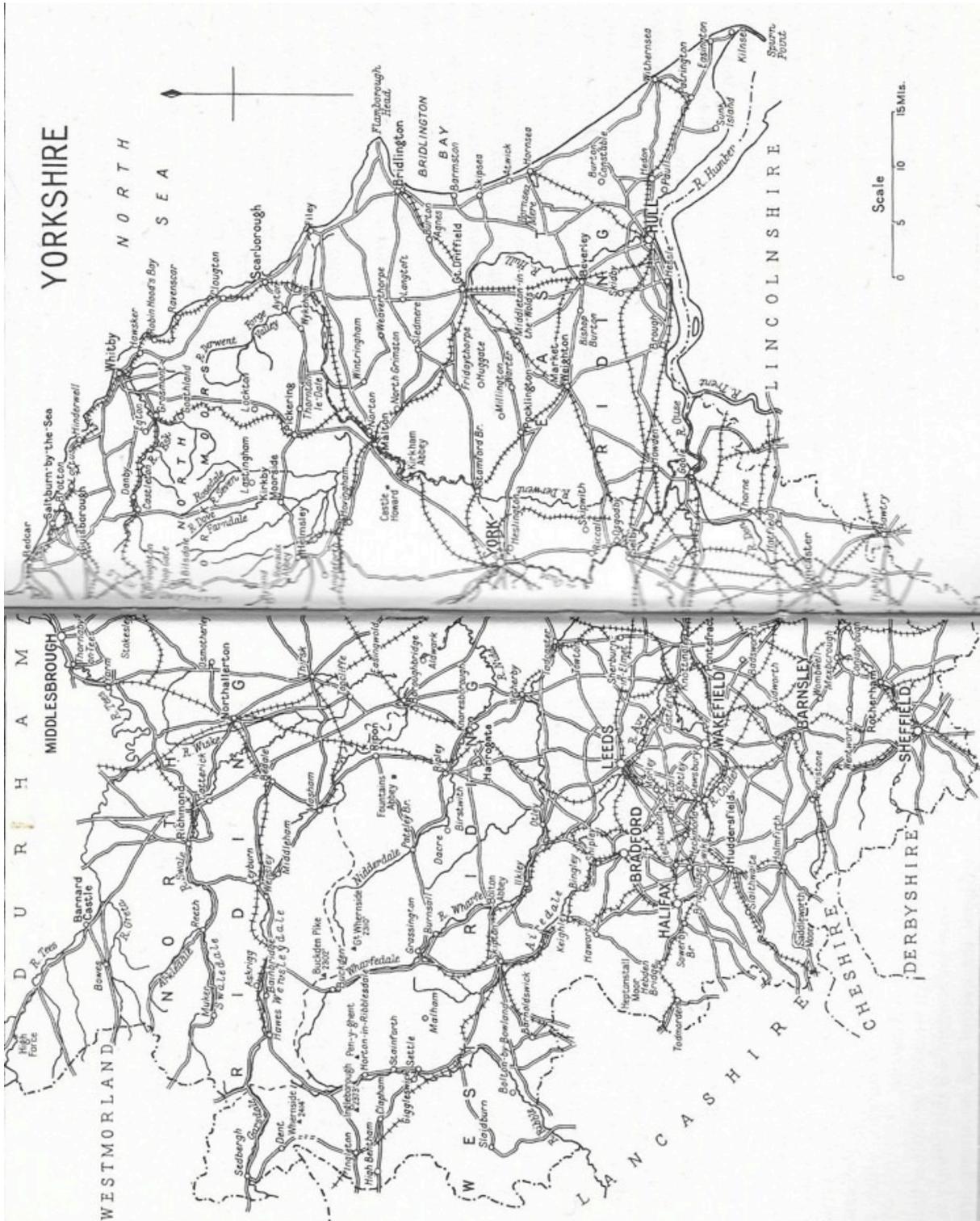
Figure 1.2   Map of Yorkshire, in Harry J. Scott, *Yorkshire Heritage* (London, 1973), 10-11.

A key feature of the vast area of Yorkshire is the significant diversity of both its physical and economic landscape, which stands in contrast to the more integrated economies of the North East and, to a lesser extent, the South West. Though the northern and eastern parts of Yorkshire both support predominantly agricultural economies, these in themselves show marked differences: with the upland landscapes of the Dales and North York Moors contrasting with the high quality arable land in and around Holderness near the coast. The distinctive pattern of industrialisation in West Yorkshire (Halifax, Huddersfield, Dewsbury, Bradford and Leeds) was a product of its rise to prominence as a world leading cluster for the wool textile industries by the mid-nineteenth century, partly as a result of the retention of distinctive social structures.[118] During a similar period, coalmining and steel production had begun to transform the southern parts of the West Riding around Doncaster and Sheffield, respectively. This pronounced economic diversity produced within it a pronounced social diversity. Union militancy and highly gendered employment on the coalfield and around the docks contrasted with the textile district's low trade union density, much greater employment of women and British Black, Asian and minority ethnic labour, along with the existence of a multitude of smaller locally owned firms, rather than nationalised heavy industries, up until the late twentieth century.[119]

Industrial and geographical heterogeneity also contributed to political heterogeneity, particularly in the period considered by this thesis. Yorkshire contends, or at least problematises, the geopolitical aphorism that the Labour Party is 'the predominant political force in the North'.[120] It was not only the 'country', but also the 'town' in parts of Yorkshire that returned Conservatives to Westminster, particularly around the Leeds-

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[118] S.A. Caunce, 'Complexity, Community Structure and Competitive Advantage within the Yorkshire Woollen Industry, c. 1700-1850', *Business History,* 39:4 (1997), 26-43.

[119] Doreen Massey, *Spatial Divisions of Labour: Social Structures and the Geography of Production* (Basingstoke, 1995), 125-126.

[120] Leuerer, 'Re-thinking Northern Politics?', 59.

Bradford conurbation. West Yorkshire also saw the endurance of an independent Liberal tradition, typified by Richard Wainwright's victory in Colne Valley in 1966.[121] Following elections for the reorganised local authorities in 1973, an article in *The Guardian* summarised the situation as such:

> Old Yorkshire retains its Texan standards, even under local government reorganisation. It has everything: two metropolitan counties, two "shire" counties, a crushingly Labour county, a bewitchingly Tory country (or, at any rate, anti-Socialist, as the Tories put it), a strong Liberal challenge, a stubbornly Independent challenge, a posse of anti-immigrationists and Communists and even – such is the tradition – eleven "Get stuffed" candidates. You can carve up old Yorkshire's four million acres on a map but they will still be Yorkshire.
>
> For administrative purposes, however, there will be four separate counties... Together they cover the spectrum of English, political, social and industrial history, and the effect of the carve-up has been to lay bare the very secret of Yorkshire's character: its defiant diversity.[122]

Yorkshire's broad neglect in the academic study of regionalism and regional identity is in part a likely product of its heterogeneity. It does not fit as neatly into the discursive binaries of 'North/South' and 'core-periphery' that underpin the economic, social and cultural analyses of other regions. Unlike the North East's clear, enduring functional and cultural regional capital in Newcastle upon Tyne;[123] Manchester's pre-eminence in 'cotton Lancashire' and (Liverpudlian exceptionalism aside) the North West,[124] and Birmingham's unrivalled size and significance in the West Midlands – Yorkshire's polycentrism does not present an obvious regional capital. The historical significance of York is challenged by the economic primacy of Leeds. This in turn is challenged by Sheffield's influence over South Yorkshire and the Yorkshire Coalfield, which has contributed to its own distinct traditions and frequent territorial ambivalence from the

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[121] Matt Cole, 'The Political Starfish: West Yorkshire Liberalism in the Twentieth Century', *Contemporary British History,* 25:1 (2011), 175-188.
[122] 'New boundaries still give everything to Yorkshire', *The Guardian,* 6 April 1973.
[123] Bill Lancaster, 'Newcastle – capital of what?', in Colls and Lancaster (eds.), *Geordies* (2nd edn.), 56-59.
[124] John K. Walton, 'Proto-industrialisation and the first industrial revolution: the case of Lancashire', in Hudson (ed.), *Regions and Industries*, 41-43.

City's leaders towards its place in a larger Yorkshire region, as highlighted in the following chapter. Alongside this polycentrism, Yorkshire has less in the way of recognisable monumental regional iconography than that offered by Durham Cathedral, the Tyne Bridge, or the Angel of the North to the North East, though the symbolic Tyke and White Rose both offer historical traditions that have been tapped into locally.

However, the oversight in not providing a more central role to Yorkshire in academic discussions on regionalism is not only a result of overlooking the fragments of a conscious sense of identity (as highlighted by a number of studies). It also ignores the vigour for regional capacity building that business and other leaders have recently displayed amid the regionalism agenda in the 1990s and 2000s. This has been particularly highlighted by Simon Lee, who noted that a 'voluntaristic non-statutory Regional Assembly for Yorkshire and Humberside' was formed in July 1996, pre-empting of the New Labour's regional proposals. This body provided in its publications much of the grounding for the strategy documents and frameworks produced by the Regional Chamber and Yorkshire Forward Regional Development Agency (RDA). In addition to this, prior to the abandonment of regional assemblies, the Campaign for Yorkshire (which had as its president the Archbishop of York) had spearheaded discussions on this subject; holding conventions and producing its own White Paper.[125]

Unlike John Tomaney's account of the North East, such initiatives have not been linked to any previous functional regionalism in Yorkshire. Indeed, Tomaney and Lee have both been lukewarm about how much these bodies were representative of more active regional identification and attachment.[126] In 2005, Yorkshire Futures, 'the Regional Intelligence Network', recorded a level of civic engagement in the region that was below

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[125] Simon Lee, 'Yorkshire (and the Humber)', in John Tomaney and John Mawson (eds.), *England: the state of the regions* (Bristol, 2002), 51-53.
[126] Ibid., 53; John Tomaney, 'The Evolution of Regionalism in England', *Regional Studies,* 36:7 (2002), 729.

the average for England, with 'apparent apathy and perceived lack of influence' recorded amongst its citizens'.[127] However, Thomas Leuerer's contextual and definitional criteria for the existence of a region 'relies on the actions of regional players, who constitute a region not as a natural unit but rather as a result of permanent political, administrative, socio-economic and cultural processes'.[128] Though the permanence is debatable, it is apparent – as will be considered in the subsequent chapters – that such regional actors have served to produce a 'region' within Yorkshire in this period, even if the boundaries, and the economic and social identities, are more complex. Not only have these actors and institutions evinced an articulation of a regional interest, but the means through which they have done so have demonstrated values that are particular to Yorkshire; such as the high regard for professionalism, and a decentralised, almost federalist approach to sub-regional administration.

III

The rather ambiguous nature of Yorkshire as a region makes it the ideal candidate to interrogate in light of drawbacks within the existing literature. The region is simultaneously included in, and excluded from, discussions on the North/South divide in England – providing it with something of an intermediary position; it also seems to transition from an area largely not subject to any form of regional financial assistance prior to the mid-1960s, to one of the regions widely acknowledged to be both deprived and peripheral by the 1980s. The purported strength of the region's cultural identity needs to be assessed against its apparent marked differences in other forms. Another aspect of the region that lends itself to the scope of this study is both the numerous and

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[127] Quoted in Simon Lee, 'Constrained discretion and English regional governance: The case of Yorkshire and the Humber', in Bradbury (ed.), *Devolution*, 137.
[128] Thomas Leuerer, 'Re-thinking Northern Politics?', 36.

changing boundaries assigned to the region throughout this period, more how these boundaries were interpreted and contested by local and regional actors in Yorkshire and Humberside. The standard planning regions created in the 1960s were used by fewer than half of UK government departments, and the boundaries for the Yorkshire and Humberside region were subject to some significant changes in the mid-1970s.[129] As discussed in the following chapters (in particular Chapter 3), the importance of these geographical areas and those used by NGOs and the private sector was shown by the way in which these were mobilised by citizens.

As noted above, this thesis does not seek to provide a definitive boundary for 'Yorkshire', and therefore in some respects does not answer the broad criticism of much 'new regionalist' writing's rather indeterminate spatial configurations. Through the case studies used here, this thesis will argue that a variety of definitions have been employed by different actors and institutions for 'Yorkshire and Humberside' in a variety of contexts. Such definitions, however, are not wholly constructivist creations, and are embedded and informed by history and the natural and built environment. Though this might appear somewhat unsatisfactory, this approach emphasises the importance of the regional paradigm in England whilst noting its contested and contingent nature. This approach fully acknowledges regions' 'slippery' qualities, whilst validating both territorial and relational uses of regions in the social sciences.[130]

These slippery or fuzzy qualities related to regionalism and regional identity, with the overlaying concerns of functional logic, cultural heritage are immediately apparent in relation to 'Yorkshire' in the period covered, and continue to be so in contemporary action

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[129] Hogwood and Lindley, 'Which English Regions?', 15.

[130] As Varro and Lagendijk have recently suggested, such debates have tended to over-emphasize the ontological differences between both approaches: Krisztina Varro and Arnoud Lagendijk, 'Conceptualizing the Region – In What Sense Relational', *Regional Studies,* 47:1 (2013), 18-28.

and debate.[131] For example, though the fact that the majority of the North Riding was excluded from the economic planning region between 1965 and 1974 was a point of some consternation, the exclusion of Teesside was more – though not wholly – accepted. Similar ambiguities existed with the southern and eastern boundaries of the region. As the Yorkshire and Humberside Economic Planning Council (YHEPC) stated in a written response to the Redcliffe-Maud Report on Local Government, the majority view was in favour of a proposed regional tier with 'executive functions' that included the Northern Parts of Lindsey to the south of the Humber and excluded Middlesbrough.[132] However, the professed view of Sir Bernard Kenyon, who served as Clerk of the West Riding County Council and as a member of the YHEPC until being embroiled in a corruption scandal, was for a local government unit to cover the whole of historic Yorkshire.[133]

Another compelling reason for the use of this particular region in this study is the extent to which its size, broad range of experiences, and extent of social diversity makes the area an ideal prism through which to explore perceived nationwide changes and trends in Britain since the end of the Second World War, and the place of a distinctly regional perspective in these discussions. A similar point has been recently emphasised by Katharine Cockin, in quoting a review from the *Guardian* of the TV series based on David Peace's *Red Riding*, that

> ...over the last 35 years, Yorkshire has been the place where many of Britain's wider public problems have been played out in extremis: labour disputes, the ravaging effects of unemployment and industrial collapse, police corruption, football stadium disasters, rioting, racial and religious conflicts and the growth of the BNP in local politics.[134]

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[131] See Conclusion.
[132] National Archive (TNA) HO221/104 'Reform of Local Government: View of the Yorkshire and Humberside Economic Planning Council', March 1970.
[133] Scott, *Yorkshire Heritage*, 14.
[134] Cockin, 'Locating the Literary North', 240.

1.5 Hull and Humberside

I

As noted above, a weakness within the literature on regional identity has been a false sense of territorial homogeneity in identity and political action. In order to remedy this, this thesis aims to consider how the 'regional' has been experienced by a more peripheral area. Though the whole Yorkshire and Humber region is considered within this thesis, much of the analysis within the chapters themselves focuses on the sub-region of 'Humberside', which was the subject of experiments in regional policy and planning in the twentieth century that traversed the historical administrative boundary of the River Humber. Humberside primarily encompasses the area currently covered by parts of North Lincolnshire and North East Lincolnshire, including the steel town of Scunthorpe, the port of Grimsby, Immingham and Cleethorpes on the south bank of the Humber estuary, and the East Riding of Yorkshire and port-city of Hull on the north bank. Hull in particular provides an ideal lens through which to consider various aspects of regionalism and regional identity in England. The city problematises all the issues highlighted here – perhaps more than any other place in the country.
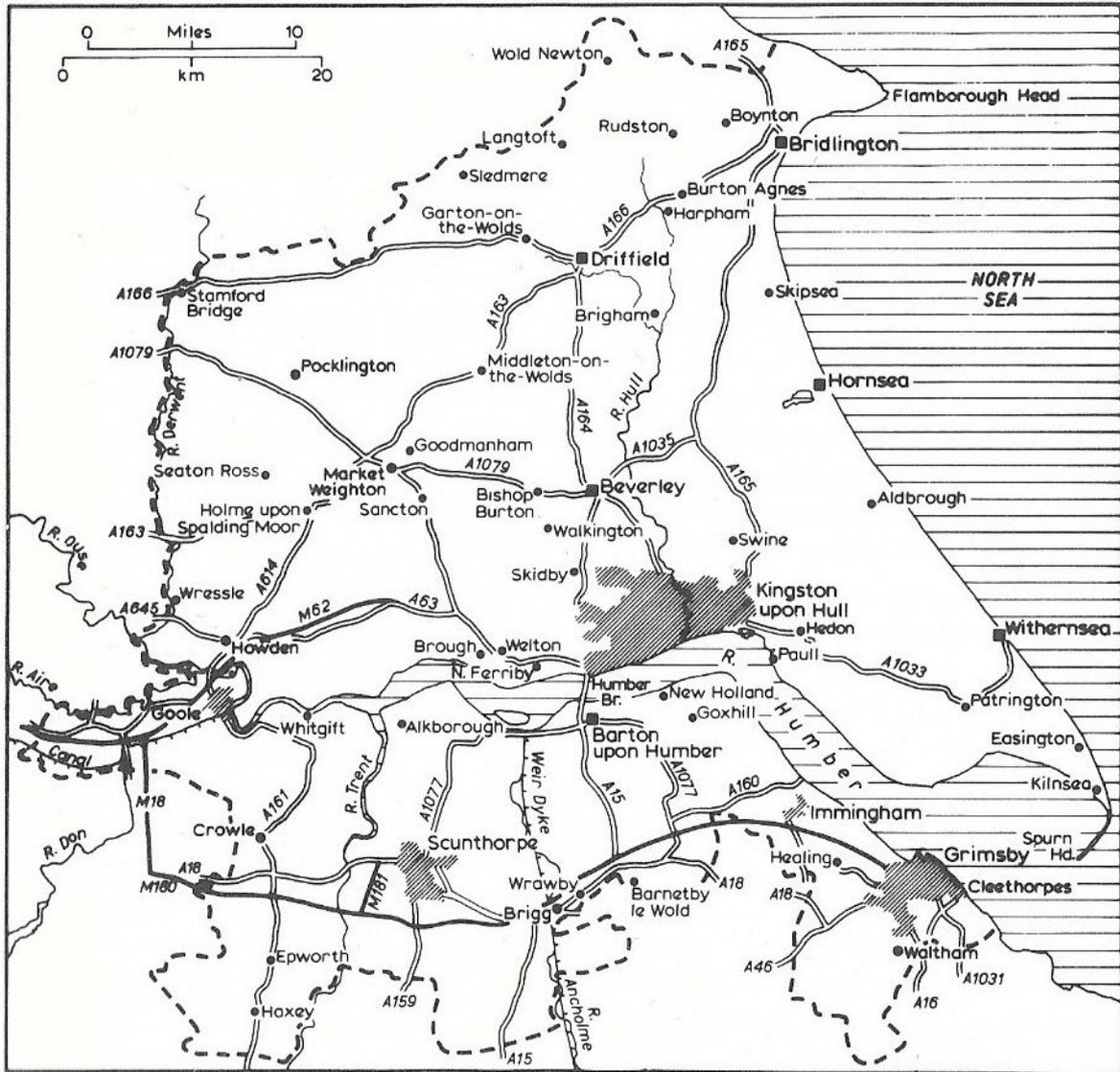
Figure 1.3   Administrative County of Humberside, from Ivan E. Broadhead, *Portrait of Humberside* (London, 1983), 10.

Though Hull is a sizeable city of roughly 300,000 inhabitants (a population that has, somewhat crucially, remained fairly stable across the 1960s to 1990s) and the major freight port in Yorkshire,[135] the area has rather apparently been treated as little more than an afterthought in studies focused on regional political, economic and cultural identity, and in investigations into 'Northernness'. For example, Stephen Caunce's examination of urbanisation across Lancashire and Yorkshire, what he terms the 'near north', makes brief mention of both Hull and the East Riding of Yorkshire, noting the county's largely rural and largely independent social organisation, and noting Liverpool's outperforming of Hull as a port from the eighteenth century onwards.[136] In Christoph Ehland's volume on northern identity, there are no contributions that consider Hull, and only cursory mention is made to the area.[137] Though there are a couple of exceptions, this sub-region is broadly overlooked.[138]

Just as there is a British (or English) 'core' and 'periphery' relationship, so too there is *Northern* 'core' and 'periphery'. As discussed above, the dominant industrial cities in northern England, such as Newcastle, Liverpool, Manchester, Leeds-Bradford and Sheffield, have effectively developed as a network of city-states, or highly specialised clusters;[139] from this economic pre-eminence has emerged greater cultural pre-eminence. Hull both exemplifies and problematizes this regional marginalisation.

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[135] By Eurostat definitions, the larger urban zone of the city includes 590,585 residents as of 2011; http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=urb_lpop1&lang=en (Last accessed 29 September 2014).

[136] Stephen Caunce, 'Urban systems, identity and development in Lancashire and Yorkshire: a complex question', in Kirk (ed.), *Northern Identities*, 58, 59, 64.

[137] The most telling mention relates to Schubert's map of 'dialect areas' in the 'linguistic north', that sees Hull and Humberside denoted as 'northern' dialects but distinct from the 'central north' dialect area that includes Leeds, Bradford, York and Sheffield: Christoph Schubert, 'Dialect and Regional Identity in Northern England', in Ehland (ed.) *Thinking Northern*, 75-76.

[138] Eg. David Neave, 'The identity of the East Riding of Yorkshire', in Royle (ed.), *Issues of Regional Identity*; Sean O'Brien, 'The Unknown City: Larkin, Didsbury and Dunn', in Cockin (ed.), *The Literary* North, 145-156.

[139] Andrew Popp and John Wilson, 'Business in the Regions: from 'Old' Districts to 'New' Clusters', in Coopey and Lyth (eds.), *Business in* Britain, 69; Martin, 'The contemporary debate over the North-South divide', 35; Hudson, 'The regional perspective', 19.

Though it cannot claim to have had the economic, social, political or cultural significance of other cities in northern England, it has consistently remained one of the larger urban areas of the UK since the medieval period, when it was a naval base of strategic importance.[140] It had developed industrially as a port of international importance, particularly in terms of timber importing.[141] Though never as dependent on the industry as its 'fish and ships' image suggested, fishing also played a big part in the city's economy and employment, until the industry's sharp contraction in the decade following entry into the European Economic Community (EEC) and the 1976 'Cod Wars'.[142] Greater economic diversity than popularly presumed did not necessarily equate to greater social diversity. As Danny Dorling has documented, in 1931 the county borough had the greatest percentage in England of its employed population in the lowest social class (27.5%). By 1971, it still remained the seventh highest (14.3%).[143] Politically, this translated into Labour-dominated parliamentary constituencies, and from the mid-1930s, a Labour-dominated Corporation committed to public housing construction. In 1966 the City Council levied the highest rates of any equivalent-sized city, had the lowest yield from the penny rate, and the highest expenditure on welfare and housing.[144]

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[140] M.T. Wild, 'The geographical shaping of Hull from pre-industrial to modern times', in S. Ellis and D.R. Crowther (eds.), *Humber Perspectives: A Region Through the Ages* (Hull, 1990), 251.

[141] J. Bellamy, 'The Humber Estuary and Industrial Development a) Historical', in N.V. Jones (ed.), *A Dynamic Estuary: Man, Nature and the Humber* (Hull, 1988), p. 135; Peter Lewis and Philip N. Jones, *Industrial Britain: Humberside Region* (Newton Abbott, 1970), 60.

[142] K.J. Allison, *A History of the County of York East Riding, Volume 1: The City of Kingston Upon Hull* (Oxford, 1969), 253; Jo Byrne, 'After the trawl: Memory and afterlife in the wake of Hull's distant water fishing industry', *The International Journal of Maritime History,* 27:4 (2015), 817-818.

[143] Dorling, 'Distressed times and areas', 53.

[144] John Barr, 'Hull and Humberside', *New Society,* 29 September 1966, 485.

II

The economic, social and political composition of Hull put it in marked contrast to the East Riding, in which it was the only county borough. Such distinctions became increasingly marked, as between 1931 and 1971 the percentage of those employed in the lowest social class in the urban areas of the East Riding fell from 21.7 per cent to just 5.9 per cent.[145] Even in 1919, Fawcett remarked of Hull that '[a]round no other large town is the transition from urban to rural grouping of people so sharply marked'.[146] The administrative centre of the county in the historic town of Beverley lies only ten miles to the north of Hull, and the County Council's composition – prior to the reorganisation of local government and the creation of Humberside in 1974 – was staunchly Conservative, operating a distinctly low-tax, low-spend model.[147] Such a pronounced divide between town and country meant that there was a significant degree of truth behind the rather hyperbolic pronouncement in a *Tribune* article in 1967 that Hull represented 'a citadel of socialism in a sea of feudalism'.[148]

Situated forty miles to the south of York and sixty miles to the east of Leeds, the nearest two large urban centres, Hull's position has contributed to a sense of isolation and marginalisation. The city and the sub-region are therefore exemplars for examining the importance of both territorialist and relativist constructions of the regional concept and regional space, and emphasise the mutual importance of both paradigms. Across the twentieth century, when Hull has been written about – even by those residing there – a continuing theme is its unique sensibility, an isolation that runs deeper than its geographical location. Writing in 1934, following his travels throughout England, J.B. Priestley (a Yorkshireman by birth) remarked of the city in *English Journey:*

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[145] Dorling, 'Distressed times and areas', 53.
[146] Fawcett, *Provinces of England,* 145.
[147] Allison (ed.), *A History of the County of York East Riding*, 146.
[148] 'Hull: City in search of a region', *Tribune,* 1 December 1967.

It [Hull] is not really in Yorkshire, but by itself, somewhere in the remote east where England is turning into Holland or Denmark.[149]

Philip Larkin, in a collected published in the early 1980s, commented on Hull:

... As for Hull, I like it because it's so far from everywhere else.[150]

Sean O'Brien, in investigating the appeal that Hull has held to poets, has attributed this literary sensibility to its 'remote secrecy and idiosyncrasy... Perhaps Hull's very peculiarity may give it a symbolic status'.[151] This may be linked to the geography of the place – and is not necessarily without parallels to other parts of the east of England (such as W. G. Sebald writing about East Anglia). Despite Suffolk's relative proximity to London for example; a commentator in the 1960s remarked, 'is there any other region so near to the capital that has its own daily morning newspaper? I think not: and that surely is a symptom of cultural independence'.[152]

Hull's distinct image of 'Otherness', its supposed disconnectedness from England, or even from the wider region – 'true' Yorkshire – has been emphasised throughout the mid-to-late twentieth century (and since) by the almost anthropological nature of its treatment in the British press. The unknown and unfashionable quality of the area has remained consistently resolute. As Tom Chesshyre wrote of the city in 2010:

To say that Hull gets a terrible press is an understatement. Hull gets a stinking, lousy, almost hapless press; just about everyone seems to want to have a go at the south Yorkshire city.[153]

[149] J.B. Priestley, *English Journey* (London, 1934), 354.
[150] Quoted in Andrew Motion, *Philip Larkin: A Writer's Life* (London, 1993), 250.
[151] O'Brien, 'The Unknown City', 146.
[152] Neil Ward and John Tomaney, 'Regionalism in the East of England', in Tomaney and Mawson (eds.), *England*, 114.
[153] Tom Chesshyre, *To Hull and Back: On Holiday in Unsung Britain* (Chichester, 2010), 22.

More infamous recent examples of this sentiment are Hull's treatment in the book *Crap Towns*, much of which stands in marked contrast to the resurgence of Yorkshire's main urban centres - such as Leeds and Sheffield, but also the national assessments of East Yorkshire itself with Beverley itself coming top of the Royal Bank of Scotland's 'affordable affluence index' in 2007.[154] As discussed in the following chapter, Hull and much of East Yorkshire have, in their industrial base, physical topography and cultural representations been excluded or marginalised within the popular imagination. The longstanding nature of this is apparent in the contrasting literary archetypes of Yorkshire from the 1930s; the 'Phyllis Bentley Country' of the industrial towns of Hudley and Annotsfield displaying little commonality with Winifred Holtby's invocation of crumbling Maythorpe Hall and the 'fine white dust of flour-mills and cement works' of Kingsport in *South Riding.*[155]

Hull has certainly not been alone in its 'otherness',[156] but the lack – and even resistance – to self-assertive ownership of such liminal status stands in stark contrast to that of other comparable cities. Liverpool, for example, has seen its history of supposed exceptionalism celebrated in a process where the negative stereotypes of the city – such as the 'scally scouser' – have been reclaimed and reconstructed alongside the production of a new modern and global image.[157] But although Hull was designated the 2017 UK City of Culture, similar processes are yet to occur in the city. Hull has been dogged and stereotyped by a 'fish and ships' image, that wasn't necessarily

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[154] *The Idler Book of Crap Towns: The 50 worst places to live in the UK* (Boxtree, 2003); Royal Bank of Scotland, 'Affordable Affluence Index,' August 2007, http://www.rbs.co.uk/content/private/downloads/RBS-Affordable-Affluence-Index.pdf (accessed 31 July 2017).

[155] Dave Russell, 'Province, Metropolis and the Literary Career of Phyllis Bentley in the 1930s', *The Historical Journal,* 51:3 (2008), 725; Winifred Holtby, *South Riding: An English Landscape* (London, 2010 edn.), 48.

[156] Holtby, *South Riding,* 48.

[157] John Belchem, *Merseypride: Essays in Liverpool Exceptionalism* (Liverpool, 2006), xvi.

representative of the economic reality even during the height of those industries.[158] The supposed stigma of association with Hull can still often lead to pedantic distinctions being made by those from the city's suburbs that they come from Hessle, Cottingham or even the tiny village of Swanland.[159] Even those ostensibly seeking to sing the city's praises are at pains to emphasise their at-arms' length association, through qualifiers such as 'growing up within the Hull postcode'.[160] Dominic Sandbrook's choice to use the common saying that 'everything reached Hull five years after… everywhere else' was intended to make the general point that the 1960s, as popularly portrayed, were not experienced equally across the United Kingdom.[161] As such, beyond the discussion of the interactions with regional, 'northern' and national institutions, this focus on Hull penetrates deeper into variations on national experiences.

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[158] Allison, *A History of the County of York East Riding,* 253; Lewis and Jones, *Humberside Region*.

[159] For example: European football writer James Horncastle insisted 'I come from Swanland, which is eight miles outside [Hull].' when *Football Weekly* podcast host James Richardson suggested he was a native of the city (Swanland is actually closer to six miles from the city centre, and fewer than four miles from Hull's administrative boundary). 'Football Weekly: Liverpool mauled by Hull City's tigers' *The Guardian* (online), 2 December 2013, http://www.theguardian.com/football/blog/audio/2013/dec/02/football-weekly-podcast-liverpool-hull-spurs-manutd (last accessed 28 March 2014).

[160] Charlie English, 'To Hull and back: the rebirth of Britain's poorest city', *The Guardian,* 11 September 2014. http://www.theguardian.com/cities/2014/sep/11/-sp-to-hull-and-back-the-rebirth-of-britains-poorest-city (last accessed 20 September 2014); within the same article English, a former *Guardian* travel editor, also makes clear to the reader his experience of Hull came from 'growing up eight miles away in Beverley'.

[161] Dominic Sandbrook, *White Heat, 1964-70: A History of Britain in the Swinging Sixties* (London, 2006), 189.

1.6 Post-War Context

I

An examination of 'regionalism' cannot be disaggregated from the broader issues across Britain and British politics in the late twentieth century. The Britain that had emerged in the aftermath of the Second World War needed a high level of centralisation to implement the social welfare reforms and nationalisation of key industries; but as 'the political and institutional certainties of the post-war welfare state began to break down in the 1960s and 1970s', regionalism began to resurface on the political agenda.[162] Thus the concerns and cultural phenomena that reinvigorated interest in the 'regions' in England – and in the wider United Kingdom – were the same as those that motivated more general policy concerns. These in turn both shaped, and to a degree were shaped by, approaches to constructing and conceptualising Yorkshire and Humberside. This section briefly highlights these key trends and debates discussed in greater detail in each of the following chapters.

This rise of a regional focus in the late 1950s was a symptom of the burgeoning debate surrounding British 'decline'. 'Declinism' is an aspect of British political culture that has been widely historicised. It has been argued to represent an ideology, and to have been a persistent feature of British politics in the twentieth century, arising from distinct circumstances.[163] Declinism is not confined to the period in question, but intensified during it: its arguments were born out by the apparent relative poor performance of the UK compared to other developing nations in this period, and by the cultural climate of the time. As Guy Ortolano has argued, regardless of the empirical reality, Britons felt

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[162] Mawson, 'The English regional debate', 182.

[163] Barry Supple, 'Fear of failing: economic history and the decline of Britain', in Peter Clarke and Clive Trebilcock (eds.), *Understanding Decline: Perceptions and Realities of British Economic Performance* (Cambridge, 1997); Andrew Gamble, 'Theories and Explanations of British Decline', in Richard English and Michael Kenny (eds.), *Rethinking British Decline* (Basingstoke, 2000).

themselves living through a period of decline, as a paradigm in their own experience.[164]

More importantly, despite doubts about the depth of public angst, declinism 'became the

norm' amongst intellectuals and journalists.[165]

II

This broad intellectual consensus that there *was* something 'wrong' with Britain naturally

led to an examination of what was right in other parts of the world. In such a climate, the

supposed archaic form of Britain's physical planning and land use structure came under

scrutiny. As Glen O'Hara notes, 'Britain's perceived sclerosis caused a search for foreign

models to emulate'.[166] Central was a concern to adopt the French form of economic and

physical planning, with the Economic Planning Regions set up by Labour in 1965 and the

machinery that accompanied them being strongly influenced by the corporatist Regional

Economic Development Commissions that had been established across the Channel in

March 1964.[167] Again, such regional planning and policy frameworks were an imposition

from the centre, rather than a groundswell of organic regional initiative. 'Regional

planning' ideas imported from France and the United States involved a combination of

economic and physical infrastructure planning.[168] The writers of Penguin Specials and

'state of the nation' books, despite providing rather disparate analyses and perceptions

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[164] Guy Ortolano, 'Decline as a Weapon in Cultural Politics', in Wm. Roger Lewis (ed.), *Penultimate Adventures with Britannia: Personalities, Politics and Culture in Britain* (London, 2008), 203. Black and Pemberton have questioned 'declinism' as the dominant paradigm in British politics and society, but have affirmed that historians should interested in how 'declinism' has underpinned various political projects: Lawrence Black and Hugh Pemberton, 'Introduction – The uses (and abuses) of affluence', in Lawrence Black and Hugh Pemberton (eds.), *An Affluent Society? Britain's Post-War Golden-Age Revisited* (Aldershot, 2004), 3.

[165] Matthew Grant, 'Historians, the Penguin Specials and the 'State-of-the-Nation' Literature, 1958-64', *Contemporary British History,* 17:3 (2003), 44.

[166] Glen O'Hara, *From Dreams to Disillusionment: Economic and Social Planning in 1960s Britain* (Basingstoke, 2007), 16.

[167] Ibid., 108.

[168] Hopkins, 'Translating the transnational'; also see Mark Clapson, *Anglo-American Crossroads: Urban Research and Planning in Britain, 1940-2010* (London, 2013), 29-53.

of the supposed 'malaise' in Britain, uniformly evoked as a common thread the importance of 'planning' and 'dynamism' in the economic sphere'.[169]

Though policy makers were spurred to broaden their conceptual and geographical horizons to embrace larger areas, pressing demographic imperatives also had a role to play in this process. The 'baby boom' of the 1950s and early 1960s reversed – if only briefly, in retrospect – what had been a downward trend in fertility and birth rates in the United Kingdom.[170] Such a deviation from a well-established trend produced alarming predictions from planners, emboldened by their new methods of statistical modelling and projection, that 'on the best judgements that could be made, the population of Great Britain was likely to grow by twenty million by the end of the century – from 53.1 million in 1965 to 72.5 million in 2000'.[171] Such a possibility fed a variety of concerns, including the strain it would put on resources such as housing,[172] and the on-going 'problem' of productivity within the economy.[173] The required expansion of existing urban centres (alongside the relief of those already considered to be overly congested, such as London and the South East), and the potential pressing need for entirely new ones also contributed in part to the need to provide regional solutions.

State-sponsored regional planning was never a consistent initiative, and there were moves towards the retreat of the state and a greater concentration on existing cities as the hubs for economic development in the 1970s. This went alongside the increasing peripheralisation and marginalisation of Yorkshire and the North, as deindustrialization saw rapid reductions in employment in its traditional industries. Already in the early

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[169] Grant, 'Historians, the Penguin Specials', 43.
[170] Glen O'Hara, '''We are Faced Everywhere with a Growing Population': Demographic Change and the British State, 1955-64', *Twentieth Century British History,* 15:3 (2004), 250-251.
[171] J.B. Cullingworth, *Environmental Planning 1939-1969, Volume III: New Towns Policy* (London, 1979), 224.
[172] O'Hara, 'Demographic change and the British State', 244.
[173] Jim Tomlinson, 'The British 'Productivity Problem' in the 1960s', *Past & Present,* 175 (2002), 194.

1970s with the continuing struggles of the economy and strained industrial relations, the more grandiose aspects of public planning appeared to be falling off the agenda. The Conservative Government of Edward Heath – elected in 1970 on a platform of large-scale infrastructural investment – was by 1972 already switching emphasis to more modest 'local' concerns instead of larger regional or national projects, in a series of political crises.[174] Not only was there an emergent public dissatisfaction with the effects and shortcomings of regional and urban planning, but academics such as Peter Hall, who had been vocal proponents of such policies, began to question their benefit.[175] Beginning in the early 1980s and extending into the 1990s, the inability of the modern technocratic Keynesian state to deliver its promised change added a new dimension to the debates surrounding decline. In the late 1980s, Robert Hewison noted that 'recession has encouraged the feeling that not only has the post-war period been one of decline, but that even its innovations have been a *failure*'.[176]

III

In addition to these trends, there has been increasing debate as to the role of heritage – both industrial and pastoral – within England. The latter has been cast by some as synonymous with conceptions of 'Englishness': according to Mandler, this avatar has 'become a thesis not only about economic decline, but also about anti-modernism in

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[174] West Yorkshire Archive Service Wakefield (WYAS) C146/6 Extract of a Speech made in London by Edward Heath, 24 May 1972.

[175] See Yvonne Rydin, 'Public Participation in Planning', in Barry Cullingworth (ed.), *British Planning: 50 Years of Urban and Regional Policy* (London, 1999), 189-192; Sam Wetherell, 'Freedom Planned: Enterprise Zones and Urban Non- Planning in Post-War Britain', *Twentieth Century British History,* 27:2 (2016), 266–289.

[176] Robert Hewison, *The Heritage Industry: Britain in a climate of decline* (London, 1987), 42, his emphasis.

culture and conservatism in society and politics' for the cultural studies field.[177] Mandler

has argued that the 1970s onwards saw a 'heritage panic', 'because of a loss of

confidence in the future, and a turning backwards in that decade to take consolation in

the glories of the national past – particularly in its rural and aristocratic (and less

significantly, its imperial or industrial) past'.[178] This look back to the past not only turned

nostalgia into an 'economic enterprise',[179] but – due to this perception of failure –

developed a political desire to reclaim aspects of the past. As Hewison notes,

> and so we polish up a history that has been reselected and rewritten. The past is
> made more vivid than the present. It never rains in a heritage magazine... The past
> is domesticated and, by regulation, made safe; it is reduced, removed, rebuilt,
> restored and rearranged.[180]

1.7   Structure and Approach

I

This thesis does not seek to be a comprehensive or authoritative 'history' of the places

under consideration. Any attempt to do so would inevitably run the risk of reproducing

Christopher Harvie's well-worn conclusions about the lack of politicised regionalism in

England. As argued above, an empiricist definition of the regional space has been

effectively dispelled by the broad academic consensus regarding the highly discursive

and contested nature of regional constructions. That regional identity exists as a product

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[177] Peter Mandler, 'Against 'Englishness': English Culture and the Limits to Rural Nostalgia, 1850-
1940', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society,* 7 (1997), 156.
[178] Peter Mandler, 'The heritage panic of the 1970s and 1980s in Great Britain', in Peter Itzen
and Christian Müller (eds.), *The Invention of Industrial Pasts: Heritage, political culture and
economic debates in Great Britain and Germany, 1850-2010* (Augsburg, 2013), 58.
[179] Hewison, *The Heritage Industry*, 29.
[180] Ibid., 137.

of dialectics from above as well as below,[181] means that the national context – and governmental action – is an important consideration throughout.

Instead, in keeping with broader trends of modern British political history, in particular those historians who are broadly considered to comprise the 'new political history', this thesis adopts a structure of situated case studies to consider aspects of regionalism and regional identity in Yorkshire and Humberside. Lawrence Black terms these 'core samples': 'not simply case studies, but the sites and hosts of bigger debates… [They] have been selected because they traverse political and social terrains and formal and informal politics. Their claim to be representative or typical is partial. Nor however, are they arbitrarily selected'.[182] This approach also has a symmetry with the more constructivist strains of regional geography. As Allen *et al.* have argued, 'place-specific studies' that focus on particular aspects of regional action or organisation are valid 'as exemplars of wider phenomena, symptomatic of broader changes; as laboratories for the exploration of particular issues, both theoretical and empirical'.[183]

II

In this spirit, the second chapter in this thesis has been broadly titled 'Economic regionalism'. The economy is probably the most explored and debated dimension of the more peripheral provincial regions. The fluctuations, functioning and relative successes of regional economic policy – broadly, the geographically targeted forms of financial subsidies and incentives that reached their apogee in the 1960s and 1970s – have

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[181] Paasi, 'Region and place,' 476.
[182] Lawrence Black, *Redefining British Politics: Culture, Consumerism and Participation, 1954-70* (Basingstoke, 2010), 2. This approach has been adopted by several historians: for example, Mike Savage, *Identities and Social Change in Britain since 1940: The Politics of Method* (Oxford, 2010); Glen O'Hara, *Governing Post-war Britain: The Paradoxes of Progress, 1951-1973* (Basingstoke, 2012).
[183] Allen, Massey and Cochrane, *Rethinking the Region*, 1.

been the main focus of most studies. Such approaches have predominantly (and rather inevitably) adopted a solely 'top-down' approach to analysis, with the regions themselves and actors within them remaining largely passive. When the response of regions has been considered in such studies, it has mainly been to generalise that 'the assisted areas of the country want it; the rest of the country resists it',[184] or to observe the effect of assistance on general election fortunes.[185]

This chapter instead focuses on an institution created as part of these centralised regional policy measures, but embedded within the region itself: the Yorkshire and Humberside Economic Planning Council. The Council was admittedly a creation of central government, with its members appointed rather than chosen through any form of direct democratic process, but through its function to advise and recommend exercised a fair degree of autonomy in constructing an economic image for the Yorkshire and Humber area. The regional plans and strategy produced by the Council have not received much attention, mainly because several of its reports were openly dismissed out of hand by government.[186] But the Councils were empowered with the scope to imagine their region's economy, and assess their strengths, weaknesses, and their potential future direction. The chapter explores how the Yorkshire and Humberside Economic Planning Council's imagined its 'economic region' both locally and nationally. It also considers the interactions not only between the Council and national actors and institutions, but also within the broader 'north of England', to trace and explore the extent to which a 'Northern' economic consciousness was articulated, and to which interregional competitiveness and tensions were displayed.

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184 Peter Hall, 'The Regional Dimension', in Cullingworth (ed.), *British Planning*, 76.
185 J.D. McCallum, 'The Development of British Regional Policy', in Duncan Maclennan and John B. Parr (eds.), *Regional Policy: Past Experience and New Directions* (Oxford, 1979), 19-20.
186 O'Hara, *Dreams to Disillusionment*, 111.

Chapter 3 focuses on 'Political Regionalism', on the period roughly from the beginning of the 1960s until the 1980s. Humberside provides the ideal prism for two reasons: firstly, efforts to engender a collective identity for 'Humberside' as an administrative unit represented perhaps the most extreme change upon historical and geographical boundaries and loyalties. Secondly, such endeavours were intrinsically linked to one of the bolder projects of economic and social regional planning – namely the feasibility study undertaken by the Wilson Government to consider the possibility of accommodating 'a new population' of 300,000-750,000 in Humberside by the end of the century. Chapter 3 considers how the 'designation' or branding of the region as Humberside was understood and fashioned in the late 1960s, the means through which this novel political region was promoted, and the extent to which it was adopted. This study helps to problematise the issues of political, economic and cultural identities on the Humber, and also to contextualise and situate these concerns within the 'modernising' agenda within which so much was framed in this period. Such a 'core sample' – as a host of bigger debates – seeks to develop analysis of the growing debates over the use and preservation of heritage and history in Britain since the 1970s, as the supposed destruction of a real or imagined urban and rural past spurred various movements towards action. This chapter seeks to add a regional dimension to these national debates.

Chapter 4 is broadly termed 'Regionalism and transport'. The transformative effects of transport developments upon the economic and cultural geography of the United Kingdom have been explored by several academics, most notably John Langton, who has argued, for example, that the canal network constructed in the Industrial Revolution was integral to the processes through which contained economic regions with distinct

provincial capitals and political lobbies were produced.[187] Transport development was physically and socially transformative, considering the relative practical distance that existed prior to the advent of mass transport, such as the railway in the nineteenth century, which served to make large parts of the country 'foreign' to outsiders.[188] And with the dawning of the 'jet age' in the 1950s, aerospace was a core element of 'the triumvirate of modernity' (alongside nuclear industries and computer technology).[189] State control and regulation of the aviation industry provided the context of this period, and the complexities of airport provision and the strict controls on scheduled international routes – made more problematic by charter business – hampered a coherent policy.[190] The various forms of management of airports, with some nationalised and run by the British Airports Authority, and others in the hands of local authorities, added an extra layer of complexity to their governance and logistics. Within a cultural mood that prized modern innovation and forms of transport, the Yorkshire and Humberside region's 'most serious imbalance' in the provision of air services in the UK created concerted regional action to remedy this.[191] From the early 1960s a campaign began, originating from a group of interested and committed individuals who formed the Yorkshire and Humberside Airport Development Association, to designate and construct a new 'Yorkshire Airport' to replace inadequate airfields – such as Yeadon (later Leeds/Bradford Airport) – to serve the population east of the Pennines, and provide them with international (and potentially intercontinental) air services. This campaign

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[187] John Langton, 'The Industrial Revolution and the Regional Geography of England', *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers,* 9:2 (1984),, 162-163.

[188] Annisa Suliman, 'Diamonds or Beasts? Re-mapping English Conceptions of Northernness in the Late Victorian Periodical', in Christoph Ehland (ed.), *Thinking Northern: Textures of Identity in the North of England* (Amsterdam, 2007), 151-152.

[189] Richard Coopey and Peter Lyth, 'Back to the Future: The Aircraft and IT Industries in Britain since 1945', in Coopey and Lyth (eds.), *Business in Britain*, 225-226.

[190] For the politics of bilateral agreements for fare levels and services for international air travel see Alan P. Dobson, *Peaceful Air Warfare: The United States, and the Politics of International Aviation* (Oxford, 1991).

[191] Kenneth R. Sealy, 'The Siting and Development of British Airports', *The Geographical Journal,* 133:2 (1967), 158.

gained traction and support amongst commercial and local government interests alike at various times, but was not without controversies and debate, both at the regional and national level.

Despite remaining under-studied,[192] airports policy is thus a particularly useful route through which to consider both regionalism, and also the changing role of 'experts' within British governance. Chapter 4 thus considers air transport in regionalism, siting this long running debate over (and campaign for) a Yorkshire airport within the broader context of national airports policy, from the end of the Second World War until the beginnings of liberalization of air transport in Britain in the mid to late 1980s. It considers the extent to which institutions either served to promote or constraint regional action towards a potential international airport. It assesses the relative importance placed on air travel by regional actors in Yorkshire and Humberside within their imaginations and constructions of an economic and cultural region. Throughout this period, the economic benefit of airports to the surrounding area remained assumed rather than quantified:[193] promoters' arguments for the importance of airports were largely subjective. How airports' utility was conceptualised by local interests is thus a key consideration, particularly for how the region constructed itself economically; though air services provided a valuable service to traditional business interests, their function and success lay more in a combination of increasing affluence, and availability from the 1960s onwards of relatively cheap 'all inclusive' tours and holidays offered by independent carriers.[194]

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[192] With the exception being the 'sadly mismanaged affair' surrounding the designation of the third London Airport.

[193] To some extent this is still the case today, with the supposed multiplier effects of airports themselves remaining rather vague and lacking in standardization.

[194] Peter Lyth, 'Flying Visits: The Growth of British Air Package Tours, 1945-1975', in Luciano Segreto, Carles Manera and Manfred Pohl (eds.), *Europe at the Seaside: The Economic History of Mass Tourism in the Mediterranean* (New York, 2009), 12.

The final 'core sample' considered here in Chapter 5 is termed 'Cultural Regionalism'. Culture, as has been noted above, is an integral component of almost all forms of regional concern and identity, and is considered throughout the thesis. Chapter 5 finally focuses on a particular cultural institution, the arts associations, established to stimulate the arts in the regions on behalf of the Arts Council of Great Britain. Natasha Vall, in her study of North East England as a 'cultural region', covers similar ground in the context of Northern Arts, the first such arts association to be founded.[195] A key feature emphasised by Vall is that the aligning of the boundaries of the association with those of the Northern Economic Planning Council allowed for 'the overlapping rhetoric of economic modernisation and cultural improvement'.[196]

Arts policy and arts associations in Yorkshire and Humberside provide an apparent contrast to the regional context of Vall's North East. Unlike the alignment of administrative boundaries that provided the platform for cultural action and expression, the region was served until the early 1990s by two separate associations: the Yorkshire Arts Association (YAA), and the Lincolnshire and Humberside Arts Association (LHA). The latter was the second such association to be formed after Northern Arts, but it was not until the end of the 1960s that the YAA was established. The Yorkshire and Humberside Planning Council, in contrast to their northern neighbour and their close attention to transport inadequacies, paid little attention to cultural resources and activity in their work.[197] The impact of ill-defined boundaries and jurisdictions, differences in areas of population, and rather ambiguous role of Humberside are evident throughout the 1970s and 1980s. Notable literary figures from Hull such as Philip Larkin were involved in various capacities with both associations. The integration of Humberside – where there

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[195] Vall, *Cultural Region.*
[196] Ibid., 11.
[197] For example, Yorkshire and Humberside Economic Planning Council, *A Review of Yorkshire and Humberside* (HMSO, 1966).

were was a 'weakness of... expertise and knowledge' – into the broader Yorkshire region proved ultimately problematic after the creation of the new Yorkshire and Humberside Arts Board in 1991.[198] During its existence, the association in Humberside had several clashes over funding and resources with the county council.

Chapter 5 therefore, in considering the two arts associations, not only provides a narrative of the development of arts policy in Yorkshire and Humberside as a comparative UK study, but also seeks to build on themes noted elsewhere, such as the extent to which institutions formed or constrained a coherent regional identity; and how various strands of public policy were used to articulate and construct a distinct region. The chapter situates these arguments in the wider national scholarship on art in Britain in the twentieth century, particularly the uses and development of community arts, which the Arts Council increasingly sought to cultivate and promote from the mid-1970s onwards, and which prioritised participation over more 'professional' artistic output.[199]

III

The conceptualisation and definition of the region of Yorkshire and Humberside within this thesis is largely passive. It derives from the manner in which those organisations or institutions covered by the core samples defined the region. As Walton states, regions

> cover broader territories (physical and imaginary) than a single administrative county, province, department or equivalent, and constitute the largest and most extensive intermediate collectivity between the individual and the nation state. Within them nest the lesser categories of provinces or counties, lesser territorial entities of government, cities, towns and smaller, more local communities, to each of which individuals and families owe allegiances which may be mutually

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[198] Archive of Art & Design, Victoria & Albert Museum ACGB198/45 YHAB Meeting Minutes, 'Planning for the Arts', 6 December 1991.
[199] John A. Walker, *Left Shift: Radical Art in 1970s Britain* (London, 2002), 130-136.

reinforcing, contradictory or conflictual according to the circumstances in which the various layers of loyalty and instrumentality come into contact.[200]

That this relatively succinct definition as employed here should remain so conditional and problematic demonstrates the complexity involved in analysing the regional unit. It remains however a necessary task.

While the methods of historical investigation have expanded beyond a traditional focus on government records, instead using 'a more catholic range of sources' to delineate investigations in British political history from a reductive framework of 'high' or 'from below' politics,[201] recent studies such as that by Glen O'Hara have made use of the 'wealth of [archival] materials available' in combination with more innovative forms of analysis.[202]

This thesis adopts a similar approach, with much of the evidence used for each of the chapters coming from archival sources. This includes both records of central government from the National Archives in Kew (particular those related to the Department for Economic Affairs, Civil Aviation Authority and the Department for the Environment), but also primary evidence from the archive services across East and West Yorkshire: the West Yorkshire Archive Service, East Riding of Yorkshire Archive Service, and the Hull History Centre. These are used in conjunction with other published and unpublished sources. Much of this data has only recently become available, though much of the government record from the 1980s and 1990s still remains classified. The use of archival documents and records as a means for historical regional studies for modern England has also become more profitable and rewarding in part due to the significant

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[200] Walton, 'Imagining regions', 290.
[201] Lawrence Black, ''What kind of people are you?' Labour, the people and the 'new political history'', in John Callaghan, Steven Fielding and Steve Ludlam (eds.), *Interpreting the Labour Party: Approaches to Labour Politics and History* (Manchester, 2003), 26.
[202] O'Hara, *Governing Post-War Britain,* 8.

improvements and investment that has been made in provincial archives by the Heritage Lottery Fund and other bodies.[203]

The use of archival records does, however, have certain drawbacks and limitations, both ontologically and practically. Modern sources are not immune to the process of destruction and degradation more associated with historical investigation from earlier periods; a flood in the basement of the Department of the Environment in 1984, for example, destroyed a number of files relating to the Yorkshire and Humberside Economic Planning Council.[204] Many records are incomplete or have not yet been catalogued. The relative completeness of accessions such as those of the Yorkshire and Humberside Airport Development Association and East Yorkshire Action Group has partly influenced their inclusion here as 'core samples', but they also stand as testament to the commitment and conviction of certain actors towards regional actions or constructs of regionalism.

As previously indicated, the core samples chosen for this thesis are not exhaustive for this study, but representative.[205] They have been selected because they best allow for the developing of an understanding of the relationship between functional, political and economic considerations of regionalism in Yorkshire and Humberside alongside questions related to local, regional and national identity; a current separation within the literature that has developed studying English regions. For Yorkshire, several other case studies may have been appropriate as part of this process, such as the effects of immigration, the importance of sport or the development of regional television content in this period. These examples have indeed already been the subject of focused case

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[203] Such as the Hull History Centre.
[204] Records of the Department for Economic Affairs, the National Archives, Kew http://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/details/r/C114 (accessed 9 October 2014).
[205] O'Hara, *Governing Post-War Britain,* 197. O'Hara himself acknowledges in his volume that he 'might indeed have examined many other post-Second World War examples'.

studies – either in Yorkshire and Humberside – or in other areas, and might indeed prove fertile ground for future study. The examples chosen are admittedly 'intermediate' in nature, predominantly focusing on institutions or bodies non-popular in constituency, often 'quangos' (for instance the Yorkshire and Humberside Economic Planning Council, and the arts associations). In many respects this is a necessity of the liminal place of 'regional' concerns within people's everyday lives. But it does not preclude such organisations from articulating a collective purpose despite being – at times – 'virtually invisible to the broader population'.[206]

The process of defining and constructing regional spaces for academic study is not an objective process, and the researcher takes an active role in fashioning these concerns. The attempt here to provide some focus on Hull and East Yorkshire/Humberside is a conscious one, intended to mitigate some of the marginalisation of sub-regions or secondary urban centres that inevitably arises in regional studies. For example, in Lancaster's study of the North East, Middlesbrough and Teesside are included but scarcely directly mentioned, in contrast to Tyneside and Wearside – in a chapter intended to summarise the major facets of the modern North East's regional self-consciousness.[207] Omissions such as these mean that the reasons for the promotion of a separate Teesside airport, or the particular effects of decline of the steel and chemical industries have had on the sub-region, have not been properly considered,[208] nor consequently have the potential issues these cause for coherent regionalism in the North East.

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206 Lee, 'Yorkshire (and the Humber)', 153.
207 Lancaster, 'The North East', 23-41.
208 Ibid., 33. Lancaster himself admits that amongst other industries 'iron and steel making, heavy chemicals and engineering have had less historical attention' than studies of carboniferous capitalism.

But to seek to remove the city or sub-region from the regional framework, or indeed the narrative framework of modern British history – as has been the case with John Belchem's work on Liverpool's supposed 'exceptionalism' – would serve to reinforce the peripheral or 'isolated' nature of Hull in relation to the broader Yorkshire region, the wider North, and also nationally.[209] This also ignores the ways that the regional paradigm has been understood, interpreted, appropriated and contested. The construction of Humberside, though also (like Merseyside County Council) 'ridden with cross river and cross county tensions',[210] was still attempted by Hull's political and economic establishment as a means of promoting both its national and international significance as 'Capital of Humberside; Gateway to Europe'.

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[209] Belchem, *Merseypride.*
[210] John Belchem, 'A city apart: Liverpool, Merseyside and North West Region', in Lancaster, Newton and Vall (eds.), *An Agenda for Regional History*, 219.

Chapter 2: Economic Regionalism: Economic development and industrial promotion in Yorkshire and Humberside, *c.*1965-*c.*1990

> What kind of people do the Opposition think Yorkshire folk are? We are not here with our begging bowls. We are not here to beg for mercy or to ask for love and kisses from the Government. We want our fair share of what is going, but once we get it we shall show grim determination in beating the lot of them.

Sir Donald Kaberry MP (Cons., Leeds North West), *House of Commons Debates,* 19 June 1972, vol. 839, col. 115.

2.1 Introduction

I

This chapter explores the changing context of what is loosely termed as 'economic regionalism' in Yorkshire and Humberside. It examines the work of the Yorkshire and Humberside Economic Planning Council (YHEPC), part of the regional machinery established by Harold Wilson's Labour government in the mid-1960s. It was eventually wound up alongside the other Economic Planning Councils (EPCs) in August 1979. Alongside the work of the YHEPC, it focuses on other organisations and campaigns established to promote regional economic development, such as the Yorkshire and Humberside Development Association (YHDA) in the mid-1970s.

Through exploring these bodies, and contrasting their experience with that of other regions – most notably the Northern planning region – I argue they articulated a complex and regionally distinct identity that was emergent from the region's particular character. This was demonstrated in both the strong concern for locational or 'environmental'

factors in not only social but also economic planning, and also the strong commitment to practical expertise as a means to promote regional economic development, rather than direct political lobbying. Both these dimensions were partly a reflection of the region's historical associational structure and highly varied political pattern.

Yorkshire and Humberside thus provides an important perspective within broader debates surrounding national economic decline, deindustrialization and the supposed entrenchment of a 'North-South' divide in this period. Economic problems 'echoing the trauma' of the 1920s and 1930s were seen as re-emergent from the early 1970s.[211] Unemployment in Britain rose sharply to 6.1 per cent in 1977, in marked contrast to the average rate of 2.1 seen during the supposed Keynesian 'golden age' of 1947-73.[212] A combination of greater exposure to global markets, significant economic shocks and the planned run down of the staple, nationalised industries that had been on-going since the 1950s led to rapid de-industrialisation in this decade.[213] But the effects of this de-industrialisation were profoundly regional in character. The concentration of the staple and heavy manufacturing industries was in provincial localities such as north-east England, South Wales and the central belt of Scotland. But these areas had from the interwar period been seen as increasingly peripheral in the UK economy – part of 'outer-Britain' – and subject to central government financial assistance in the form of regional economic policy.[214] The Yorkshire and Humberside planning region began the postwar period without any designated 'Development Areas'. By 1979, the entire area was designated for some level of economic relief.[215] The region was therefore subject to increasing peripheralisation in the 1970s and 1980s; on the wrong side of an emerging

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[211] Popp and Wilson, 'Business in the Regions?', 66.
[212] Timothy J. Hatton and George R. Boyer, 'Unemployment in the UK labour market before, during and after the golden age', *European Review of Economic History,* 9:1 (2005), 35; 51-54.
[213] Ibid.
[214] Scott, *Triumph of the South*, 67; Law, *British Regional Development*, 224-229.
[215] McCallum, 'The Development of British Regional Policy', 27-30.

debate on the existence of a North/South UK divide that would intensify under Margaret Thatcher. But despite the close alignment of Yorkshire and Humberside with the wider North, this chapter demonstrates their uneasy relationship to a Northern identity, especially their relationship with what might be termed the 'deep North' of the North East.

II

This chapter will consider the extent to which the YHEPC and similar bodies articulated a particular regional identity. It argues that the YHEPC and YHDA articulated a distinct regional identity that – despite increasing debates over economic and social ideologies – demonstrated a consistent sense of the importance of location and environment; and which sought to pair the concerns of the Yorkshire and Humberside region with a strong sense of national priorities, favouring forms of professional expertise to more political means of regional economic agitation. There was, however, a shift in the forms of professional expertise that were employed, as the authorities and industrialists moved their support away from planners and placed more trust in management consultants and advertising professions.

This chapter first provides a brief overview of the changing national policy framework towards regional policy: the raft of measures pursued with varying vehemence by successive governments since the 1930s to address issues of regional unemployment and regional industrial development. It also sets out the economic and intellectual context of Yorkshire and Humberside in the mid-1960s, prior to the formation of the YHEPC.

The chapter then focuses on the late 1960s to 1970, as the lack of economic growth and the spectre of rising unemployment put increasing strain on the YHEPC's ability to maintain support across the region, and posed challenges to the Council's conviction that Yorkshire and Humberside could avoid financial assistance from central government. Not only did the YHEPC show a particular approach to its work, but this approach reflected wider existing regional traditions of organisation and association in Yorkshire. But analysis of the YHEPC's work demonstrates that its requests and plans remained broadly consistent with previous forms of regional action and regeneration: and the increasingly open enmity towards development areas, in particular the Northern Economic Planning Region, was indicative of a particular regional identity of Yorkshire. I suggest this demonstrates a more complex regional identity than merely intra-regional 'North-North', or 'near-North / deep North' tensions, but one where the cultural and political weight of a more entrenched notion of a binary North/South divide must be acknowledged.

Such concerns would be maintained and would become amplified into the 1970s and 1980s, even as Yorkshire and Humberside's relative economic position became more perilous with the rapid onset of de-industrialisation, and its lasting effects on the labour market. Between 1971 and 1987 the region lost over 40 per cent of its manufacturing employment, and the regional GDP per capita fell relative to the UK average by just under 5 per cent from the mid-1960s to the mid-1990s. Though in this period the methods through which economic development was promoted changed, the overarching vision of the locational advantages of Yorkshire and Humberside remained similar. With the quick erosion of public confidence in state-led economic planning policy following the perceived failures of the 1960s, the YHEPC itself was usurped by its own creation, the YHDA, from 1973. This was a product of the challenge in the region of Keynesian logic by

more Victorian notions of mutuality and self-sufficiency, of 'self-help' in regional industrial promotion.

In examining organisations such as the YHEPC and YHDA, this chapter argues that although the economic challenges faced by Yorkshire were not unique, the approaches taken towards efforts to address them demonstrated a particular regional identity, one shaped by the its geographical, cultural and industrial inheritance. It also argues that the efforts of YHDA to promote the region in the 1980s demonstrate Yorkshire and Humberside's ambiguous relationship to the wider north in economic terms, with this being shown in the changing approaches to marketing the region globally. John Belchem has argued that economic distinctiveness was a significant factor in Liverpudlian 'exceptionalism' in comparison to the '"woolyback" industrial districts' of the surrounding north west.[216] This distinctiveness was a complex issue in Yorkshire and the Humber, with the primarily agrarian economic areas of North Yorkshire, North Lincolnshire and East Riding of Yorkshire sitting alongside the urban system of the West Riding.[217] These considerations in wider terms serve to demonstrate the inherent diversity of the industrial regions and sub-regions of 'the North' that has engendered ambivalences in the northern experience. This creates significant problems for generalising over responses and experiences, particularly in matters related to local and regional economies.

This chapter contains three key themes which I argue are of particular importance to examining both regionalism and regional identity in Yorkshire and Humberside, and which formed a central part of initiatives which were lobbied for and/or enacted. The first theme discussed is how a sense of the region's geography was central to the articulation of an economic region. Regional economic bodies placed consistent emphasis on the

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[216] Belchem, 'A city apart', 218.
[217] Caunce, 'Urban systems, identity and development', 58.

importance of locational, rather than structural factors, in promoting economic growth in the region. The second theme is the relationship of the region with experts and expertise in fostering economic growth; and the final theme considers these debates in the context of 'northernness' and the wider North.

2.2   Context: UK regional policy, de-industrialisation, and Yorkshire and Humberside

I

British regional economic policy's successes and failures in maintaining or reviving its industrially depressed regions since the late 1920s have drawn much analysis from the 1980s onwards, when the national level of regionally targeted financial assistance was significantly reduced.[218] The number of jobs created and redistributed from the more prosperous regions of the country to those in receipt of government aid are deeply disputed. Various other critiques have been made of regional policy, including the rather tenuous relationship it held with national planning policy more generally; its concentration on manufacturing industry to the exclusion of supporting service sector employment; the lack of geographical focus in its eligibility and application; the ambiguous role of public sector employment and regional dispersal; and the governmental preference for focusing on general structural problems rather than concentrating on addressing locational disadvantage. In the context of this chapter an evaluation of the efficacy of regional policy is less important than a discussion of what policy measures were pursued and how these related to the region considered by this thesis.

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[218] Hall, 'Regional dimension', 83.

The initial driver of regional economic policy in Britain was the persistence of the structural slump in the old 'staple' exporting industries. Emerging in the early 1920s, and continuing into Great Depression years of the 1930s, collapse of global demand for coalmining, heavy engineering and shipbuilding, iron and steel manufacture created an unemployment problem that was sharply spatially concentrated. In the mid-1930s these areas, such as South Wales, Clydesdale and the North East, termed by Miller as 'outer-Britain', experienced an unemployment rate amongst the insured labour force of more than ten per cent that of southern England and the Midlands.[219] This regional unemployment differential belied the sectoral growth precipitated by the consumer goods boom of the 1930s; the growth in employment brought about by these light manufacturing industries was located away from these areas, and which only accounted for 8.32 per cent of all new manufacturing plants employing 25 or more people.[220] The interwar years have been characterised as being a period of affluence in which living standards rose, primarily as a result of a significant fall in the cost of living, particularly for the skilled and semi-skilled trades, exacerbating the feeling of a widening divide.[221] The increasing perception of a material divide as reproduced in broader spatial terms in turn encouraged greater articulation of a matching cultural division, evident in the work of travel writers and other commentators in the 1930s, most notably George Orwell, J.B. Priestley and H.V. Morton.[222]

The persistence of these problems made it politically unavoidable for central government to maintain its non-interventionist approach, though Treasury resistance to wider

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[219] McCallum, 'British regional policy', 3; Frederic M. Miller, 'The unemployment policy of the National Government, 1931-1936', *The Historical Journal,* 19:2 (1976), 453-76; Scott, *Triumph of the South*, 67.

[220] Scott, *Triumph of the South*, 3, 67, 284.

[221] This point on real wage increases comes from George R. Boyer, 'Living standards, 1860-1939', in Roderick Floud and Paul Johnson (eds.), *The Cambridge Economic History of Modern Britain Volume II: Economic Maturity, 1860-1939* (Cambridge, 2004), 287.

[222] Cockin, 'Locating the literary north', 245-246; Dorling, 'Distressed times and areas', 54-56; Phillips, *The Industrial Politics of Devolution*, 16.

assistance tempered the extent of any regional policy during this period.[223] Initially policy focused on enabling the mobility of labour from those regions worst affected. The Industrial Transference Scheme and Juvenile Transfer Scheme were established in 1928 to provide small grants and loans for the unemployed to relocate. During the depths of the depression in 1932-33, as many as 14,000 people a year were helped to move.[224] By 1934, after a series of government-commissioned studies into the 'depressed areas' – and intense public interest – there was an acceptance of the need for 'positive external assistance' to break the cycle of depression.[225] The Special Areas (Improvement and Development) Act in that year designated four special areas in South Wales, North East England, West Cumberland, and West Central Scotland. Major cities in these areas such as Newcastle and Glasgow were excluded from these initial measures due to their slightly less alarming unemployment rates. Modest but increasing loans and financial inducements to attract new industry were offered in these areas, as well as introducing trading estate developments in places such as Team Valley and Hillington.[226] In many respects, this owed less to enthusiasm for direct intervention from the centre, and more to the persistence of Sir Malcolm Stewart as the Commissioner appointed for the English special areas, and to Scottish industrial activism.[227]

The economic difficulties experienced in the 1920s and 1930s also increased calls for the creation of larger 'regional' areas of public administration, in part to alleviate the financial and functional burdens local authorities faced, and in part for more effective

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[223] Scott, *Triumph of the South*, 88, 286.
[224] Peter Hall, 'The Regional Dimension', 77.
[225] McCallum, 'British Regional Policy', 4; D.W. Parsons, *The Political Economy of British Regional Policy* (London, 1986), 11-13.
[226] Peter Scott, 'The Audit of Regional Policy: 1934-1939', *Regional Studies,* 34:1 (2000), 57-61; Law, *British Regional* Development, 45; McCallum, 'British Regional Policy', 5.
[227] Parsons, *British Regional Policy,* 15-21; Gavin McCrone, *Regional Policy in Britain* (London, 1969), 95-102; Phillips, *The Industrial Politics of Devolution,* 15-19.

planning – both economically and also of the physical environment.[228] The persistence of severe structural problems outside the south and midlands of England would lead the appointment of a Royal Commission on the Distribution of the Industrial Population in 1937, under the chairmanship of Sir Montague Barlow. The Barlow Commission's report, published in 1940, advocated 'the adoption of a regional system' with wide ranging controls for development.[229] Abercrombie's minority report had gone further in calling for 'a Ministry that would tackle the problems of housing transport and land at the same time as having powers over the distribution of industry'.[230]

Despite considerable interest in the possibilities of more coordinated national and regional planning machinery, the focus of the more concerted regional policy pursued by the Attlee Government from 1945-51 was primarily social and political.[231] Peter Scott has convincingly argued that an immediate emphasis on employment generation in areas in receipt of government assistance took priority over Barlow's recommendations for more wide-ranging economic regional planning policy.[232] The 'Development Areas' designated by the 1945 Distribution of Industry Act largely reflected the prewar assisted areas, with parts of the Scottish Highlands, Merseyside, Wrexham, and South Lancashire also being added to these areas by 1950.[233] The Board of Trade was empowered to provide loans and grants to firms in the Development Areas, and to facilitate the financing, building and leasing of trading estates. Industrial development outside of the Development Areas was curtailed initially through the retention of wartime building licensing, and then was formalised into Industrial Development Certificates (IDCs) by the

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[228] See Peter Hall, *Urban and Regional Planning* (London, 1992), 48-56.

[229] Philip Asterley Jones, 'Post-War Machinery of Government: VI-Regional Administration', *Political Quarterly* 15:3 (1944), 198.

[230] O'Hara, *Dreams to Disillusionment*, 101.

[231] Gerald Manners, 'National and international perspectives', in Manners, Keeble, Rodgers and Warren (eds.), *Regional Development in Britain*, 11-12; Parsons, *British Regional Policy,* 85.

[232] Peter Scott, 'British Regional Policy 1945-51: A Lost Opportunity', *Twentieth Century British History,* 8:3 (1997), 358-382.

[233] Ibid., 361-362.

1947 Town and Country Planning Act. The supply of 'advance factories' by the Board of Trade in the assisted regions were argued by Peter Hall to have produced 'spectacular' results, with more than half new industrial building from 1945-7 situated in the development areas, compared to just 5 per cent prior to the Second World War.[234] However, despite reasonably impressive employment figures for these factories in the mid-1950s, the application of these controls and incentives has been argued to have been less effective in practice than the scales of the powers of the Board of Trade suggest. Scott and Phillips have highlighted the structural vulnerability – the increasingly branch plant nature – of the factories established in the North East and Scotland at this time. The balance of payments crisis confronting the Attlee Government in 1947 also meant that the immediate postwar expenditure on regional policy and rigid application of IDC policy were short-lived.[235] Firms outside of the Development Areas – particularly in export industries – were more readily able to appeal to 'national interest / national efficiency' arguments to obtain IDCs.[236] Further to this, New Town and overspill policies around London – the most active form of regional planning enacted after 1946 – placed the development corporations into direct competition with the Development Areas for more mobile industry.[237]

Though the force with which regional policy was pursued eased towards the end of the 1940s, this 'de-emphasis' was accelerated under Conservative governments from 1951 onwards. Regional policy has been generally characterised as in 'abeyance' in the period from 1951-8, as post-Korean War rearmament and economic growth maintained levels of employment in heavier industries such as coalmining, iron and steel and shipbuilding.

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[234] Hall, 'Regional Dimension', 78.
[235] Scott, 'Lost Opportunity', 379.
[236] Stephen Rosevear, 'Balancing Business and the Regions: British Distribution of Industry Policy and the Board of Trade, 1945-51', *Business History,* 40:1 (1998), 77-99.
[237] McCallum, 'British Regional Policy', 8.

Public spending priorities shifted towards other policy concerns, such as housing.[238] In the first eight years of Conservative rule, total expenditure per annum on regional assistance under the 1945 Act was barely half what it had been in the final three years under Labour.[239] Regional planning in the south east continued to take priority over active regional policy in the Development Areas. In 1953 for example, Scott highlights IDCs granted to London New Town factories created 31 per cent more jobs than new factories across the whole of the assisted regions.[240] Where regional policy was still employed in the mid-1950s, Scott argues, it was done so explicitly for social reasons: '..the 'black spot' option... resources being concentrated on the precise localities in which unemployment occurred, even if there were much more economically viable centres within a relatively short distance'.[241]

In 1958, however, regional policy once again came to be applied more actively by the Conservatives. Scott has argued that in part this was a result of the shift within the Cabinet away from the neo-liberalism of erstwhile Chancellor Peter Thorneycroft towards the corporatism favoured by Prime Minister Harold MacMillan.[242] Impetus was given however by the sharp and 'totally unforeseen' downturn in the British economy.[243] Deflationary cuts to public spending and decreased global demand, alongside increasing international competition, caused the re-emergence of significant levels of regional unemployment. Coal and shipbuilding were particularly hard hit by this shock, and falls in output in these sectors were matched by increased unemployment that was more acute

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[238] Ibid., 10; McCrone, *Regional Policy in Britain,* 112-119; Parsons, *British Regional Policy,* 136-137.
[239] Ibid., 9.
[240] Peter Scott, 'The Worst of Both Worlds: British Regional Policy, 1951-64', *Business History,* 38:4 (1996), 47.
[241] ibid., 46.
[242] Ibid., 49, 53.
[243] McCrone, *Regional Policy in Britain,* 117.

in the Development Areas than elsewhere in Britain,[244] highlighting the continued structural weaknesses of their local economies.[245] The government's response was to introduce the Distribution of Industry (Industrial Finance) Act 1958 which added some smaller areas outside of the existing Development Areas to the places eligible for grant and loan aid. Direct public expenditure on regional policy more than doubled to £8.6 million in 1959-60, and then increased to £11.8 million in 1960-61.[246] These years also saw the partial revival of government intervention to provide industrial infrastructure. IDC controls were once again tightened, and advance factory policy was revived in some form. The most notable example of this policy was MacMillan's 'judgement of Solomon'; with two strip mills at Ravenscraig in Motherwell, and Llanwern in Newport construction in preference to one on unemployment grounds.[247] Dissatisfaction with this *ad hoc* system, political and otherwise, would rapidly lead to the consolidation of the various acts since 1945 into the Local Employment Act in 1960. Abolishing the Development Areas – which were viewed as too inflexible – this legislation gave the Board of Trade the power to schedule Development Districts on the basis of high unemployment rates, which in practice was set at 4.5 per cent of the insured population.[248] Alongside maintaining the carrot and stick measures of previous to direct industrial development to the Districts, the Act also empowered the Board of Trade to provide financial subsidy to industrialists constructing their own factories in assisted areas.

Assessments of this policy have been generally critical. Scott has argued the government managed 'to achieve the worst of both worlds, neither allowing industry to choose its own location according to efficiency criteria, nor being prepared to plan the location of

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[244] Ibid.; McCallum, 'British Regional Policy', 10. Scott, 'Worst of Both Worlds', 52-53; Parsons, *British Regional Policy,* 142.
[245] Popp, 'Business in the Regions', 73.
[246] Parsons, *British Regional Policy,* 143.
[247] Phillips, *Industrial Politics of Devolution,* 20-21; Scott, 'Worst of both worlds', 54-55.
[248] McCrone, *Regional Policy in Britain,* 121-122; Hall, 'The Regional Dimension', 79.

industry according to long-term, growth orientated considerations'.[249] Parson perceived this period as 'perhaps a "dithering" before the "dreaming", a phase that fell between two stools'.[250] The disadvantages of this were clear: the flexible scheduling and de-scheduling of Development Districts proved frustrating to industrialists and public authorities alike. Development Districts covered 12.5 per cent of the country's population in 1961, only 7.2 per cent in 1962 and then reached a maximum of 16.8 per cent in 1966. On top of this uncertainty that mitigated against effective planning, the strategy of concentrating on unemployment figures as the criteria for regional policy served to direct investment into areas with the least robust prospects of growth.[251] Moore and Rhode's attempted analysis of the effects on employment on regional policy presented this period – particularly up to 1963 – as a mixed one. High growth of manufacturing employment continued in the South East and Midlands in the late 1950s, and this was not matched across the Development Areas. A more uneven picture was evident in the early 1960s.[252]

There are several important points that emerge from this history. The first is that regional policy represented a reflection of national economic debates, rather than being a product of any strong regional activism or focus. Even though the 1960 Local Employment Act decentralised administration of regional policy to regional offices in the UK, powers for approval remained with the centre in all cases.[253] The structures through which regional policy was administered were overwhelmingly vertical, and aligned with a national

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[249] Scott, 'Worst of both worlds', 55.

[250] Parsons, *British Regional Policy,* 141.

[251] McCrone, *Regional Policy in Britain.*

[252] Barry Moore and John Rhodes, 'Evaluating the Effects of British Regional Economic Policy', *The Economic Journal,* 83:329 (1973), 97. The modelling used for comparing and actual and expected rates of employment growth in this period did not include the iron and steel industry due to its nationalisation in the 1960s. The shipbuilding industry was also excluded due to the significant financial support given to several shipyards in excess of standard regional policy incentives.

[253] Brian W. Hogwood, 'The regional dimension of industrial policy administration', in Hogwood and Keating (eds.), *Regional Government*, 102.

concern for full employment and the efficient use of national resources.[254] Such a strategy broadly fitted with the spatial Keynesian policy agenda that accompanied the national social welfare policies enacted following the Second World War. A general consensus exists that it was social, rather than economic impulses that were the drivers of policy.[255]

II

The early 1960s saw the emergence of more intensive regional plans. The adoption of greater economic planning, and the desire in British policy circles to see this applied in a regional context in combination with more active physical planning on a regional scale, emerged from a diverse and complex set of national and international circumstances and cultural trends. One commonality was the increasing impact of transnationalism on policy networks and exchanges. This was not in itself novel to the late-twentieth century, but gained importance in the climate of 'high-modernism' of the 1950s and 1960s.[256] The need for the adoption of foreign models was in part fuelled by general cultural anxieties around Britain's perceived decline. The result of this national crisis of confidence was to look abroad for models of seeming success. As O'Hara has highlighted, it was France – and to a lesser extent the Soviet Union – who proved the ideal archetypes to follow; France's extraordinary growth rate and resilience in the 1950s and 1960s appeared 'like an attractive mirror image of Britain's "stop-go" crises'.[257]

In contrast to Britain's seemingly sluggish economic performance, the 'French miracle' appeared a product of a 'semi-planned' economy. Channelled through the small

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[254] Hall, *Urban and Regional Planning,* 67, 91.
[255] Manners, 'National and international perspectives', 11-12.
[256] O'Hara, *Governing Post-War Britain*; Phillips, *Industrial Politics of Devolution*, 12.
[257] O'Hara, *Dreams to Disillusionment*, 16-23; O'Hara, *Governing Post-War Britain,* 17-25.

Commissariat du Plan, acting independently of government and by the late 1950s supervising modernisation commissions across various industrial sectors and on issues common to all, France's planning strategy gained significant traction in Britain, with French influence seen across the UK government.[258] A move towards the adoption of economic planning began in the early 1960s, through intense debates between industrial bodies such as the Federation of British Industries and the TUC, and the Conservative Government. It would eventually lead to the creation in 1962 of the National Economic Development Council and National Economic Development Office, whose initial attempts at indicative planning for industrial growth served as a forerunner for the later ill-fated National Plan.[259]

This transnationalism was also a product of the wider 'declinist' critique of the lack of expertise in policy making. The 1950s and 1960s in particular marked an influx of experts – particularly academic expertise – into governments across the world, as was particularly the case with the Kennedy administration in the USA.[260] In this period, 'the "modern" seemed to promise liberation from the past and a preferable future', and part of this vision was that 'scientists and other experts would deploy their training to benefit the nation'.[261] The 'region' served as the ideal geographical unit through which to channel such planning fervour; and the latter half of the 1960s was 'an exceptionally busy period, 'witnessing a veritable flood of planning studies, planning reports, planning research, and especially, perhaps, talk about planning'.[262]

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[258] O'Hara, *Governing Post-War Britain,* 19; O'Hara, *Dreams to Disillusionment,* 19-20.
[259] Astrid Ringe, 'Background to Neddy: Economic planning in the 1960s', *Contemporary British History,* 12:1 (1998), 82-98.
[260] Hopkins, 'Translating the Transnational', 176; O'Hara, *Dreams to Disillusionment,* 27-28.
[261] Guy Ortolano, *The Two Cultures Controversy: Science, Literature and Cultural Politics in Postwar Britain* (Cambridge, 2009), 21.
[262] Dennis Hardy, *From New Towns to Green Politics* (London, 1991), 67.
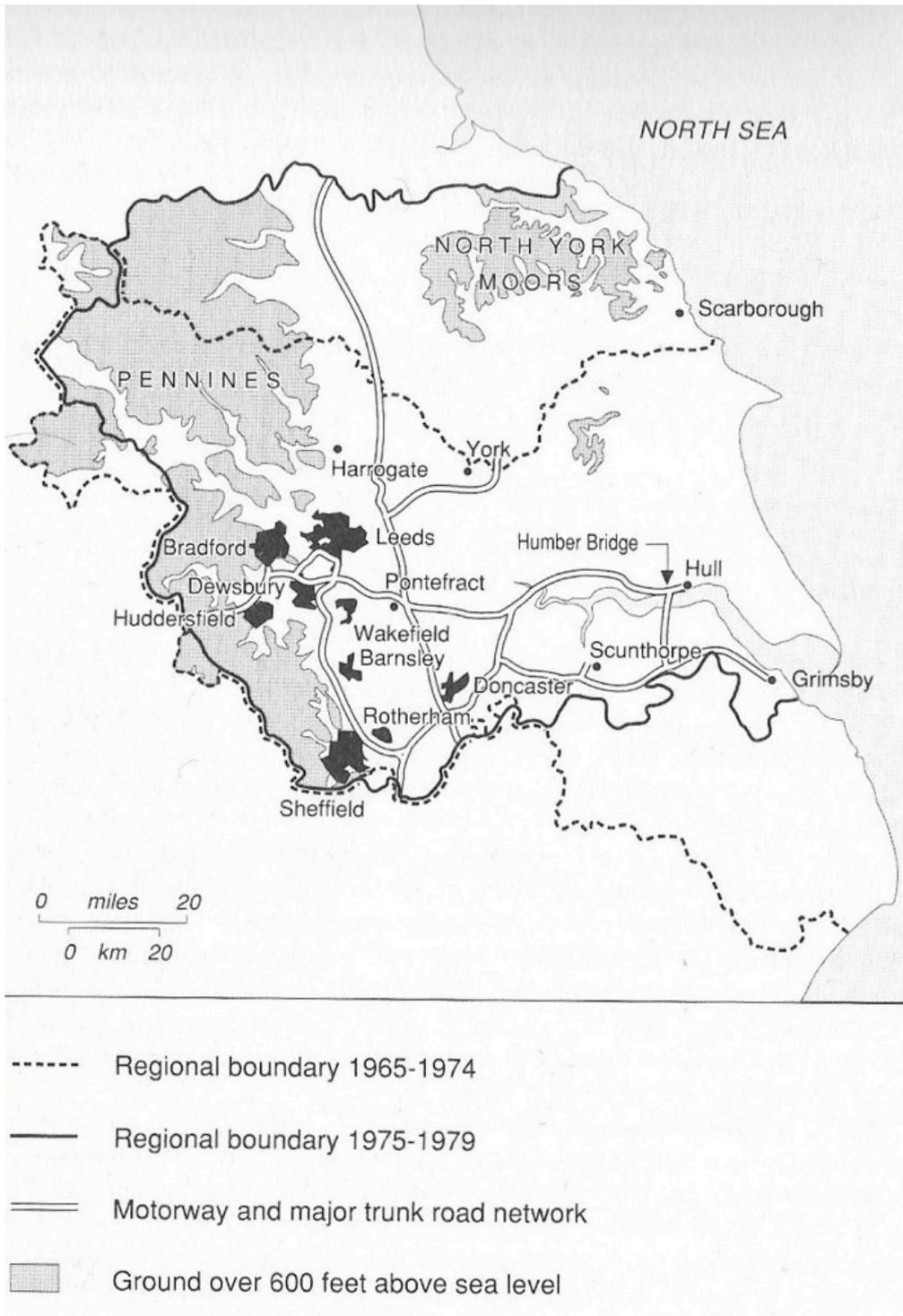
Figure 2.1   Yorkshire and Humberside Economic Planning Region, taken from Diana Pearce, 'The Yorkshire and Humberside Economic Planning Council 1965-1979', in Patricia L. Garside and Michael Hebbert (eds.), *British Regionalism 1900-2000* (London, 1989).

2.3   From planning to publicity: the changing role of expertise

I

The Yorkshire and Humberside Planning Region was the last of the northern planning regions to be designated, and in some ways the most contentious. Its geographical constitution was disputed: various interests around Sheffield showed some displeasure at being put into Yorkshire and Humberside, rather than the East Midlands, and the novel inclusion of parts of Lindsey in Lincolnshire, to the south of the Humber river, reflected the intense interest from both central government and academics in the growth potential of 'Humberside' (a context discussed in detail in the next chapter).[263] Some in the North Riding were frustrated at being included instead in the Northern region: the Yorkshire Council for Social Service (YCSS) stated that 'it is convinced that, in social and economic terms, Yorkshire and Humberside provides a focus for the life of the North Riding in a manner which is not possible for a Northern region'.[264] The clerk of the East Riding County Council would also write to the YHEPC Chairman in 1967 requesting the redrawing of the boundary to include the North Riding. The arguments for this were defended as

> not merely sentimental…nor are the grounds for suggestion limited to the psychological advantages, in that your Council would be able to call upon a strong existing sense of coherence instead of having to endeavour to create one for an area possessing no historic links. The most forceful argument for redrawing the

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[263] Diana C. Pearce, 'The Yorkshire and Humberside Economic Planning Council 1965-1979', in Garside and Hebbert (eds.), *British Regionalism*, 131.
[264] *Royal Commission on Local Government in England: Written Evidence of Private Citizens, Amenity, Ratepayers' and Residents' Organisations and other Witnesses – Supplementary Evidence of Government Departments* (HMSO, 1969), 601. Also see Hull History Centre (HHC) C TCRD/8 'YHEPC: Summary of the Council's work: October 1968 to November 1969', 17 November 1969.

boundaries of the "Yorkshire" region must purely be at present that they cut across what is quite clearly a physical and planning entity.[265]

It was not only the boundaries of the planning region that caused debate. The composition of the YHEPC also drew criticism, particularly from some labour groups who felt their interests would not be adequately represented. These included initial concerns expressed by the president of the Yorkshire miners and by the Yorkshire Federation of Trades Councils.[266] The eventual list of appointments to the YHEPC reflected a similar corporatist balance to that of other Planning Councils, and demonstrated the economic diversity of the region. Only three union representatives (the Transport and General Workers' Union (TGWU), Amalgamated Engineering Union (AEU) and the National Union of Dyers, Bleachers and Textile Workers) made the thirty-strong list. They were joined by industrialists from the region's transport textile, steel, coal and fishing industries (amongst others); representatives of local authorities from the county councils and county boroughs, such as Leeds and Grimsby; and a handful of public and voluntary bodies.[267]

Most important in setting the tone of the YHEPC and its work was the appointment of its Chairman. Sir Roger Stevens was a former diplomat and Vice-Chancellor of Leeds University. Whilst holding this role he also served on the Economic Development Council ('Little Neddie') for the wool textile industry, which had been been retained by Labour as part of the wider machinery of indicative planning and also placed under the

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[265] HHC C TCRD/8 ERCC Clerk to Stevens, 20 January 1967. Indeed, following the reorganization of local government in 1974, the boundaries were adjusted to take in the newly created county of North Yorkshire. Pearce, 'Yorkshire and Humberside Economic Planning Council', 131.
[266] 'Miners seek a voice in planning', *The Guardian,* 27 April 1965. Though there was no worker representation on the Council, the chairman of the Yorkshire division of National Coal Board, Mr. W.H. Sales, was one of the first appointments made to the YHEPC; 'Union body may ask for talks', *The Guardian,* 26 February 1965.
[267] *The Guardian,* 1 April 1965.

responsibility of the Department for Economic Affairs (DEA).[268] Academic representation on the Council was also provided by Anthony Goss, the head of the Leeds School of Town Planning, and by John Page, Professor of Building Science at Sheffield University. Several of the local authority representatives were also chairmen of their town planning committees. The appointment of a Vice-Chancellor to chairman was not in itself unique or an unusual step for the DEA – as demonstrated by economist Charles Frederick Carter's chairmanship of the North West Economic Planning Council until 1968 – but it stood in contrast to the more political appointment of T. Dan Smith for the Northern Economic Planning Council. Stevens' assertions immediately after assuming his role were highly instructive. He was keen to stress the active role he felt his university could play through 'using talent' to aid the YHEPC's work. *The Guardian* reported that 'a university in its position ought to contribute in every sort of way to regional life and therefore he welcomed the opportunity of combining his function as vice-chancellor'. Alongside this advocacy of utilising academic expertise, Stevens also stressed his own objectivity: 'he thinks the fact he is not deeply wedded to any part of the region could be an advantage when it comes to economic planning'. His aim was declared to be 'completely fair and neutral'.[269]

Stevens' past as a senior civil servant, and the connection he now had to an academic institution, positioned him almost as the archetype of the modernist technocratic professional ideal culturally in ascendant in policy circles globally, as brought to the fore by the 'planning fervour' of the mid-1960s. His disavowing an attachment to place and his statement of his own objectivity echoes the general attitude that Mike Savage argues was pervasive in the social scientific community in this decade. Sociologists in the 1960s

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[268] Christopher Clifford, 'The rise and fall of the Department for Economic Affairs 1964-69: British government and indicative planning', *Contemporary British History,* 11:2 (1997), 101.
[269] 'Yorkshire Council's links with the University', *The Guardian,* 1 April 1965.

sought to 'demoralise' and standardise their methods. In the process, their claims to objectivity and general applicability led to the minimisation of the place-specific concerns of their subjects and in turn gave their work a 'locationless logic',[270] distancing such practitioners from their participants.

Also important in this context was the apparent depth of social capital amongst middle-class interests the YHEPC could draw on across the region. The composition of these groups was important in legitimising the Council's purpose. Not only was provincial 'associational life' vigorous and influential in the region,[271] associations were also 'largely professional, and managerial middle class'.[272] In the early 1970s, almost three-quarters of associations in Yorkshire could draw on the skills of members representing at least six different professional classes: crucially including architects, planners, surveyors and other academics (although only 18 per cent had some representation on their respective local authorities).[273]

Strong regional and local (mainly urban) professional and voluntary links therefore existed in Yorkshire, and the Chairman himself had involved himself in various societies in the 18 months he had resided in Leeds prior to 1965. A strong and conscious concern to tap into these existing middle-class reserves was evident almost immediately. In July 1965, Stevens' addressed the YCSS to make clear the on-going work would not be purely economic in its focus, as it was reported '...he thought the Board would be losing sight of its purpose if, in picking up the instruments of economic analysis, it were to forget that it

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[270] Savage, *Identities and Social Change*, 14.

[271] Lesley Robinson, 'English associational culture in Lancashire and Yorkshire, 1890s-c.1930s', *Northern History,* LI (2014).

[272] Lucy E. Hewitt and John Pendlebury, 'Local associations and participation in place: change and continuity in the relationship between state and civil society in twentieth-century Britain', *Planning Perspectives,* 29:1 (2014), 25-44.

[273] P.D. Lowe, 'Amenity and equity: a review of local environmental pressure groups in Britain', *Environment and Planning A,* 9:1 (1977), 41-42.

was concerned with the opportunities for men and women to lead happy lives'.[274]

Stronger links to voluntary and elite organisations were also later enshrined in the Council through changes to its membership, with the appointment of representatives of the County Landowners Association and Women's Royal Voluntary Service alongside a member of the YCSS.[275]

II

The initial actions of the YHEPC confirm its commitment to the technocratic ideals advocated by the 'white heat of scientific revolution' of Harold Wilson's first government. Steps were taken by the Council and the Board to move quickly to establish a sound and rational means through which to assess the region's strengths and weaknesses. One of the first actions was to designate sub-regional divisions through which various studies and statistical information should be arranged. Rather than focus on the existing administrative divisions within Yorkshire and Humberside, it was instead made clear that these divisions should reflect functional divisions across the region:

> Within this extensive and varied territory there is a great diversity of economic and social conditions. For the purposes of economic and land use planning it is necessary to study many problems which arise within, and in the main must be related to, smaller areas which exhibit either some homogeneity of character or interdependence based on practical limits of accessibility. The delineation of sub-divisions must therefore take account not only of physical features but also of economic groupings and social environments which have developed over a long period.[276]

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[274] 'Board out to help people to lead happy lives', *The Guardian,* 7 July 1965.
[275] Pearce, 'Yorkshire and Humberside Economic Planning Council', 132.
[276] TNA EW 7/237 YHEPB(65) 9 'Yorkshire and Humberside Economic Planning Region: Sub-divisions of Region for Study Purposes', July 1965.

But though wishing to reflect a rational division of the region based on economic and social function, the inherent difficulties of precise alignment were also acknowledged:

> The lines of demarcation between the defined sub-divisions are not clear cut. A number of fringe areas have affinities and connexions in more than one direction; … The areas as defined are however thought to afford a satisfactory working bases, provided it is recognised that hey are not entirely self-contained or mutually exclusive.[277]

The seven study areas created for this purpose held some distinct differences from the local authority boundaries at the time, but also foreshadowed the reorganisation of the early 1970s. The West Yorkshire and South Yorkshire sub-divisions were centred on the Leeds-Bradford conurbation and Sheffield respectively. The North Humberside and South Humberside sub-divisions focused on the major urban centres around the Humber (which would also form the rationale for Humberside's creation); and the South Lindsey sub-division consisted of almost all the area in the region at this time that would revert to Lincolnshire County Council in 1974. The more novel territorial sub-divisions were 'Mid-Yorkshire': covering 'the Ripon/Selby/Bridlington triangle' and including York; and 'Yorkshire Coalfield' located in the south of the region, that acknowledged the overwhelming importance of (predominantly male) mining employment to area around Barnsley and Doncaster.[278] This ordering stands in contrast to the sub-divisions used by the other two northern EPCs; the Northern Economic Planning Council, for instance, did not prominently use its sub-divisions in their reporting and findings in a manner that acknowledged sub-regional sectoral specialisations and concentrations.

The YHEPC's novel conception of regional space demonstrated the complex interrelationships that existed in Yorkshire and Humberside between the varied local economic concerns and interactions. This translated into complex interactions between

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[277] Ibid.
[278] Ibid.; YHEPC, *Review of Yorkshire and Humberside*, 85-86 (Appendix A2).

local and regional identity, particularly on an official level through the numerous and varied local authorities. From within the region, it was again the East Riding that baulked at the redrawing of its boundaries on the grounds it was a 'physical, administrative, social and historical entity'.[279] The Chairman himself moved to reach out to the county councils and county boroughs to 'co-operate in assembling information'.[280] Though this drew a mixed response it did elicit unanimous cooperation. Stronger liaison with planning officials for local government in Yorkshire and Humberside was also given a boost through the establishment of the Standing Conference of local planning authorities shortly after the planning region's creation. Sharing members with the YHEPC, the Standing Conference involved itself with various aspects of the physical planning of the region, for example taking an active role in the issue of regional airports in Yorkshire (as discussed in chapter 3). It was the Conference itself that reached out to the Council to agree on the form of the relationship between the three bodies. Evident in the terms was a fundamental emphasis on technical considerations and expertise. Efficiency and objectivity were also key:

> 1. The Conference and the Board should establish regular contact to avoid duplication in the assembly of facts, to exchange data and to reach agreement on facts.
>
> 2. There should be exchange of information on forward programmes of studies and surveys.
>
> 3. Data should be interpreted independently and exchange of the results on interpretation is desirable.[281]

The focus on both 'facts' and 'data' as crucial to the on-going work of both authorities ultimately endorses O'Hara's general highlighting of the dearth of statistical information

[279] HCC TCRD/8 R.A. Whitley to YHEPC Secretary, 'Regional Strategy', 23 February 1971.
[280] TNA EW7/237 YHEPB(65) 12 'Developments in the region – Proposed approach to county councils and county borough councils, note by the Chairman', 27 July 1965.
[281] TNA EW7/238 YHEPC(66)90 'Liaison with the Yorkshire and Humberside Standing Conference of Local Planning Authorities', 20 October 1966.

available on a regional level in the 1960s.[282] This was something the DEA sought to rectify through its own 'programme of regional economic research' intended to inform the work of the EPCs and Economic Planning Boards (EPBs).[283]

For the YHEPC however this research was a more fundamental concern than was evident in the work of other regions. This was particularly the case in the first few years of its work, in the lead up to the publication of the first regional review in October 1966, the catchily-titled *A Review of Yorkshire and Humberside* (in depressing contrast to *the North West of the 1970s,* or *Challenge of the Changing North*, used by the adjacent EPCs).[284] Not only was a significant amount of research put in train to acquire the factual basis on which planning decisions about the region could be made, but this was bolstered by the formalising of an academic advisory group, under the chairmanship of Professor Page, to act as a 'clearing house for the results of research into the region's development'.[285]

The appeal to such experts, particularly economists, planners and social scientists, reflected what James C. Scott termed 'high modernism', associated with 'how the benefits of technical and scientific progress might be applied – usually through the state – in every field of human activity'.[286] Though not necessarily as sweeping as Scott's focus, the planning culture of mid-1960s (promising increasing progress through the use of technical expertise) was not only illustrated through the ambitious visions of the urban

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[282] Glen O'Hara, 'Numbers, Experts and Ideas: The French Model in Britain, c. 1951-73', in Tom Crook and Glen O'Hara (eds.), *Statistics and Public Sphere: Numbers and the People in Modern Britain c.1800-2000* (London, 2011), 86.
[283] Department for Economic Affairs, *Economic Planning in the Regions: The work of the regional Economic Planning Councils and Boards, Second Edition* (HMSO, 1968), 9-10.
[284] Or *A Region with a Future,* the title of the South West Economic Planning Council's strategy. Admittedly, however, Yorkshire and Humberside was not entirely alone in the rather bland title.
[285] 'Clearing house for research', *The Guardian,* 29 October 1965.
[286] James C. Scott, *Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed* (Yale, 1998), 88-90.

future such as Fred Pooley's 'North Bucks New City',[287] or the more speculative forms of 'futurology' that ran alongside planning in the 1960s.[288] In Yorkshire and Humberside in the mid-1960s, the intense interest of central government in the Humber Estuary and the work of the DEA's Central Unit for Environmental Planning (CUEP), discussed more in the next chapter, meant that a radically different industrial and urban future for the region – brought about through sober technocratic analysis – stood as a tangible possibility.[289] The focus of the Council's work aligned closely with the modernist intellectual and economic climate that had been generated by the 'planning fervour' of the late 1950s and 1960s, and broader transnational scientific expert-led modernism reflected in various national international institutions.[290] That it was the EPC's role to harness and realise the long-term benefits of such expertise for the modernisation of the region's infrastructure and economy was made very clear in the public pronouncements of the Stevens. In a press conference to promote the upcoming regional review, the Chairman described it as 'a first stepping stone towards longer-term economic planning for the Region'. It was to be 'based on factual information and assessments provided by the region's Economic Planning Board, and sifted by specialist groups of the Board and Council... it will show where in the Council's view there is scope for improving the

[287] Guy Ortolano, 'Planning the Urban Future in 1960s Britain', *The Historical Journal* 54:2 (2011), 477-507; this could also be set against a range of other ambitious industrial and physical planning projects rife in the 1960s, such as the *Oceanspan* proposals for major development of the Clyde and Forth backed by the Scottish Council for Development and Industry, and the ambitious Counterdrift Cities proposals for huge new urban settlements that would rival London in scale: Phillips, *Politics of Devolution,* 52-56; Derek Rigby Childs, 'Counterdrift Cities', *The Architects' Journal,* 20 February 1963.
[288] O'Hara, *Dreams to Disillusionment,* 26-27.
[289] TNA EW7/238 'Note of a meeting between members of the Academic Advisory Committee and the Central Unit for Environmental Planning of the Department for Economic Affairs', 14 November 1966.
[290] Eg. Daniel Spiech Chasse, 'Towards a global history of the Marshall Plan. European post-war reconstruction and the rise of development economic expertise', in Christian Grabas and Alexander Nutzenadel (eds.), *Industrial Policy in Europe after 1945: Wealth, Power and Economic Development in the Cold War* (Basingstoke, 2014), 187-212.

economic imbalance'.[291] Such discourse – with its appeal to objectivity and blunt positivism – demonstrates a claim to authority that arises, as Porter states, 'from the application of uniform, "objective" standards that seem independent of political pressures'.[292] Such a stance corresponded with national policy interests, and the on-going 'transformation in the disciplinary base of the academic infrastructure' in the UK in 1960s.[293] Several times in this period, the YHEPC held fast to its long-term economic planning ambit, against challenge from its own members.[294]

The Council's stance towards long-term economic planning was consistent with the major intellectual ideas regarding regional growth during this period. Most notable amongst these was *pole de croissance,* or growth point/pole theory, synonymous with Francois Perroux and developed by other European economists.[295] The concept was originally employed by Perroux in the mid-1950s to describe a sector of economic growth that exerted 'propulsive' effects on other sectors; and expanded to refer in spatial terms to urban agglomeration.[296] Although Perroux's work was subject to significant critique,[297] growth pole theory gained significant traction in academic and policy circles in Britain, particularly in relation to regional planning and economics. The focus on using expertise towards identifying growth points is clear in examining work and pronouncements of the Council. When establishing the academic advisory committee in 1965, *The Guardian* reported that Stevens 'said one of the development group's main tasks would be to

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[291] TNA EW7/238 'Notice of Press Conference', 8 June 1966.
[292] Theodore M. Porter, 'Statistics and the Career of Public Reason: Engagement and Detachment in a Quantified World', in Crook and O'Hara (eds.), *Statistics and Public Sphere*, 45-46.
[293] Savage, *Identities and social Change,* 133.
[294] See, for example, the proceedings in TNA EW7/238 'YHEPC(66) – 15th meeting minutes', 27 October 1966.
[295] McCrone, *Regional Policy in Britain,* 71-72.
[296] John B. Parr, 'Spatial structure as a factor in Economic Adjustment and Regional Policy', in Maclennan and Parr (eds.), *Regional Policy,* 198-199, 208.
[297] O'Hara, *Dreams to Disillusionment,* 104-105.

examine the region's growth points'.[298] Though largely absent from *A Review of Yorkshire and Humberside,* vague allusion was made to growth points in the overall summary:

> In short, some parts of the region, in particular the Coalfield and Humberside, offer scope for the attraction of additional new industries to achieve a better balance in employment opportunities. Other areas have advantages for natural industrial growth; South Humberside obviously so; also the Doncaster / Pontefract / Knottingley area at the centre of good road and rail communications.[299]

The YHEPC agreed on four selected 'growth zones' in the region that it believed should become the 'focal points' for additional jobs and investment: the 'Five towns' (comprising Normanton, Featherstone, Knottingley, Castleford and Pontefract); 'Greater Barnsley'; 'Greater Doncaster'; and 'Greater Hull' (i.e. North Humberside).[300] The first three of these areas were staunchly defended as representative of dispassionate selection on economic grounds when their inclusion in evidence to the Hunt Committee was challenged on the grounds of focusing on depressed areas rather than 'centres of growth'. Both Stevens and another member of the Council argued:

> [Sir Roger Stevens]:- Why should any location along the M.1., for example, in the centre of the United Kingdom within very easy access, or it will be very easy access to both Liverpool and Humberside be regarded as uneconomic?
>
> [Mr Sara]: We have set our hearts against putting down, as Mr. Sales has said, little factories in little villages. We have been ruthless about saying we do not believe the Pennine Valleys should be developed with industry, but we do think that in this area there are places where industries can flourish on a viable economic basis in comparison internationally and nationally...[301]

The YHEPC also sought to express an industrial strategy that was intended to provide a long-term basis for an industrial region that would be both modern and efficient. Not only

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[298] 'Clearing house for research', *The Guardian,* 29 October 1965.
[299] YHEPC, *Review of Yorkshire and Humberside,* 74.
[300] HCC TCRD/8 'YHEPC: Summary of the Council's work: October 1968 to November 1969', 17 November 1969.
[301] TNA EW7/876 'Hunt Committee on the Problems of the Grey Areas, note of meeting with YHEPC representatives', 16 February 1968.

was there need for 'faster application of technological advances in industry and fuller use of modern plant and equipment and up-to-date production methods';[302] but also a need to prioritise research for the 'selective encouragement of science-based and other industries in particular parts of the region'.[303] YHEPC agreed that academic professionals should remain central to these studies deemed essential to regional planning:[304] it was deemed essential that the Council's Academic Advisory Committee be retained.[305]

The commitment to further empirical and other research was likely the reason for the rather preliminary tentative tone of *Review.* It was clear in the preface that this was not intended to be seen as a comprehensive regional plan in any sense.[306] However, it presented a much more thorough and statistically driven picture of the region that was given by either the Northern Economic Planning Council or the North West Economic Planning Council in their work. Alongside the main report, consisting twelve main chapters (five of which dealt with issues related to industry and employment), there were some fifty pages of statistical and other appendices,[307] as well a dozen additional tables in the text and almost thirty illustrations.[308]

The stronger and more immediate tone of *North West of the 1970s* was similar to *Changing North.* Both strongly put forward a series of specific policy recommendations

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[302] YHEPC, *Review of Yorkshire and Humberside,* 46.

[303] TNA EW7/238 'YHEPC(66)99 - Follow up of the Regional Review – work proposed or in progress', 9 December 1966. Almost thirty follow up studies were proposed.

[304] TNA EW7/238 'YHEPC(66) 16th meeting minutes', 24 November 1966.

[305] TNA EW7/238 'YHEPC(66) 15th meeting minutes', 27 October 1966.

[306] YHEPC, *Review of Yorkshire and Humberside,* viii.

[307] Ibid., 79-129: these were primarily demographic statistics drawn from the census, and industry and employment statistics drawn from Ministry of Labour samples. Other sources, such as Department of Education and Science figures from the *Registrar General's Annual Review* were also included with their limitations stressed, 81-83.

[308] In contrast, *Challenge of a Changing North* had barely half the number of statistical tables either in its main document or appendices.

for action in their immediate summaries.[309] In contrast to these rather active stances, *Review* presented its general findings in a much more suggestive way. The summary was placed in the final chapter of the main report, under the rather vague title of 'Signposts to Action'.[310] Though some points were 'urged' – such as attention to the region's roads (see below) – and some generally speculative targets were given, such an estimated 730,000 new houses in the region by 1981 to meet rather alarmist population projections,[311] *Review*'s general conclusions positioned it as a means to provide a 'useful basis' for further consultation.[312]

The rather non-committal recommendations of the YHEPC hinted at some of the tensions and debates around the interpretation of data for the region's geographical size and economic diversity. For example, a survey of almost 800 firms conducted on behalf of the Council's Industry group by the CBI found that almost two-thirds expected to employ more workers. These findings – along with others – sparked considerable debate among two of the group's industrialists about the implication that industry in the region was depending on a considerable increase in manpower supplies.[313] Stevens himself noted to the Hunt Committee that, though there was 'very little statistical evidence to support' his view, he saw pressing structural problems in the wool textile industry of 'a good deal of under-employment'; over-reliance of firms on a small number of large buyers; and

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[309] Northern Economic Planning Council, *Challenge of the Changing North – A Preliminary Study* (HMSO, 1966), 1-4; North West Economic Planning Council, *Strategy II: The North West of the 1970s* (HMSO, 1968)*,* 2-3.
[310] YHEPC, *Review of Yorkshire and Humberside,* 72-77.
[311] Ibid., 59.
[312] Ibid., 77.
[313] TNA EW7/388 'YHEPC Industry Group – 6th meeting minutes', 12 May 1966. It should be noted that the firms approach excluded the coal, steel and textile sectors. This survey was not published or referred to in the review, but its findings were endorsed through reference to the estimates for manpower requirements produced in the National Plan: YHEPC, *Review of Yorkshire and Humberside,* 31-33, Appendix E.

issues of profitability.[314] Such issues, and other complaints on lack of statistical evidence, demonstrated the inherent tensions on attempting regional economic planning through such rationalist data and expert-modernism. Region-wide statistics were still in their infancy, and though the *Abstract of Regional Statistics* had first been published in 1965, it still lacked figures on indicators such as productivity, output, overall investment and labour use which represented facts 'absolutely vital to resolving some of the inherent dilemmas of regional planning'.[315] In some senses O'Hara assertion that it represented 'an immature research programme' was correct.[316]

Regardless of this vagueness, the enthusiasm for regional planning was not sectional, at least at the point of the publication of the first review in 1966. There is some evidence of broad popular engagement: 30,000 to 40,000 copies of the broadsheet were estimated to have been sold by the YHEPC upon its release, and it was claimed that 5,000 or so copies of the actual report had been purchased. This was in line with times; as Tomlinson has noted, 'the 1960s saw a scale of official economic propaganda unparalleled since the 1940s', with the importance of data stressed as 'not just about designing [The National Plan] and judging its success, but about educating the population about the possibilities of prosperity that planning brought with it'.[317]

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[314] TNA EW7/876 'Hunt Committee on the Problems of the Grey Areas, note of meeting with YHEPC representatives', 16 February 1968.
[315] O'Hara, *Dreams to Disillusionment,* 107.
[316] Ibid., 107.
[317] Jim Tomlinson, 'Managing the economy, managing the people: Britain c.1931-70', *Economic History Review,* 58:3 (2005), 570.

III

In general, Yorkshire and Humberside had exhibited a degree of enthusiasm for the form of rational, modernist and objective regional economic planning that was at the heart of the national policy in the mid-1960s, and at the time the YHEPC fulfilled the archetype. But by the late 1960s, increasing dissatisfaction with the Planning Council would lead instead to calls for a different form of professional expertise to articulate a regional economic identity, and of economic regionalism.

Changing national economic fortunes and their particularly acute consequences for the region were a key factor in this increasing dissatisfaction. *The National Plan* and the various instruments for indicative planning towards economic growth objectives were 'effectively jettisoned' in the deflationary 'July measures' of 1966; a situation confirmed by the failure to maintain an effective voluntary incomes policy, and by the continued Sterling crises that would lead to devaluation in November 1967.[318] Harold Wilson's government left office with Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth at 1.8 per cent, after inheriting growth of GDP of 5.4 per cent in 1964, and promising annual growth of 4 per cent by 1970.[319] The unemployment rate began to steadily rise from the late 1960s onwards.

Economic slowdown and the acceleration of deindustrialization had a series of interrelated effects across the Yorkshire and Humberside region. The planned run-down of mining on the Yorkshire coalfield, as production was moved further east towards Selby with as many as 20,000 jobs shed, generated significant and lasting unemployment

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[318] Hugh Pemberton, 'Relative decline and British Economic Policy', *The Historical Journal,* 47:4 (2004), 997; O'Hara, *Governing Post-War Britain*, 75-83.
[319] Dominic Sandbrook, *State of Emergency – The Way We Were: Britain, 1970-1974* (London, 2011), 59; Cmnd.2764. *The National Plan* (1964), 2-3.

amongst these communities.[320] Despite the designation in November 1967 of Special Development Area status which offered significant grant incentives and other inducements to industry to these small coal-mining districts, chronic unemployment rates in places such as Mexborough and Hemsworth were already quoted as upwards of 10 per cent by the early 1970s.[321] Rationalisation in the wool textile industry was a long running process, with 42 per cent of mills closing in Yorkshire between 1925 and 1967.[322] However, this only had a significant impact on employment in the West Yorkshire 'textile zone' during the 1960s, as employees in this sector contracted from 153,000 to 94,000 across the decade.[323] Of increasing concern from late 1967 onwards was the situation in North Humberside, particularly around Hull. Modernisation of the dock facilities to handle containerised cargo – a process that cut port employment in half – was largely completed by 1968.[324] Cancellation of Royal Navy orders also saw the labour force cut at the Hawker Siddeley factory in Brough,[325] and competition from other Development Areas caused major issues for shipbuilding and repairing firms on the Humber. These sudden shocks to the local economy led to numbers of registered unemployed that, according to the Corporation, were greater than any time since the interwar years.[326]

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[320] Kenneth Warren, 'Yorkshire and Humberside', in Gerald Manners, David Keeble, Brian Rodgers and Kenneth Warren (eds.), *Regional Development in Britain* (Chichester, 1980), 315.

[321] J.D. McCallum, 'The Development of British Regional Policy', in Duncan Maclennan and John B. Parr (eds.), *Regional Policy: Past Experiences and New Directions* (Oxford, 1979); Glen O'Hara, 'A Journey Without Maps: The Regional Policies of the 1964-70 British Labour Government', *Regional Studies,* 39:9 (2005), 1185; As stated by Roy Mason MP during debate on 'Yorkshire and Humberside Region': *House of Commons Debates,* 19 June 1972, vol. 839, col. 55.

[322] Laura Price, 'Immigrants and Apprentices: Solutions to the Post-War labour Shortage in the West Yorkshire Wool Textile Industry, 1945-1980', *Textile History,* 45:1 (2014), 34.

[323] Warren, 'Yorkshire and Humberside', 313; by 1972 wool textile employees numbered only 80,059, Price, 'Immigrants and apprentices', 43.

[324] Lewis and Jones, *Humberside Region*, 58.

[325] HCC UDMC/116 Stonehouse to Pursey, 9 January 1968.

[326] HCC UDPU/1031 Holmes to Pursey, 22 January 1968.

The issues faced by industry and the local authorities in Yorkshire and Humberside saw increasing calls from the YHEPC to push not only the region's long-term case, but also for immediate measures to be taken for certain localities. Frustration grew, then, when the Council refused to assist the local authorities and MPs in North Humberside in seeking government assistance. Roger Stevens defended this position in *The Financial Times* by noting though 'at the moment, for instance, there is more unemployment in Hull than in Huddersfield', the future transport infrastructure and development proposals for the Humber make this region more 'dynamic' in the long-term:

> For the moment, therefore, we think that more thought and money must be devoted (selectively and with discrimination)... [to the] old industrial areas where people do and will live than to the wide open spaces of the Humber estuary where the great and glossy New Towns of the future may later be conjured into existence.[327]

Though the Council would repeatedly make the claim, with some justification, of its influential role in the establishing of the Hunt Committee on the 'intermediate' or 'grey areas' – that would eventually lead to Intermediate status for the Yorkshire Coalfield and North Humberside in 1969 – in the face of these immediate issues the YHEPC was increasingly forced on the defensive. In a press conference in November 1969, Stevens acknowledged that

> for years the Council has been widely criticised for being only an advisory body, incapable of actually doing anything. In answer to such criticisms it has previously been explained that while the Council is not an action body, this didn't mean it could not command considerable influence in getting other people who could do things to do them; and to do them in the directions in which the Council was advocating.[328]

Listing several examples of when such influence had been brought to bear, Stevens concluded:

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[327] 'An economy in need of diversification', *the Financial Times,* 30 October 1968.
[328] HCC TCRD/8 'YHEPC: Press Notice', 17 November 1969.

> I offer these examples not in any sense for self-glorification or as evidence of self satisfaction or complacency. But it would be a great pity if, in spite of what has been achieved the hard work that has been done by the Economic Planning Board and council between them over the last four years continue to be regarded as academic or backroom stuff of little practical significance. It isn't. The Council does its job by giving sound and well argued advice which as recent experience confirms, gets acted upon...[329]

The statement demonstrated how the Council was confronted with an increasingly changed attitude to the economic regionalism of the area. The emphasis on 'doing' and practical action highlighted a greater premium placed on immediate decisions, rather than indicative planning. The reference to 'academic' or 'backroom stuff' also noted the erosion of popular endorsement of this form of expertise in decision-making. That trust and enthusiasm for the work of the YHEPC had dissipated, particularly amongst the local authorities and industrialists of the region, was displayed in the reception of the eventual publication of the Regional Strategy in 1970, again given an enlivening title: *Yorkshire and Humberside: Regional Strategy.* The broad strategy predicted no fundamental shift in the urban pattern or industrial structure of the region; it reiterated the concentration of growth on the 'focal points' of the Five Towns, Doncaster and Barnsley; and stressed efforts should be concentrated on the need to attract both 'science-based' and service industries.[330] Though the strategy gained broad endorsement from the government, the local response from key regional actors was less kind. Local authorities and other bodies demonstrated general dismay at lack of any new insight, and its 'weak generality'.[331] *The*

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[329] Ibid.

[330] Yorkshire and Humberside Economic Planning Council, *Yorkshire and Humberside: Regional Strategy* (HMSO, 1970), 30-46.

[331] HCC TCRD/8 H.F. Alston, 'Yorkshire & Humberside Regional Strategy', 9 November; Doncaster and District Development Council, *Development Digest for Yorkshire and Humberside,* November 1970.

Times reported in January 1971 that the document had drawn 'a great deal of criticism', citing in particular the CBI and Yorkshire group of Labour MPs.[332]

How then did such a rapid shift against state-led planning expertise arise so quickly? The recent historiography of British cultural history is instructive here. Historians including Lawrence Black and Matthew Hilton have argued against the general characterisation of this period as representing a broad Keynesian corporatist collective consensus; instead, they highlight the growing consumerist movement that manifested itself through an expanding sphere of pressure groups and private actors. Ortolano and others have pointed to the more individualist critiques of British culture, such as the 'radical liberalism' of F.R. Leavis, that were encompassed by the 'declinist' literature of the period.[333] And in party politics, Black and Green have noted the on-going debates in the Conservative Party between free market liberals and Butler-style paternalists – played out in institutions such as Swinton College in North Yorkshire. Similarly, Labour Party revisionists such as Michael Young pushed for greater appreciation for consumer matters and of consumer culture.[334] Even before the 1970s, such pressures had brought about greater citizen protection and involvement in planning, through such means as the the creation of the Parliamentary Ombudsman, the Town and Country Planning Act 1968, and later the Skeffington Report.[335]

In this on-going discourse on greater market freedom and the role of the state, the advertising and marketing executive emerged as the alternative model of professionalism and expertise through which economic growth could be fostered. Sean Nixon and others have discussed how the advertising industry had emerged as a

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[332] 'Reassessing the grand strategy', *The Times,* 18 January 1971.
[333] Ortolano, *The Two Cultures Controversy*, 66-89.
[334] Black, *Redefining British Politics,* 33-45.
[335] O'Hara, *Governing Post-war Britain,*102-111; Steven Fielding, *The Labour Governments 1964-1970, Volume I: Labour and Cultural Change* (Manchester, 2003), 192, 199-200.

commercial authority that rivalled established forms of social power and recognition, having successfully countered the moral and ideological concerns of both the left and the right surrounding its methods and techniques that had been debated since the early 1950s.[336] This was undoubtedly linked to this burgeoning consumer culture in the 1960s, which also informed the 'institutionalisation of a modern, organised consumerism' that manifested in the many non-governmental organisations (NGOs) seeking to exert socio-political influence from this period onwards.[337] As Nixon argues, advertising men became emblematic of the particular affluence of London in these years, and their agencies were emblematic of the increasingly global nature of trade in the post-war period.[338] In contrast to the disinterested, objective approach claimed by planning, public relations, marketing and advertising were imbued by their proponents with dynamism, engagement, and assertiveness.

That the authorities in Yorkshire and Humberside would look more towards these alternative forms of expertise lay in the lack of tangible results regional planning had wrought. Crucially, however, the perceived failings of planning neither led to the abandonment of a desire for region-wide economic cooperation, nor an abandonment of the need for professional expertise to coordinate such action. It instead heralded increasing desire for the Yorkshire and Humberside to be actively promoted, rather than taking the YHEPC's presentation of its more passive role within a broader national framework. Such a point was illustrated in May 1971 in a *Yorkshire Post* article by John

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[336] Sean Nixon, ''Salesmen of the Will to Want': Advertising and its Critics in Britain 1951-1967', *Contemporary British History,* 24:2 (2010), 227; Matthew Hilton, *Consumerism in Twentieth-Century Britain: The Search for a Historical Movement* (Cambridge, 2003), 221-241; Stefan Schwarzkopf, 'They do it with Mirrors: Advertising and British Cold War Consumer Politics', *Contemporary British History,* 19:2 (2005), 143.

[337] Schwarzkopf, 'They do it with mirrors', 134; James McKay and Matthew Hilton, 'Introduction', in Nick Crowson, Matthew Hilton and James McKay (eds.), *NGOs in Contemporary Britain: Non-state Actors in Society and Politics Since 1945* (Basingstoke, 2009), 14-15.

[338] Sean Nixon, *Hard Sell: Advertising, affluence and transatlantic relations, c. 1951-69* (Manchester, 2013), 16-18.

Spence, Conservative MP for Sheffield Heeley. Titled 'Why the regions need to call in the experts', Spence criticised the lack of dynamism in planning that had seen economic potential in the region wasted:

> For years we have had regional economic plan on top of plan. Each for a time has held some attraction. Largely each succeeding plan has been a re-hash of some earlier plan – updated of course – but essentially the same as what went before. And just as earlier plans and advice had not solved the problem, so later ones did not do so either… Why have we been so long on policy – long on plans and advice, but so short on performance?[339]

In Spence's opinion, both national and local government served as 'protective agencies' – 'they are not initiators – they are not "doers"'. What was needed for economic development was 'attracting scarce money and economic resources – this will not be done by the public relations officer, but only by an effective "go-getter" organisation going all out for results'.[340]

The appointment of Bernard Cotton to the Chair of the YHEPC in October 1970 (a role he would hold until its abolition in 1979) was perhaps the most crucial aspect of enshrining this change in attitude. Sheffield-born, and the chief executive of the Osborn steel group, his appointment was described as 'a surprise for many who expected a name from the circuit of public affairs participators'.[341] Grammar-school educated, and having starting his career – rather crucially – as a salesman after wartime service, he made much of credentials as a 'self-made' man.[342] Cotton's continued refrain was for the local authorities and sub-regional institutions to exercise greater 'self-help' to alleviate the gloomy economic outlook.[343] It was a position he made clear almost immediately upon

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[339] 'Why the regions need to call in the experts', *Yorkshire Post,* 5 May 1971.
[340] Ibid.
[341] 'Self-help aim for planning chairman', *The Times,* 1 April 1974.
[342] Ibid.
[343] Ibid. As reported by the chairman of the Steering Committee for the proposed North Humberside Development Association (as discussed below), Cotton used his opportunity to

taking charge of the YHEPC; the *Hull Daily Mail* reporting his statement that 'self help, and not just Government cash hand-outs, is the answer to the problems of Yorkshire and Humberside'.[344]

That Cotton was appointed by the incumbent Conservative government of Ted Heath makes it easy to identify the more market liberal approach represented by the election manifesto and the Selsdon Park conference of early 1970. Though, as Green has argued, the policy approach adopted not as laissez-faire as suggested, its attitude towards regional policy placed much greater emphasis on competitive self sufficiency and individual decision-making.[345] This matched official and semi-official moves across the region in various local and urban centres. Several area development associations, formed from partnerships between 'professionals and businessmen',[346] local authorities and trade unions, had been established by the early 1970s including in Labour-controlled areas such as Rotherham and Doncaster. Such associations had taken on the role of more actively promoting their local areas to industries, several taking advantage of the opportunities provided by their Intermediate and Special Development Area Status.

The steps taken in North Humberside, and in particular Hull, are particularly illustrative. In mid-1970, the Hull Junior Chamber of Commerce and Shipping formed a steering committee from various interests on the North Bank,[347] and several companies (in manufacturing, service and retail trades) in the Hull and East Riding area were

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'introduce him to the area' to speak 'for fifteen minutes on the theme of self help': HHC UDPW3/246 Curtis to Wall, 10 November 1970.

[344] 'Self help the answer to our problems', *Hull Daily Mail,* 1 October 1970.

[345] E.H.H. Green, *Ideologies of Conservatism: Conservative Political Ideas in the Twentieth Century* (Oxford, 2002),229-233. Indeed, in the Heath Government's first year in office it would move to enact some of these claimed through such measures as the scrapping of regional 'Little Neddies', 233.

[346] As described in a report on the Bradford Area Development Association: 'Changes must come slowly', *The Times,* 19 November 1969.

[347] HCC UDPW3/245 Curtis to Wall, 22 June 1970.

canvassed to discover what these firms saw as limitations to growth, and what a development association could do about these. As the summary of the findings reported:

> The majority of the companies want, and are prepared to back financially a professionally-run P.R. Campaign to improve the image (and their recruiting prospects) of the City. One specifically refers to the need for a professional Director "with missionary zeal".[348]

Intense interest in this issue was evident around the city of Hull at this time, as was the need to commit resources to active promotion, not just the creation of the conditions for industrial development. Advertising's potential power in this endeavour was put forward for instance in a report in the *Hull Daily Mail*:

> We should be prepared to spend more on publicity. When one remembers that it cost £500,000 to inflict a new motor car on us, pittance is too polite a word to describe the £10,000 given to our Development Committee to publicise Britain's Third Port.[349]

When the Chamber's steering committee report was published in November 1970, it acknowledged that the economic problems of the area were pressing, but action needed to be taken:

> Whatever the future may bring, it is clear that North Humberside's major problem is the short-term. Experience elsewhere has shown over three decades how difficult it is to reverse a well established decline, so that events of the next five years will be crucial... "Self-help" may very well be tried and eventually found wanting; but this is no justification for finding it difficult and leaving it untried.[350]

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[348] HCC UDPW3/245 'Problems experienced by some Hull and East Riding Companies in being located on North Humberside', 21 August 1970.
[349] 'Hull to blame for 'rundown image'', *Hull Daily Mail,* 9 July 1970.
[350] *Report of the Steering Committee for The North Humberside Development Association,* November 1970, 16.

An appendix to the report envisaged an advertising strategy that would be 'a slower build project than simply one strong burst of publicity', and for this purpose needed the appointment of 'a London based Independent Public Relations Consultancy'.[351]

As it was, Hull's Corporation had at the same time employed McKinsey as consultants to assess the council's capacity to stimulate economic development. Their report reached similar findings in relation to the city, pronouncing the main deficiencies lay in the lack of 'a positive and dynamic approach... towards commerce and industry'. In order to overcome this it was declared that 'the Corporation needs a positive, outward-looking "management style": a marketing orientation towards commerce and industry, and more efficient property management'.[352] Rather that work through a proposed development agency, the Corporation looked to appoint 'a man to develop a city', who required 'an analytical mind and the tenacity and ability to make decisions'.[353] Ian Holden, the man appointed in April 1971 to the role of Director of Industrial Development, pronounced in the local press that he planned '...to get Hull more widely known using public relations and other marketing techniques, and hopes to get investment in Hull from outside companies'.[354]

IV

Despite these initiatives, the continued worsening economic conditions in the winter of 1971-72 would lead to the government's reversal of the decision to move from capital grants to tax allowances in the development areas, which had a particularly alarming

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[351] Ibid., 39-40.
[352] East Riding of Yorkshire Archives (ERA) DDX1184/2/8 McKinsey & Co., 'Stimulating Economic Development: City and County of Kingston Upon Hull', January 1971.
[353] Advertisement - 'Wanted: A man to develop a city', *Sunday Times,* 28 February 1971.
[354] 'Hull should see results by year end - New director', *Hull Daily Mail,* 16 April 1971.

effect in the Yorkshire and Humberside region.[355] This led not only to the 1972 Industry Act that would extend Intermediate status to the whole region, but also to an Opposition motion tabled by Roy Mason – former President of the Board of Trade – and Sheffield Attercliffe MP Patrick Duffy. The motion, highlighting 'increased unemployment and loss of job prospects in the last two years' and calling for 'an urgent reappraisal of its measures to give its people faith in a more prosperous future', led to a debate lasting more than five and a half hours. Though Conservative MP for Bradford West John Wilkinson contended that 'there [was] very little in common between the West Riding textile district and the South Yorkshire coalfield, between Huddersfield and the deep south around Sheffield',[356] an area of broad commonality between both Labour and Conservative MPs was that self-reliance rather than greater central financial subsidy was the preferred strategy for economic development. That this should be channelled through a region-wide development association – using marketing expertise now increasingly favoured – was again advanced by Spence who put forward that '…a vigorously led local campaign with the object of selling the area, the town, the city, the region is probably the most constructive form of self-help that we can do for ourselves in the regions'.[357]

By September, the YHEPC through Cotton had pressed forward with such proposals. A region-wide industrial development association 'strongly recommended' to promote all that the region had to offer to industrialists. Envisaged as 'a small number of of high calibre specialist staff', the main roles of a regional body included promotion (through 'more effective and widespread advertising and general publicity'); and co-ordination (acting as 'a clearing house of information' for available industrial sites etc. throughout

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[355] McCallum, 'Development of British Regional Policy', pp. 21-22.
[356] 'Yorkshire and Humberside Region', *House of Commons Debates,* 19 June 1972, vol. 839, col. 137.
[357] Ibid.

the region').[358] By the end of January 1973 the constitution of the Yorkshire and Humberside Development Association (YHDA) had been approved and adopted.[359] The new YHDA was able to secure membership from all the new local authorities within the region, who would also provide financial support – a position that it would retain through both the 1970s and 1980s.[360]

The man hired to be YHDA's first Director came directly from industrial development and promotion work. Dr. Iain Skewis had been responsible for industrial development and marketing for the Highlands and Islands Development Board. The Association's second director in 1977, Peter Watson, came from 'a marketing career previously' and declared himself as 'a relative newcomer to industrial development'.[361] Though the YHEPC continued to operate under Cotton until 1979, the chairman saw its most notable and vigorous achievement to be the Association's creation.[362] The action taken by the YHDA almost immediately sought to emphasise its assertiveness and dynamism: initial policy objectives for the 'small professional team' included 'to establish the YHDA in the eyes of the Government and regional local authorities, industrialists and commentators as a professional, imaginative, and above all a 'doing' body'.[363] This mantra of being a 'doing body' cut across all of the Association's early communications. Promotion was seen as central to such efforts:

[358] HCC UDPW3/247 'A regional industrial development association - a paper for discussion', u.d. (1972).
[359] HCC UDPW3/247 'Meeting note - Proposed regional industrial development association, conference with local authorities and others', 26 September 1972; 'Meeting note - Yorkshire and Humberside Development Association, conference with local authority representatives and others', 25 January 1973.
[360] ERA LS7300/1/Y388 'Yorkshire and Humberside Development Association: 3-year strategy and programme', 14 December 1990: all local authorities were quoted as being members as of the end of 1990.
[361] HCC UDPW3/248 Watson to Wall, 28 June 1977; The appointment of YHDA's third director in 1981 would follow a similar line to the first, having several years experience heading the Strathclyde Industrial Development Department.
[362] Pearce, 'The Yorkshire and Humberside Economic Planning Council', p. 138.
[363] HCC UDPW3/247 'Yorkshire and Humberside Development Association - some notes', 14 November 1973.

It is in the promotional field that the Yorkshire and Humberside Development Association will be most in the public eye. It is planned that the effort will be "regional" in character and it is expected that the response will arise from the whole development spectrum of manufacturing and service industry (including office activities and distributive centres).

In every case the technique will be to secure the developer's interest, analyse his needs, review the possibilities of the region with him (normally by a visit to the Association's Central Planning Centre), and then arrange for him to meet the appropriate people who can take his interest further 'on the ground' in the parts of the region he wishes to consider.[364]

Rather than use expertise as a means to provide factually-grounded advice, the YHDA was intended to position the Yorkshire and Humberside region aggressively and competitively, as an *Financial Times* editorial on the region in March 1974 remarked: 'Its avowed intention during the next year is to use hard-nosed publicity techniques to put the region more noticeably on the map'.[365] This strategy developed over the mid-1970s and into the 1980s. Articles highlighting industrial development, or the advantages of the region to commercial and industrial interests, continued to appear in the national press. In 1978, the YHDA began to publish its own almost-monthly newsletter/trade magazine titled *Development Digest,* which by the early 1980s had a circulation of over 6,000, many of which went to overseas industrialists, embassies and chambers of commerce. The YHDA also organised trade visits with Northern Europe and Scandinavia, the United States, and – by the mid-1980s – South East Asia (particularly Hong Kong, South Korea and Japan) all being targeted as areas of particular focus.[366] From 1981 onwards, YHDA would also establish their own presence in the US by hiring agents. A directory of companies and various brochures were also produced.

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[364] Ibid.

[365] 'The ability to prosper', *The Financial Times,* 14 March 1974.

[366] 'Scandinavia Drive in Yorkshire', *The Financial Times,* 17 October 1979; 'Why Norwegian companies come to Yorkshire and Humberside', *Development Digest,* March 1983; ERA LS7300/1/Y388 'Yorkshire and Humberside Development Association: 3-year strategy and programme', 14 December 1990: The strategy documents a focus on securing inward investment from each of these parts of the world was intended to continue into the 1990s.

The focus on marketing also indicated a shift in both the scale and timeframe of prospective regional economic development. Industrial policy as pursued to the 1960s had favoured macroeconomic economic measures as a way of increasing productivity, particularly via growth in export-based manufacturing industries. Nicholas Kaldor and Thomas Balogh, two of the foremost economic advisors to Harold Wilson, argued that this needed to be done through larger units and a process of 'orderly rationalisation'.[367] Rapid deindustrialization and increasing unemployment eroded the logic of such assumptions, and by the early 1970s these assumptions of more large-scale and long-term 'prestige' projects were being increasingly questioned. This was in part embodied in 1973 by E.F. Schumacher's book *Small is Beautiful.*[368] Such sentiments were evident in Yorkshire and Humberside in the 1970s. Spence opined that '…it is better to have a cosmetics factory and employ people, even though it might not be as dramatic or have the same prestige as an aluminium smelter plant or oil refinery…'.[369]

Despite the change towards a more competitive, private and entrepreneurial form of expertise, there still remained a number of continuities to the approach that had been adopted in the 1960s. YHDA, in the 1970s at least, maintained an acute awareness of the local and sub-regional diversity of the region. This was in part a result of the YHDA's origins in local development association initiatives. Though facilitating commercial and industrial promotion through use of marketing expertise, the role of the Association was then to 'pass on' interested parties to the Development officers of the new local authorities. Similarly, the importance of data and new technologies as a means of facilitating efficient decision-making remained an initially much-vaunted part of YHDA's

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[367] Martin Chick, 'The state and industrial policy in Britain, 1950-1974', in Christian Grabas and Alexander Nutzenadel (eds.), *Industrial Policy in Europe after 1945: Wealth, Power and Economic Development in the Cold War* (Basingstoke, 2014).
[368] David Edgerton, *The Shock of the Old: Technology and global history since 1900* (London, 2006), 191; Sandbrook, *State of Emergency*, 183-184; Harold Perkin, *The Rise of Professional Society: England since 1880* (London, 2002), 481; O'Hara, *Dreams to Disillusionment*, 211-212.
[369] 'Why the regions need to call in the experts', *Yorkshire Post,* 5 May 1971.

work. YHDA's focal point on launch in 1974 was its 'regional planning centre', intended to give 'a complete picture of the region' both visually (through maps) and statistically (through its 'computerised data bank' and reference library).[370] Though this planning centre fitted the more consumerist context – its purpose being '..to offer "customers" an impressive and efficient service' – YHDA continued to place emphasis on its being a 'clearing house of information'. Though policy relied less on the influence of academics or on fundamental restructuring of the economy, and more on incremental commercial and industrial developments, this did not mean an entire rejection of their role and importance to development. However, as Cotton told a conference at Hull University, 'the universities could provide research, new thinking, and innovation that could result in new products, new employment and new wealth for the community'.[371] A YHDA promotional piece in the *Financial Times* in 1987 emphasised the credentials of the then director Dr John Bridge and his '"targeted marketing" approach' by clarifying that 'the PhD is in economics'.[372] In the 1970s and 1980s, expertise was more singularly refocused onto market-driven, wealth-generating forms.

2.4 Environment and Image

I

The YHEPC and YHDA both asserted the central importance of employing expertise in regional economic problems. They were representative of the changing attitude towards how and what professional expertise were necessary to secure regional economic growth. A crucial part of how this expertise was constructed centred on the physical

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[370] HCC U DPW3/247 'Yorkshire and Humberside Development Association - some notes', 14 November 1973.
[371] 'Universities 'have role in the economy'', *The Times,* 6 November 1976.
[372] 'Netting the Right Targets', *The Financial Times,* 29 July 1987.

'environment' of the region. This focus showed similar development over this period: from a reliance on high-modernist representations of the 1950s and 1960s, to the increasing commodification of Yorkshire and Humberside's natural and more 'postmaterialist' assets in the 1970s and 1980s. This section highlights the relationship between the physical environment of Yorkshire and how the region's 'image' was perceived, emphasising how this interacted in the work and actions of the major regional economic institutions. This examination highlights how material and imagined geographies of regional differences are interwoven in – rather than separate dimensions of – English regionalism and regional identity.[373] However, it also highlights the extent to which diverse material and economic geographies, and occasionally contradictory regional imaginations, can be employed simultaneously.

II

In the few instances where the EPCs have been historicised, most attention has focused on their direct role within economic development, and their apparent lack of both influence and success in this regard.[374] This primary concern is understandable and valid, but it has also meant that less attention has been given to the EPCs' more indirect influence on issues around physical planning. In Yorkshire and Humberside, the EPC's attempts to exert direct and indirect influence were most apparent in relation to the environment. This concern was not just the preserve of public sector officials acting in

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[373] As is indicated by Baker and Billinge in their discussions of an English North-South divide: Baker and Billinge, 'Cultural constructions',180-181.

[374] Janet Mather, 'English regional policy', in Peter Dorey (ed.), *The Labour Governments 1964-1970* (Oxford, 2006), 238-243; O'Hara, *Dreams to Disillusionment*, 107-112; P.D. Lindley, 'The framework of regional planning 1964-1980', in Hogwood and Keating (eds.), *Regional Government*, 178-184; Pearce, 'Yorkshire and Humberside Economic Planning Council', 138-140.

accordance with public health, amenities and transport, but was also the deep concern of a variety of NGOs and voluntary initiatives.

The development of 'the politics of the environment' represented a key theme of the 1960s and 1970s. While environmental action and conservation groups in England dated back to mid-nineteenth century, modern environmentalism began emerge in earnest in the mid-1960s.[375] Hilton *et al* have argued this period also saw 'a major philosophical shift' in environmental campaigning, with ecological considerations increasingly supplanting aesthetic considerations.[376] J.R. McNeil has suggested a more interrelated development, highlighting how popular and vociferous movements had emerged by the 1970s – in part motivated by the visual nature of the damage wrought by pollution-intensive economies – represented by interlinked global and locally focused environmental groups.[377] But the literature generally agrees that increasing environmentalism was in part a product of increasing affluence across Western societies, and the move towards more values-based public politics. Such a context was keenly apparent to the actors within the YHEPC, who in their report on environmental progress in the region in 1973 noted that

> Public concern about the environment has grown enormously during the period covered by this report. The environment is nowadays an "in" word, embodied, for example, in the title of a major Government Department... Nowadays, the need to clean and renovate buildings is taken as a matter of course. When the Council started their work this was not so.[378]

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[375] Christopher Rootes, 'Environmental NGOs and the Environmental Movement in England', in Crowson, Hilton and McKay (eds.), *NGOs in Contemporary Britain*, 205-211.

[376] Matthew Hilton, James McKay, Nicholas Crowson and Jean-Francois Mouhot, *The Politics of Expertise: How NGOs Shaped Modern Britain* (Oxford, 2013), 232.

[377] J.R. McNeil, 'The Environment, Environmentalism and International Society in the long 1970s', in Niall Ferguson, Charles S. Maier, Erez Manela and Daniel J. Sargeant (eds.), *The Shock of the Global: the 1970s in Perspective* (Cambridge MA, 2010), 263-281.

[378] Yorkshire and Humberside Economic Planning Council, *Yorkshire and Humberside Environmental Progress Report, 1966-1973* (HMSO, 1973), 10.

The Council created an Environmental Group upon beginning its work in 1965. The terms of reference adopted by the Group demonstrated a primary concern for the aesthetic environment of Yorkshire and Humberside, and in particular the built environment:

> To consider in what respect environment in the Yorkshire and Humberside Region, including the appearance and physical condition of urban and rural areas, and facilities of living, for education, for health and welfare, and for recreational and cultural activities.[379]

The Group sought the involvement of the local authorities from an early stage, with Roger Stevens writing to establish the relative importance they placed on various environmental factors, what steps they had taken, and the barriers they perceived to addressing these issues.[380] The condition and appearance of various public utilities (such as car parks, public transport interchanges and council housing estates) and industrial sites were the most prominent feature of the list supplied. However, atmospheric pollution and the condition of waterways and recreational facilities (physical and cultural) were also included, demonstrating at least some sense of a more rounded environmental ambit.[381] Unlike the unanimous response received to their enquiries on planning initiatives, responses for these environmental factors were less forthcoming, with only 57 per cent of the region's 143 councils having submitted returns by March 1966.[382]

However, the replies received and subsequent actions showed both local and regional environmental concerns centred on the quality of the built environment, primarily due to the ageing and increasingly obsolescent industrial infrastructure of the region. Derelict buildings and sites were summarised as the main problem faced by local authorities but,

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[379] TNA EW7/388 Chairman to local authorities, 3 December 1965.
[380] Ibid.
[381] TNA EW7/388 YHEPC(E.G.)(66) 1 'Local Authorities Environmental Enquiry: Appendix B - Environmental Factors, 3 December 1965'.
[382] TNA EW7/388 'Summary Table of Replies', 16 March 1966.

as with other elements of economic and physical planning in Yorkshire and Humberside, there was great diversity within this. The environmental problems reported ranged from derelict pit-heads and unsightly slag-heaps of the coalfield; derelict railway stations and factories, particularly in the West Riding; and even planning restrictions in rural areas of the East Riding preventing expansion or derelict land clearance.[383] *Review of Yorkshire and Humberside,* in addition to having a chapter dedicated to the 'physical environment', included an appendix detailing the scale of dereliction across the region. In relative terms, the acreage of designated derelict land across the region was less than all but three of the planning regions across England and Wales. The YHEPC however made a point of emphasising the high concentration of this land in the industrial areas of the West Riding (see Table 1), and the high cost of treating this land for the local authorities given that the region was not eligible for government grants of 85 per cent offered to the Development Areas. In some senses this was a prescient case as, due to the continued rundown of the region's mines and other staple industrial concerns, the total acreage justifying treatment had all but doubled to 10,544 acres by 1971.[384]

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[383] TNA EW7/388 YHEPC(E.G.)(66) 1 'Local Authorities Environmental Enquiry: Appendix E - General Summary of local authorities' views on Environmental Problems in the Yorkshire/Humberside Region', u.d.
[384] YHEPC, *Environmental Progress Report, 1966-1973*, 68.

Table 1 - Derelict Land in England and Wales, 31 December 1964

Area	Total Acreage of Derelict Land	Derelict Land per 10,000 Acres of the Total Regional Acreage	Total Acreage Justifying Treatment	Percentage of Column 4 treated in 1964	Percentage of Column 4 to be trated in 1965
1	2	3	4	5	6
England and Wales	**99,091**	**27**	**59,495**	**4.38**	**6.8**
Northern	19,882	42	13,291	1.94	11.19
Yorkshire and Humberside	**9,733**	**28**	**5,660**	**2.24**	**3.9**
West Riding	**6,248**	**35**	**3,811**	**2.97**	**5.79**
East Riding	**622**	**8**	**379**	**3.69**	**Nil**
Lindsey	**2,863**	**30**	**1,470**	**Nil**	**Nil**
North West	12,784	65	9,453	4.72	5.81
Wales and Monmouthshire	14,191	28	8,304	4.88	6.1
East Midland	6,142	20	3,899	2.98	7.18
West Midland	12,290	38	10,991	7.76	5.49
East Anglia	2,970	10	1,873	2.24	4.48
South West	16,042	27	2,763	3.11	6.04
South East	5,117	8	3,261	4.54	4.47

YHEPC, A Review of Yorkshire and Humberside (HMSO, 1966), Table F1, Appendix F, 126.

The built, primarily urban environment and its renewal was a core focus of the YHEPC in its early days. Again, this was in line with the urban nature of modernist thinking, which as John Urry has summarised defines space as 'absolute, generalised and independent of context'.[385] Implicit within this was a modernist distaste for the past, noting there was a need for relief from 'the general drabness and monotony of much of the urban area of the West Riding'.[386] By 1970 there were 29 urban redevelopment plans in place across the region which in Yorkshire showed little regard for the value of the existing environment, as Simon Gunn has highlighted particularly in relation to Bradford, where

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[385] John Urry, *The Tourist Gaze, Second Edition* (London, 2001), 114.
[386] YHEPC, *Review of Yorkshire and Humberside,* 61.

the past was seen as 'the locus of environmental problems, not charming relics', and which also placed 'speedy transport links' to other urban centres as a priority.[387] Leeds similarly sought a grandiose redesign of its built environment, attempting to reshape itself as 'The Motorway City of the Seventies' through the creation of its Inner Ring Road from the mid-1960s that – though in part inspired by the Buchanan Report (1963) – saw its more conservationist sentiments 'overridden by the seemingly unrelenting imperative for road space'.[388] These development plans followed the ahistorical logic of modernism to a greater degree than some of the more infamous experiments in urban planning such as Newcastle.

In the 1966 Review, urban and regional road communications were given particularly close attention, and it was this subject that produced perhaps the most strident call to both central and government action from the YHEPC, with the statement that

> only a bold and imaginative programme of road improvements can reduce this problem to manageable size. This will take time, perhaps a long time. Meanwhile traffic will increase progressively and traffic increases will continually overtake road improvements.[389]

In contrast, the other two Northern regions displayed less concern with road transport. The circumstances in the North West were pronounced by the North West EPC (NWEPC) to be 'improving markedly', with the construction of the M6 and additional motorways in planning.[390] In the North East, the communications situation was also perceived to be less pressing, as some £125 million was programmed to the spent on improving the region's roads between 1965-70, including £50 million made available as a result of Lord Hailsham's political missions in 1963 which stressed infrastructural improvement

[387] Simon Gunn, 'The rise and fall of British Urban Modernism: Planning Bradford, circa 1945-1970', *The Journal of British Studies*, 49:4 (2010), 860-861, 855.
[388] Simon Gunn, 'The Buchanan Report, Environment and the Problem of Traffic in 1960s Britain', *Twentieth Century British History*, 22:4 (2011), 536-538.
[389] YHEPC, *Review of Yorkshire and Humberside*, 48.
[390] NWEPC. *The North West of the 1970s,* 24.

as vital to the region's economic future.[391] The YHEPC's emphasis on the importance of modernising communications, particularly for road and air travel (see chapter 4) demonstrated the emphasis placed by regional officials on modern infrastructure and urban environments designed for automotive mobility as an essential prerequisite for economic growth in the 1960s. The Council were unapologetic that '...because most people spend the greater part of their time at work or at home, improvement of the urban environment should have the highest priority'.[392] This emphasis would continue even as regional economic promotion eclipsed regional planning. The improving situation for road transport by the 1970s, with the completed extension of the M1 to Leeds, and the ongoing construction of the M62 and M18 as the major schemes in some £350 million of road investment in the region, meant that emphasis shifted elsewhere.[393] Skewis would use one of his first YHDA articles in the national press to make plain the Association's belief that transport was still 'key to regional growth' and 'substantial and imaginative investment in Yorkshire and Humberside's railways, docks, waterways and airports is what is now needed'.[394] When under fire for its lack of 'doing', the YHEPC would claim that it took the initiative in 1968 to launch a regional 'clean-up' campaign. Roger Stevens made clear that the Council saw small improvements ('painting, cleaning and tidying up') as essential means of attracting the dynamic industries the YHEPC was seeking to capture:

> This is the kind of thing the campaign is directed towards, and the council believes that in this a great deal can be done which would have the effect of making this region more attractive, above all to new science-based industry.[395]

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[391] NEPC, *Challenge of the Changing North*,31; O'Hara, *Dreams to Disillusionment*, 121.
[392] YHEPC, *Yorkshire and Humberside Regional Strategy*, 12-13.
[393] Ibid., 8-9.
[394] 'Transport Investment is the key to regional growth', *The Times*, 1 April 1974.
[395] 'Campaign for a tidier Yorkshire', *Guardian*, 3 April 1968. See also HHC CTCRD/8 'YHEPC - Summary of the Council's work - May to September 1968'.

The success of the campaign would lead to a dedicated 'Yorkshire Council for the Environment', which in 1973 the YHEPC described as 'a thriving and busy organisation'.[396] The YHEPC was not alone in launching such a 'self-help' campaign; 'Operation Springclean' was launched the following year by the NWEPC, with its slogan of "Fight grime in the North West".[397] As a 1971 special report in *The Times* on the North West noted, much still needed to be done as part of 'clearing up the mess left behind in a less enlightened age'. However, much praise was heaped on the new urban landscapes of 'sparkling new blocks of flats, new factories, smooth-moving traffic on dual carriageways and grass and trees interspersing the brick and concrete' were 'far cry from the Love on the Dole and Coronation Street images'.[398]

It was an appeal to meeting the needs of both clearing the supposed debris of the Victorian era, and an inducement to more modern infrastructure, which informed the evidence the YHEPC provided to the Hunt Committee during its work in 1967 and 1968. This reflected a general aversion of the Council towards increased financial subsidies such as the Regional Employment Premium used in the Development Areas. Central was the case for greater investment grants to be offered to new and existing industries in the 'older industrial parts of the region' to improve and modernise their premises and assets. It was deemed 'essential' that preferential grants for the derelict land clearance were needed – ideally the 85 per cent grants offered in the Development Areas – 'to clean the environment, in order to make these areas attractive to industry'. Roads were the final infrastructural necessity the YHEPC pressed for: 'in particular, the highest priority should be given to road improvements and developments which would help to encourage

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[396] YHEPC, *Environmental Progress Report 1966-1973*.
[397] NWEPC, *The North West of the 1970s*, 30.
[398] 'Industry in the North West: Still a massive task to clear up the mess left by the Victorians', *The Times*, 22 April 1971.

industry and increase the mobility of the region's manpower'.[399] In contrast, the NWEPC was less bashful about appealing for fiscal assistance, as their Hunt evidence called for the 'Pennines Zone', ostensibly centred around Burnley and Blackburn, to receive financial assistance commensurate with the Development Areas.[400] But the YHEPC would remain consistent in their basic focus that infrastructural and environmental improvement was a means for economic growth. This motivated the Council to produce perhaps its most provocative call to action for local and national government under the Chairmanship of Roger Stevens. As part of the 1970 Strategy Review, the Environmental Group created a map of 'Environmental Conditions' by local authorities. In doing so, the Council was clear that had '…not shirked from setting out frankly the worst aspects of the region's environment'. Eleven factors – including provision of basic amenities and rateable values, dereliction, pollution, and access to the countryside – were condensed into 'a single index of environmental deficiency', with the greatest weight placed on housing quality.[401] The coloured map of the region (Figure 2.2), whilst attempting to show the area as 'full of contrasts', nevertheless highlighted that much of the urban environment of the West Riding (in particular the textile districts and coalfield) was 'poor' to 'bad'. The categorisation of Hull as 'bad' – claimed mainly on the basis of its poor housing – sparked particular consternation from the Corporation, which saw this as a point of controversy in the report, a view supported by the region's Standing Conference of Local Planning Authorities.[402]

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[399] TNA EW7/768 'YHEPC - Submission to the Hunt Committee', 4 January 1968.
[400] TNA EW7/768 'North West Economic Planning Council - Evidence to the Hunt Committee', January 1968; 'North-West gives cool support to grey area study', *Guardian*, 18 October 1967.
[401] YHEPC, *Yorkshire and Humberside Regional Strategy*, 12-13.
[402] HHC CTCRD/8 Hull City Council Regional Development (Special) Committee - Yorkshire & Humberside Regional Review', 9 November 1970; 'YHEPB - Note of meeting with officers of the Standing Conference of Local Planning Authorities', 8 July 1970.
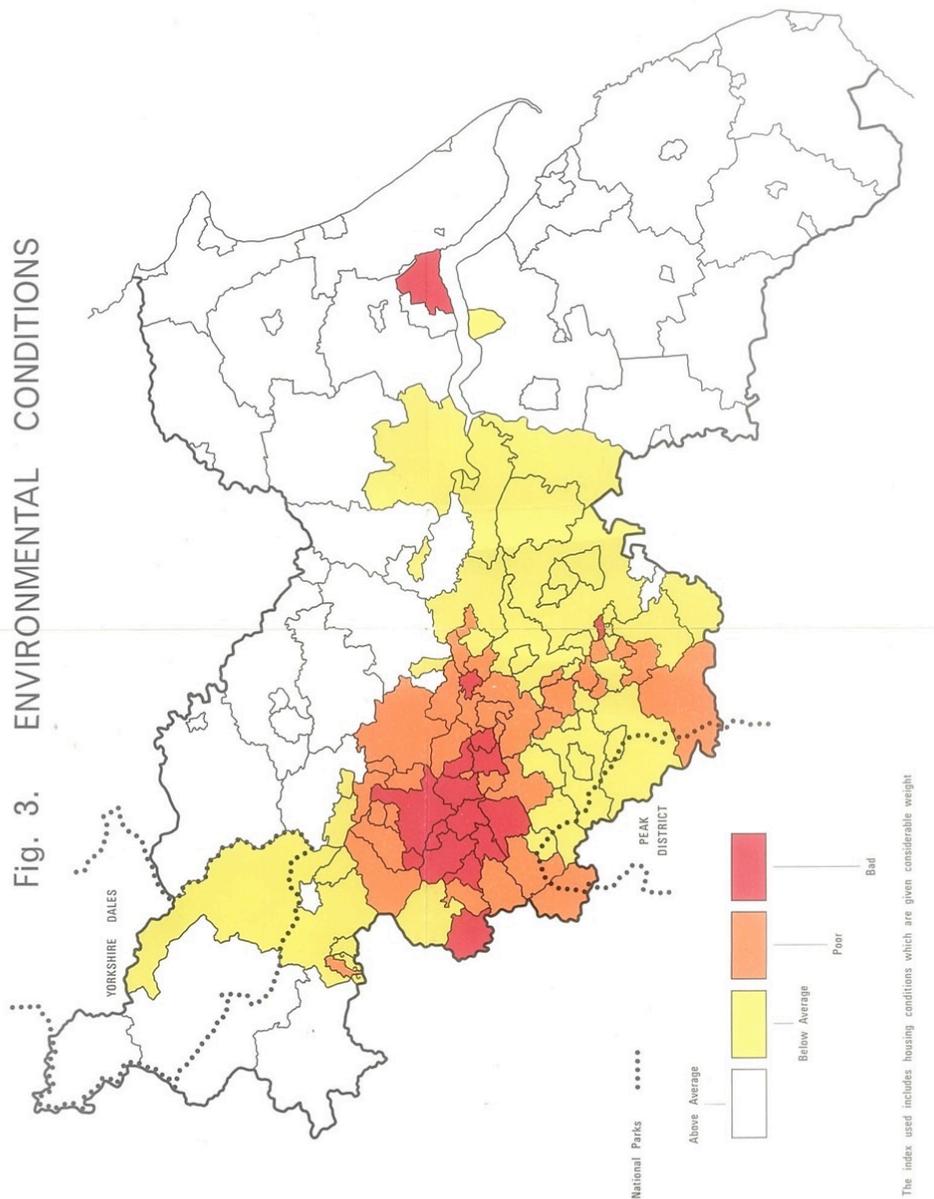
Figure 2.2   'Environmental conditions', in Yorkshire and Humberside Economic Planning Council, *Yorkshire and Humberside Regional Strategy* (HMSO, 1970).

III

The YHEPC's early work noted the negative perceptions of the environment across Yorkshire and Humberside. Under the Chairmanship of Roger Stevens, YHEPC set out a strongly proud regional identity, but one that was deeply concerned about the 'image' of the region. In the article in the *Guardian* announcing the launch of the region-wide clean-up, it was stated that 'visitors were adversely impressed' by the overall appearance of the area.[403] This consciousness of the visibility of dereliction and industrial decay was clear in the Chairman's suggestion to Hull's clerk in late 1969 that even the clearance of small 'abandoned and ruinous factories' was important:

> Many of these kinds of dereliction are conspicuous and should by no means be overlooked in forming programmes. Indeed, schemes to clear and plant small sites adjacent to main roads (which need not be expensive) yield an impressive reward in terms of improving the appearance of a town at a reasonable cost.[404]

Such a consciousness of the image of the region was borne out of the technocratic and planning fervour of the 1960s. Constant defensive allusions were made in the late 1960s and early 1970s to the negative perception of Yorkshire and Humberside by those outside the region, particularly by the South East and London. This consciousness of a negative image is most visible in the Commons debate in 1972; J.P.W. Mallieu, the Labour MP for Huddersfield East, saw the economic difficulties besetting the region as due to the 'difficulty' presented by 'the image of Yorkshire as being black and bleak and scarred'.[405] Stanley Cohen, the MP for Leeds South-East was more blunt, but more evocative in his pronouncement:

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[403] 'Campaign for a tidier Yorkshire', *Guardian,* 3 April 1968.
[404] HHC C TCRD/8 Stevens to Glen, 17 November 1969.
[405] 'Yorkshire and Humberside Region', *House of Commons Debates,* 19 June 1972, vol. 839, col. 101.

> We must create a new image of our region. It is unfortunately true that in many areas in this country, particularly the South of England, there is a tendency to regard us still as morons wearing cloth caps and mufflers, keeping a donkey in the bath and spending our leisure time climbing slag heaps.[406]

Similarly, in a volume on *Yorkshire Heritage* first published in 1970, Harry J. Scott, the long-time editor of the monthly Yorkshire magazine *The Dalesman,* summarised the partiality (but also the grain of validity) of the image presented of the region to the outsider:

> A standing grievance with Yorkshire folk is that their county of broad acres is so widely misrepresented as a black land of pit-heads, belching mill chimneys, clanging steel works and grime smothered houses. Unfortunately many of the modern 'ways in' have lent substance to this view. Because our railways were designed to serve industrial areas they entered where the murk was greatest. Because the roads to the south traversed the area of coal and steel, the first impression of travellers was of blackness and of noise. The traditional English way of entering a city through its backdoor of slums applies as much to the North as on the way into London. But you don't judge London by its backdoor! The blackness of a limited area of Yorkshire is, indeed, a comparatively recent development.[407]

The YHEPC even saw it necessary to state in their *Review* that, 'contrary to popular belief, the climate of the region is not markedly worse than many other parts of the country'.[408]

The decreasing capital of and trust in planners, academic professionals and civil servants in favour of more assertive promotional activity led by public relations and advertising professionals provided an impetus for a change in emphasis within the YHEPC. The worm of public opinion had been steady turning against the 'second planning revolution' and its ills in the late 1960s.[409] The backlash to much of the planned redevelopment of this period saw palpable distaste to the supposed vandalism wrought on the urban landscape, a rejection of many of the industrial precepts of economic

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[406] Ibid.
[407] Scott, *Yorkshire Heritage*, 160-163.
[408] YHEPC, *Review of Yorkshire and Humberside*, 61.
[409] Hardy, *From New Towns to Green Politics,* p. 84.

planning, and increased both appreciation of both rural and industrial heritage. Such shifts provided the economic development bodies with both a need to more assertively market and self-fashion the image of their region; but also an opportunity to exploit different regional assets in doing so. In the 'self-help' spirit engendered by Cotton, the new Chairman's introduction to YHEPC's *Environmental Progress Report* in 1973 signalled the need to more assertively promote the positives the region had to offer rather than focus on its negatives:

> Yorkshire and Humberside is a great region. Its people are characterful and hardworking. Its towns and cities are bustling and lively centres. It has industries of world-wide reputation and a prospering agriculture…. And yet the region is considered in some parts of the country to be a drab relic of the nineteenth century, full of dark satanic mills. What are we going to do about it?[410]

This shift in emphasis and positivity saw increasing and more vocal criticism brought to bear on areas that pled economic distress, for instance Hull. Hull's officials had been lobbying for greater regional policy assistance in light of the economic issues the city had been facing. There had been conscious attempts to highlight that 'the economic situation within the city and its immediate environs is considerably worse than the region',[411] and to press their case for full Development Area status.[412] Despite an unemployment rate of over four per cent, sympathy from industrialists and the regional economic bodies was minimal. It was stated in response that the city itself was to blame for its 'rundown image', with one piece positing that

> when we have councillors and aldermen demanding that we be treated as a development area at once, who can blame the rest of the country for thinking that Hull is a depressed area?[413]

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[410] YHEPC, *Environmental Progress Report 1966-1973,* v.
[411] 'Reversal to city's economic progress', *Guardian,* 2 November 1968.
[412] 'City wants to be development area', *Daily Mail,* 8 August 1970.
[413] 'Hull to blame for "rundown image"', *Hull Daily Mail,* 9 July 1970.

The secretary of the YHEPC was similarly damning, suggesting that the Humberside's 'chip' on the shoulder over its supposed isolation '…was often put forward as an alibi when the question of the lack of industrial and economic growth throughout the region was raised'.[414]

IV

This new image-conscious form of economic regionalism relied on the cultural and imaginative vocabulary that regional industrial bodies in Yorkshire and Humberside could draw on to construct an identity for the region to outsiders. In this regard, the images drawn on by the YHDA in its work in the 1970s and 1980s represented something of a shift in emphasis, not just in relation to the spatial environment but also – perhaps more importantly – in relation to the temporal conception of the region.

Though large urban centres had been the focus of efforts in the 1960s, attention now turned to the smaller market towns and equally rich rural environment that Yorkshire and Humberside offered. The region's countryside had come under consideration by the YHEPC in publications and interactions with public and voluntary bodies, but these had been somewhat cursory in scope. In the 1966 *Review,* the chapter dedicated to the 'physical environment' had acknowledged that the 'richness and variety' of the region's countryside was one of its 'greatest assets', and that most city centres were only three miles from open country.[415] However, such statements amounted to barely ten paragraphs in a chapter that focused primarily on derelict land within the cities and towns, and which had been preceded by a full chapter on the deficiencies of the region's urban housing.

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[414] 'Isolation: the chip on Humberside's shoulder', *Hull Daily Mail,* 17 November 1970.
[415] YHEPC, *Review of Yorkshire and Humberside*, 63.

The 1970 *Strategy* was, for the most part, as equally passive about the virtues of the countryside as it sought to highlight the environmental issues of urban areas. However, in the half paragraph in which the YHEPC highlighted the countryside, the traces of a shift in approach could be seen:

> …there is another and much brighter side which represents one of the region's most valuable assets and which is so often not recognised by many others who have not lived here. The region is endowed with spectacular scenery and countryside of unsurpassed beauty extending throughout the region's boundaries and close to many of its industrialised areas. Throughout, the region is able to offer great attractions to the tourist. These assets are becoming more widely recognised.[416]

For a Council whose position had previously been ambivalent, if not openly hostile, to the region's past, it was noteworthy that illustrations of some of both Yorkshire and Lincolnshire's historic landmarks, and the market town of Knaresborough, were included alongside modern industrial images of smelting works and power stations (Figures 2.3.1, 2.3.2).

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[416] YHEPC, *Yorkshire and Humberside Regional Strategy*, 13.

Knaresborough
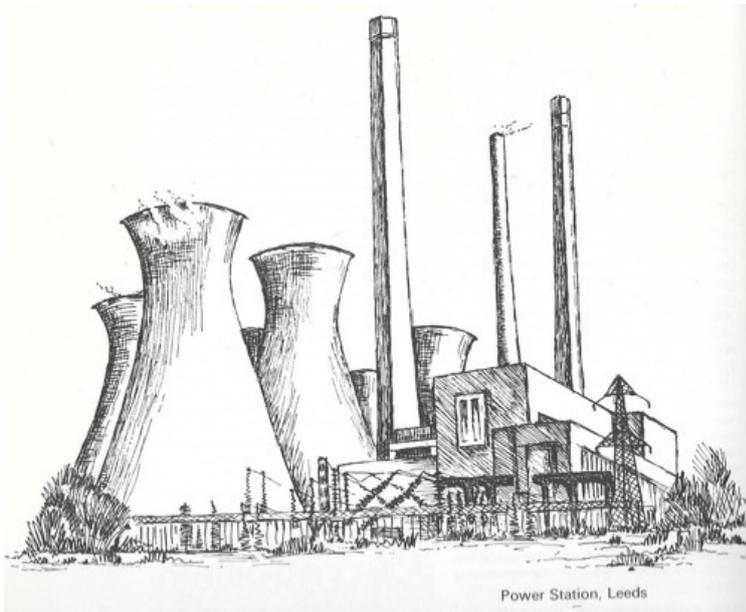
Power Station, Leeds

Figures 2.3.1, 2.3.2   From Yorkshire and Humberside Economic Planning Council, *Yorkshire and Humberside Regional Strategy* (HMSO, 1970).

The diverse landscape and heritage of the region became something that could be used as an asset in forging a imagined regional identity in the 1970s. Not only could the region project its modern industrial infrastructure, but it could also promote its historical significance. Scott would not only highlight this, but assert that greater ownership of this meeting of past, present and future needed to be taken by interests in (and away from) Yorkshire:

> Many a Yorkshire exile has boasted in far lands of the manifold richness of his home territory: sheep on the hills and an abundance of minerals beneath the ground, rich farms on the plains and the wolds and a multitude of manufactories in the industrial valleys, the age-old industry of bringing fish from the sea and the modern production of chemicals along the river estuaries. All this against a backdrop of ancient abbeys and castles, lonely fells and remote moors and dales, historic architecture side by side with new universities and modern housing estates. It is a country of which to be proud. Yet it must be admitted that there are moments where one wonders if Yorkshire folk at home, for all their aggressive loyalty, are not insensitive of the riches which are their heritage. So much is ignored and forgotten in these days where we speed through our land more concerned with miles per gallon than the panorama of the landscape.[417]

As the following chapters emphasise, the assertion of both tradition (invented or otherwise) and a deep heritage and history of place had been a key response to the encroachment of urban modernism in the more rural parts of the country, such as Lincolnshire and the East Riding, since the 1960s. The adoption of these images by the YHDA, in particular, looked to blend both images, to appeal both to the dynamic businessman and industrialist, but also the national and international tourist. The neglect of tourism in Yorkshire and Humberside to this point somewhat reflected the changing patterns of mass tourism. Increasing affluence in Britain, combined with a flourishing charter and Inclusive Tours (IT) market operated by independent airlines, had produced a huge expansion and 'democratisation' (as Peter Lyth has termed it) in

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[417] Scott, *Yorkshire Heritage*, 13.

international air travel.[418] By 1970, some 5.7 million Britons were venturing abroad on holiday, and spending around £460 million.[419] Such a development had seen the increasing eclipse of the British seaside resort as the holiday destination of choice in the 1960s, but increasing mobility through both rail and road communications had meant that the traditional resorts in Yorkshire and Humberside of Bridlington and Cleethorpes had been eclipsed by Blackpool, Morcambe and Skegness from a much earlier period.[420]

However, the increasing importance of the historical assets of Yorkshire and their tourist value came to the fore in the 1970s. In 1974, there were a reported 47.6 million visits to 'historic properties', with a supposed 9.5 million of these accounted for by foreign tourists.[421] Ballooning membership of the National Trust and of civic associations in the mid 1970s also affirmed a wider popular appreciation for the country's architectural and cultural past.[422] In this context, tourism became seen as the 'new growth industry' in Yorkshire at a time of difficulty for traditional industrial concerns. The English Tourist Board estimated that in 1972, the value of tourism to the region was approximately £120 million in turnover. Such was its value to the region that the Conservatives were keen to emphasise, in a second debate held on region's economy in November 1973, that it stood to overtake coal mining in importance to the Yorkshire and Humberside economy.[423] A 1974 report commissioned by the English Tourist Board indicated how well placed Yorkshire with regards to these cultural developments that were underpinned by increased affluence, leisure time and greater car ownership across a larger section of the population. It noted that '...the growth of international tourism has fundamentally

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[418] Lyth, 'Flying Visits', 11-30.
[419] Ibid., 14.
[420] Urry, *The Tourist Gaze,* 17-37.
[421] Patrick Wright, *On Living in an Old Country: The National Past in Contemporary Britain* (Oxford, 2009), 58.
[422] Mandler, 'The heritage panic', 62.
[423] HHC U DPW 3/247 'Brief for Debate on the Yorkshire and Humberside Region', 22 November 1973.

altered the structure of the domestic tourist industry with a shift from seaside to inland locations. In Yorkshire, the favourable balance of inland and seaside tourism augers well for the future'.[424] Across the county, the report identified 29 major historic houses or gardens, 11 castles or ruins, and 13 abbeys and priories of architectural and historical interest. Additionally there were at least four large areas of natural beauty, and also 'a strong pro-tourist attitude among residents'.[425]

In addition to a greater emphasis on historic buildings and the natural beauty of the landscape, a revolt against the excesses of urban redevelopment, exemplified by Colin Amery and Dan Cruickshank's polemic against the 'licensed vandalism' carried out since the 1950s by 'professionally-aided merchants of greed',[426] also led to a move towards conservation of the historic parts of Yorkshire and Humberside's towns and cities. In marked contrast to the disavowing of the merits of the area's inherited architecture, the YHEPC's *Environmental Progress Report* in 1973 noted that

> An immense amount of building took place in the region in the high noon of the Industrial Revolution between 1840 and 1914. At the time of the Regional Review, few post-1840 buildings had been listed. But much greater value is now placed on Victorian buildings... This means that the region almost certainly will have many more listed buildings of architectural or historic importance.[427]

The establishment of the YHDA therefore was not merely a change towards promotion, but also a move towards the construction and projection of an increasingly varied cultural and economic image of the region: one that combined the region's modern economic and progressive urban outlook with an appreciation for its historical features

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424 English Tourist Board, 'The Marketing and Development of Tourism in Yorkshire - Main Report' (1974), 12.
425 Ibid, 23-24.
426 Colin Amery and Dan Cruickshank, *The Rape of Britain* (London, 1975), 10-11.
427 YHEPC, *Environmental Progress Report 1966-1973*, 23-24.

and natural landscape. This was explicit in the initial discussion paper produced by the

YHEPC prior to the YHDA's formation:

> A body promoting industrial development in the region could also usually co-ordinate its efforts with other regional bodies, including; e.g. those of the Yorkshire Tourist Board: the work of these too bodies should be complimentary since industrial development promotion invariably stresses the scenic and other environmental attractions of the region, while tourism cannot hope to flourish without a sound basis to the regional economy; dilapidated industrial towns would be no help in attracting tourists to the region. Both bodies would be interested too, in encouraging greater use being made of the region's facilities for conferences of all kinds.[428]

2.5 "Heartland": North/South divide, interregional and intraregional perspectives

I

YHEPC, YHDA and – by extension – groups and officials supporting these associations

grappled with these complexities in relation to the inherent cultural indivisibility of the

north-south divide in the UK, and more specifically in England. This section contrasts the

approach of economic institutions in Yorkshire and Humberside with those nations and

regions that were considered increasingly 'peripheral' in the UK economy, particularly

Scotland and Wales; and the Northern and North Western Planning Regions. Central in

this is an understanding of how actors within Yorkshire and Humberside saw the

imaginative geographies of the 'North' and 'South' and the rather ambiguous positioning

of the region within such conceptions. This is most evident in the YHDA's campaign to

cultivate a 'Heartland' image for the region in its promotional activity; in which its location

in 'the Centre of Britain' was pushed as an appeal to the best aspects of both northern

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[428] HHC U DPW3/247, 'A regional industrial development association - a paper for discussion', u.d. (1972).

and southern 'metaphors'.[429] But such appeals presented continuous ambiguities that led to the increasing alignment of certain places with this regional economic image to the exclusion of others.

Increasingly from the 1970s a sense of a binary division within the UK and within England itself began to emerge, based on the geographical concentration of deindustrialization and consequently unemployment in the regions and nations outside of the South East, and to a lesser extent the other regions of the South and Midlands. The 1980s saw a continued stream of articles, particularly from the left-wing press, that documented the economic and demographic statistics that underpinned a North-South divide. In addition to this characterisation in the popular press, 'during the course of the 1980s, and into the 1990s, numerous academic accounts pointed to the emergence of a substantial gap between south and northern England in terms of employment opportunities, unemployment rates, average incomes, dependence on welfare support, and various other measures of economic well-being'.[430] The basic economic figures provided evidence for an acceleration in such trends in the 1980s, with total employment in the 'Southern' regions increasing by 1.1 million between 1979 and 1986, compared to a decrease in jobs of almost 900,000 across the rest of Great Britain over the same period.[431] Yorkshire and Humberside bore much of the brunt of this, with an unemployment rate across the region consistently above the UK, peaking at 13.5 per cent in 1986. The number of manufacturing jobs fell by 250,000 between 1979-87, some 36.6 per cent of the workforce in that sector within the region.[432] Following the designation of Intermediate and Special Development Areas following the Hunt Report

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[429] See Russell, *Looking North.*

[430] Ronald L. Martin, 'The contemporary debate over the North-South divide: images and realities of regional inequality in late-twentieth century Britain', in Baker and Bilinge (eds.), *Geographies of England*, 17; also Russell, *Looking North,* 6.

[431] Paul N. Balchin, *Regional Policy in Britain: The North-South Divide* (London, 1990), 10.

[432] Ibid., 24, 13.

and planned pit closures in the late 1960s, the region had been subject to creeping regional policy assistance. By 1977 the whole of the region was eligible for either intermediate or full regional relief, and areas of the region would continue to receive support even as the Conservative Government in 1979 began de-scheduling large areas of the country, reducing and consolidating the commitments to regional policy.[433]

However, as important to the perception of a North-South economic divide based on real disparities and inequalities was the distinct images and constructions of the imagined cultural divide between North and South. One of the more provocative examples of this merging of the real and imagined divide was written in 1989 by journalist David Smith. Alongside describing the long economic decline of the North in relation to the South, as well as other distinctions such as health outcomes, union density and divisions in voting tendencies, Smith's chapter on the 'perceptions of North and South' saw him quote George Orwell's observation in *The Road to Wigan Pier* of the perceived social realist nature of the North by its inhabitants, observing:

> Everyone has encountered the modern descendant of George Orwell's Yorkshireman... If, as it seems incontrovertible, lifestyles are related to prosperity, then the economic differences between North and South will tend to reinforce social differences.[434]

Other ideas included that '...northerners are somehow more moral and fairer than their faster and looser counterparts in the South'; that northern males were more chauvinistic than their southern counterparts; and that northern workers were 'less adaptable and

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[433] Barry Moore, John Rhodes and Peter Tyler, *The Effects of Government Regional Economic Policy* (HMSO, 1986), 19-23.
[434] David Smith, *North and South: Britain's Economic, Social and Political Divide* (London, 1989), 30-31.

have been more determined to cling on to trade unionism than their southern counterparts'.[435]

Such generalisations about the nature and image of the North in relation to the South were deep-rooted well before the 1980s. Northern space-myths, as Rob Shields has traced, held a long literary history dating back into the nineteenth century, and that the wild, rugged, untamed nature of the 'North's' natural landscape was meshed with the 'unredeemed ugliness' of its urban environment.[436] Such imagery, Shields argues, saw 'the spatialisation of England… constructed around London with peripheral regions taking different mytho-poetic positions irrespective of their detailed realities – the hellish industrial North, for example, or the pastoral south'.[437] As Katharine Cockin's summary of the 'Literary North' highlights, 'the strategic identification of the North with the strange and primitive' was partly a means to buttress the cultural prestige of the South, compared to the 'centres of innovation' found in the Southern metropolis.[438] Such stereotypes and images, Lez Cooke also argues, were given new voice by the 'new wave' of Northern writers who emerged in the 1950s and 1960s, whose North 'signified a grey, constricting drabness, that was the embodiment of limited ambitions and philistine cultural outlook'.[439] Such images came to be commodified with the establishment of commercial television, which capitalised on the 'kitchen sink drama' working class realism populised in novels and theatre since the 1950s. It brought homogenized images of a Northern 'Granadaland' to an increasing national television viewing audience.[440] The distinctly urban image of the North of England also served to provide it with an

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[435] Ibid., 38, 40-41, 43.
[436] Shields, *Places on the Margin,* 208-211.
[437] Ibid., 214-215.
[438] Katharine Cockin, 'Introducing the Literary North', in Cockin (ed.), *The Literary North*, 6-8.
[439] Lez Cooke, *A Sense of Place: Regional British television drama, 1956-82* (Manchester, 2012), 13.
[440] Ibid, 63.

'otherness' to the true, deep Englishness embodied in the supposed pastoral landscapes of the South.[441]

As many of these scholars on the North and the North-South divide argue, these imagined geographies have also led to an ascribing of a character, moral, and ideological dimension to these stereotypes. For example, in literary constructions the North was characterised as masculine, representing emotional restraint, physical strength, and a 'brooding melancholy' formed from the general gloominess'.[442] In economic and political terms, Martin suggests that this dichotomy was drawn and exploited by the Thatcher government in the 1980s:

> ...The South was seen as the dynamic locus of a new culture of enterprise, innovation, individual initiative and self-help, a new market-based economic democracy, that was counterposed to what was regarded as the old and outmoded post-war culture of collectivism, welfare dependency and state subsidy dentified as persisting amongst the electorate in the North.[443]

This also assumes the primacy of the South in the production of such an imagined geography of England, a circumstance which as Hechter argued in relation to the Celtic Fringe served to reinforce the economic inequalities between core and peripheral provinces and nations.[444] However, Dave Russell has offered an important corrective to these more negative and exclusionary forms of Northern identity and images, and Englishness respectively. He argues that the North has had much more agency in the conscious construction of its own identity, and that 'being Northern imbues individuals with valuable cultural associations implying a capacity for hard work, a lack of

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[441] Robert Colls, *Identity of England* (Oxford, 2002), 203-211; Shields, *Places on the Margin,* 229-230; Martin, 'North-South Divide', 35; Kohl, 'The 'North' of 'England': A Paradox?', 94-103.
[442] Cockin, 'Literary North', 15.
[443] Martin, 'North-South Divide', 40-41.
[444] Michael Hechter, *Internal Colonialism,* 160; termed by as 'flexible positional superiority' by: Russell, *Looking North,* 268; Cockin, 'Literary North', 4.

pretension, a certain generosity and warmth and much else'.[445] Such can be contrasted with Southern metaphors projecting 'sinful excess', illogicality and frivolity.[446] Russell has also highlighted the value that a variety of public figures from more privileged socio-economic backgrounds have drawn from their Northern associations when claiming cultural authenticity.[447] However, perhaps most importantly in this regard, the examples Russell mobilises are almost entirely drawn from Yorkshire.

II

The associations' conscious acknowledgement and articulation of these negative associations and particular images of Northernness, and of Yorkshire and the North, highlights the validity of the contention that the space-myths surrounding regions and their identities form a basis for thought and action.[448] The power of these spatial images in the establishing of the YHDA were clear. The initial long-term objectives for the Association included

> To project the region in the rest of the UK as part of modern Britain/Europe and to steadily erode the "North Country" image.[449]

In seeking to construct a new image for Yorkshire and Humberside, rather than simply eschew a Northern image and emulate the Southern model of economic respectability, a different approach was sought that demonstrated a less passive approach to place marketing. The same document listed an immediate policy objective as

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[445] Russell, *Looking North,* 277.
[446] Baker and Billinge, 'Material and imagined geographies', 2.
[447] Russell, *Looking North,* 278-281.
[448] Baker and Billinge, 'Cultural constructions', 181; Paasi, 'Region and place', 477.
[449] HHC U DPW3/247 'YHDA - Some notes', 14 November 1973.

> To consolidate and promote the concept of a Yorkshire and Humberside region and to establish as its "brand image" its "Heartland" location in the UK and its very special position relative to the EEC.[450]

This 'Heartland' found form in Yorkshire's 'central' location, both on the real and imagined fault-line between a physical and socially constructed North-South divide. The promotional material and statements made within the national press makes the exploitation of the region's geographical position within the UK clear. As the examples below in Figures 2.4, 2.5, 2.6, and 2.7 show, the YHDA made clear the positioning of the Yorkshire and Humberside region, with its now revised boundaries that included North Yorkshire County Council. Local development authorities and private firms also followed suit in their promotional material. Transport infrastructure was often incorporated into these visualisations of the Yorkshire and Humberside's location, whilst also emphasising its equidistance from both London and Edinburgh. Not only was this geographical centrality with the nation aggressively highlighted, but so too was the region's central location in relation to Northern Europe and its ports, as a means of attracting inward investment both nationally and internationally. As was emphasised in a YHDA pamphlet from the mid-1970s,

> The unique geographical location of Yorkshire and Humberside gives huge advantages to its businesses. At the "Centre of Britain" it offers those with national distributions the most economical answer to their problems. The whole region is the hinterland of the Humber ports looking towards the North Sea and the most prosperous parts of Europe. It lies at the eastern end of the rapidly growing Humber/Mersey trade axis.[451]

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[450] Ibid.
[451] HHC U DPW3/247, pamphlet, u.d. (c. 1975).

YORKSHIRE AND HUMBERSIDE
THE CENTRE OF BRITAIN

This map should be considered in relation to the text: the shaded portion is a Development Area and the remainder of the region is an Intermediate Area. There are important variations in aid between the two.

Figure 2.4   From YHDA, 'Finance for Industrial Expansion' (1979).
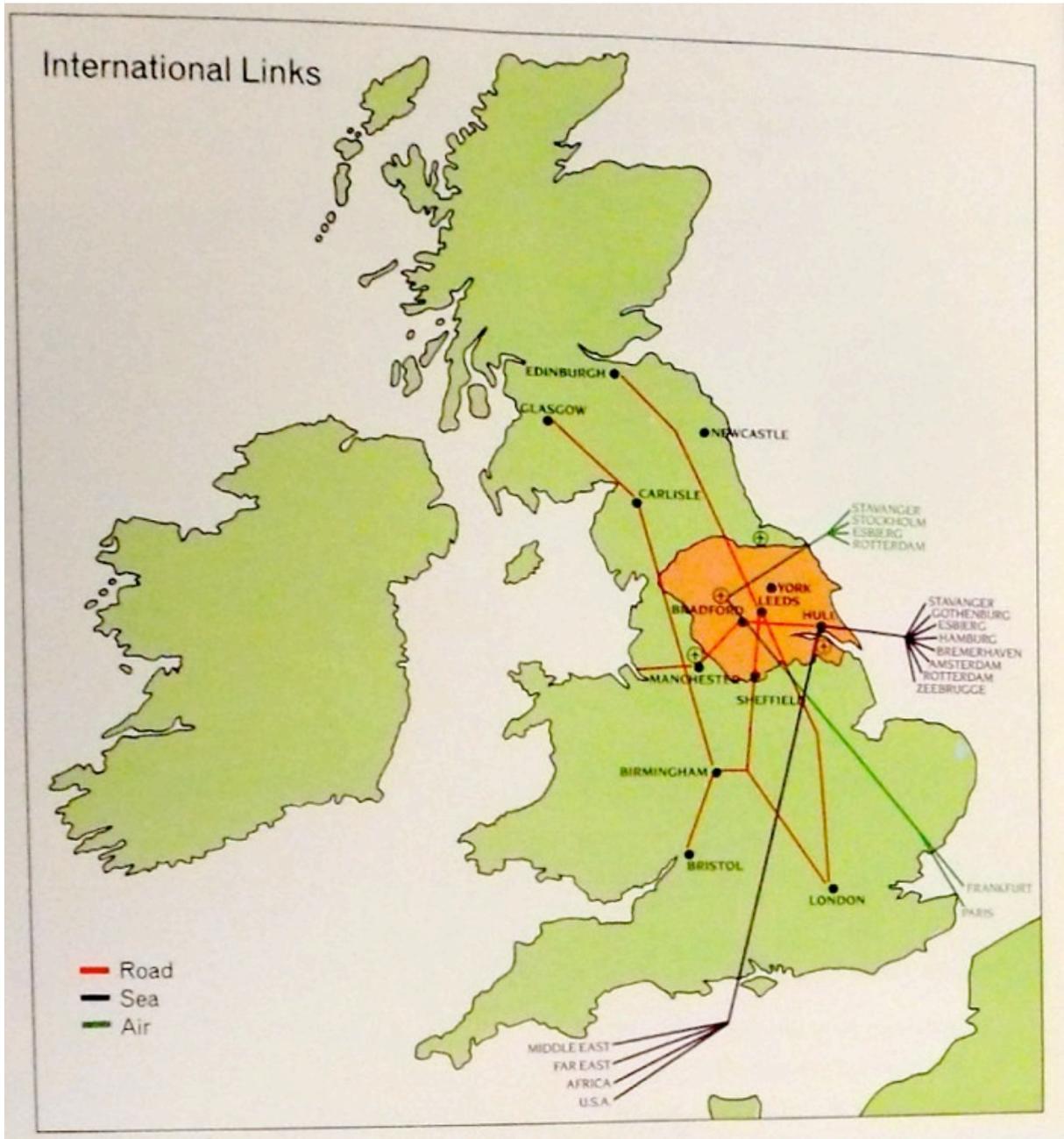
Figure 2.5   From ERA Y388 YHDA, 'Yorkshire and Humberside – Britain means business (u.d. c.1982-1984).
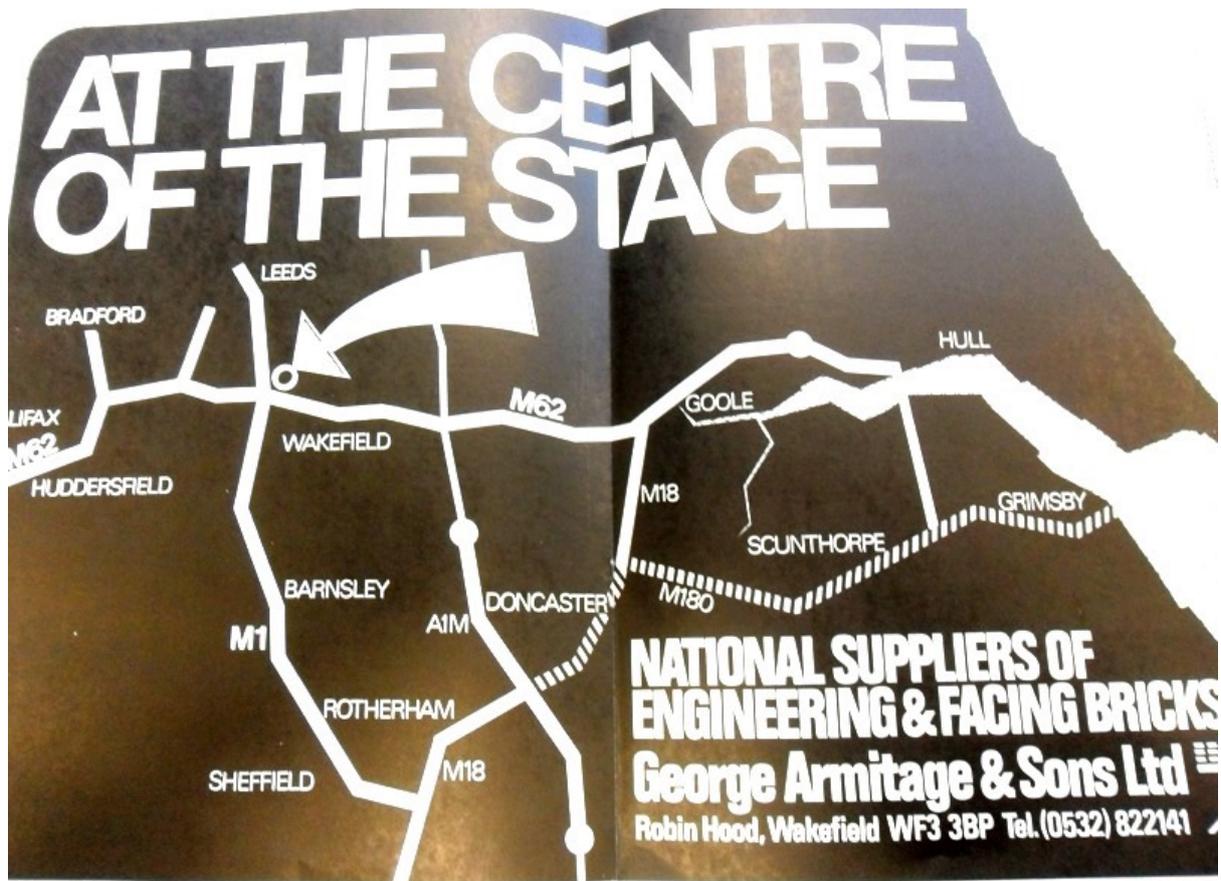
Figure 2.6   From YHDA, '4000 Companies in Yorkshire and Humberside – West Yorkshire Volume' (1976 edition).

Figure 2.7   From YHDA, '4000 Companies in Yorkshire and Humberside – West Yorkshire Volume' (1976 edition)

These industrial promotion activities also used imagined geographies in constructing an economic region. A brochure issued in North America in the mid 1980s was keen to point out that 'topographically' as well as economically, the region was one 'of great contrasts'; highlighting on the same page its vast acres of agriculture; the 'rugged backbone' of the Pennines and the 'rolling chalk uplands' of the Wolds; its centres of commerce; and an industrial base that had 'kept pace with evolving technology and diversified into electronics, plastics, petrochemicals, healthcare and biotechnology, and food processing'. Not only did this embody the natural imagery and enterprise culture associated with the South, it included imagery that capitalised on the supposed untamed natural environment of the North, and the legacy of industriousness. Rather than negative assertions of the industrial heritage, the YHDA sought to capitalise and characterise a past where 'the region [had] been at the forefront of heavy industry'; noting as well that 'much of this countryside remains unchanged, but the heritage of the industrial revolution and the region's present day character derives equally from the numerous weaving mills in its valleys'.[452] These documents juxtaposed idyllic scenes of countryside, pleasant villages and market towns such as Richmond in North Yorkshire, Beverley racecourse and Yorkshire Cricket Club, with jet aircraft at Leeds-Bradford, petrochemical facilities, office developments and other images of a modern, globalised region. Perhaps the most striking of these contrasting spatial and temporal images was that of an Intercity train shadowed by York Minster included in 1980s promotional material (Figure 2.8). Such positioning for the region economically sought to present it as both of the North, and of the South, but independent of both. Rather than emulate the South East – or the South – the YHDA instead sought to be a counterpoise.

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[452] ERA Y388 YHDA, 'Yorkshire and Humberside - Britain means business' (u.d., c.1982-1984).

Figure 2.8   From ERA Y388 YHDA, 'Yorkshire and Humberside – Britain means business (u.d. c.1982-1984)

III

Such assertive positioning, challenging, and reinforcing of stereotypes and images were representative of the ambiguous and complex inter-regional relationships of the other Northern English regions, and of the minority nations of the UK: although the YHDA survived the abolition of the regional planning machinery, and with it the YHEPC, in 1979, and its unwavering support from all the major local authorities through the 1980s was in stark contrast to the experience of the other Northern regions.

Both the North East and the North West had established industrial development agencies well before the belated creation of the YHDA. The North East Development Council (NEDC) had existed in various forms since the 1950s as a body to promote the North East; and the North West Industrial Development Association was created in the 1960s 'to coordinate and promote regional economic development'.[453] In terms of the promotional activities involved, there were many similarities in the ways they looked to promote their regions economically, to attempt to show cultural diversity, and that the benefits of increasing affluence were available to executives and industrialists there as much as elsewhere in the country. For example, the NEDC would highlight not only the region's communications network in its advertisements,[454] but also 'outstanding facilities for sports... unspoiled countryside... uncrowded coastline' and living space much more affordable than the South.[455] Similarly, the North-West Industrial Development Association (NWIDA) would present an image of 'one of the finest systems of roads and motorways... the complementary attractions of towns and countryside and the whole

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[453] Benito Giordano, 'England's North West', in John Tomaney and John Mawson (eds.), *England: the state of the regions* (Bristol, 2002), 85; In Scotland, development bodies dated back to the interwar period, Phillips, *industrial politics of devolution,* 17-18.

[454] 'Advertisement - The North East Can Solve Industry's Problems', *The Times,* 10 February 1969.

[455] E.g. 'Advertisement - NEDC', *The Economist,* 13 June 1964; Advertisement - NEDC', *The Economist,* 9 May 1964.

quality of life in general'.[456] They both also adopted similar means of promotion to YHDA, organising trade missions and setting up offices overseas as part of an effort to be competitive globally from the mid 1970s, the UK's entry into the EEC.

Their efforts within their regions proved, however, to be much more fractious and turbulent than the Yorkshire experience. Both the NEDC and the NWIDA struggled to maintain the involvement of their constituent local authorities. The former's experience was tumultuous for over two decades, with the NEDC's public relations officer resigning in 1969 and declaring the council had 'failed totally in the past two years to attract new industry, and the industrial development were restive and unhappy'.[457] Amidst unhappiness over the scope of its actions, including sponsoring a forum on devolution, Tyne and Wear County Council threatened to withdraw from the NEDC in 1978, Cumbria having already done so and joined the North West agency the previous April.[458] NWIDA would cease in 1985, under accusations that it failed 'to do its job properly', and was reconstituted as 'Inward' the following year with some difficulty in what the *Financial Times* termed 'one of the most parochially divided regions in Britain'.[459] In the midst of substantial government reductions to the regional development agencies in the mid 1980s, the NEDC became subsumed into a new Northern Development Company in 1987, and suffered similar difficulties with the chief executive leaving after only five months in the role.[460] The main impetus for development in the North East would from this point come from Urban Development Corporations, based on a similar model to that used in London's Docklands, that as Vall notes sought to culturally capture maritime

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[456] HHC DDX1184/5/3 Press cutting 'Advertisement - We aren't boasting but', u.d., c.1970.
[457] 'PRO of NE Development Council quits', *Financial Times,* 20 August 1969.
[458] 'Tyne and Wear May Leave Promotion Council', *Financial Times,* 13 September 1978.
[459] 'Inward looks outward-with difficulty', *Financial Times,* 7 February 1986.
[460] 'Region development chief resigns after five months', *Financial Times,* 20 October 1987.

histories and the heritage of Northumbria, rather than the more immediate industrial past.[461]

In comparison, YHDA could claim much greater success as a regional industrial promotional and coordinating body. Despite the distinctly liberal, more free market approach the Association represented, it could use its goodwill to coordinate action between staunch Labour councils, including Sheffield City Council, and capital-oriented 'antagonists' such as the chambers of commerce within the region.[462] When funding was cut to the industrial development agencies in 1985-86, four private sector firms based in Yorkshire stepped in to make up the shortfall.[463] In 1982, in addition to hundreds of companies signed up as associate members, YHDA had established a strong 'London Committee' deemed essential to promoting Yorkshire and Humberside both nationally and globally, that included amongst its members politicians and representatives of global companies such as Price Waterhouse, BP, and Chase and Nordic Bank.

The stable footing of the YHDA, and its presence in London, were indicative of the strong construction of a Yorkshire region that would work economically within the national interest. As discussed above, an appeal to such an approach was consistent from the more technocratic objectivism of the YHEPC in the mid 1960s, and was markedly different from that adopted by the other two regions. This analysis of both the YHEPC and YHDA's efforts to articulate and construct Yorkshire and Humberside as an economic region demonstrate that this appeal to the national economic interest also involved a conscious distancing from the behaviour of the other 'Northern' regions and nations. Roger Stevens had made clear in his opening address to the YHEPC as Chairman that it was essential that it not act as a 'regional pressure group', but instead work wholly in the

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461 Vall, *Cultural Region,* 131-133.
462 E.g. 'Bridging the North-South divide', *Guardian,* 24 March 1988.
463 'Private concerns funded development association', *Financial Times,* 28 June 1986.

national interest.[464] Such an assertion seemed to have a pointed air given the more aggressively lobbyist tone the NEPC struck from its beginning. Indeed, Stevens was contrasted on an article about the EPCs with T. Dan Smith over the issue of whether they were 'sticks to belabour the Government into using its vast purchasing power and employment role' for increased regional aid.[465] Yorkshire and Humberside's emphasis on regional policies geared towards derelict land clearance, investment grants and communications infrastructure were sought as a fair corrective to the region's environmental inheritance. Direct financial assistance, and the stigma of full Development Area status, was seen as something to be avoided at all costs, and antithetical to the region's belief in it's own 'self-help' and self-sufficiency. In advocating for financial assistance to the Hunt Committee, the representatives of the YHEPC made clear that it was only 'after a great deal of thought...' that '...however unpalatable,' the areas identified were seen as 'in need of a shot in the arm and... a fair do'.[466]

That other regional industrial bodies appeared to want to distance themselves from the 'North' and was almost accusatory of its failings. As Smith himself stated to the Hunt Committee:

> I think the West Midlands would say, "The reason we want to do this is because we do not want to be like the north". They can see there is nothing as bad as that. This is a significant argument. When I go to other areas they say "We want to avoid making the mistakes that have led to the position you are in". They do not deny that we are in that condition, and I think that is significant.[467]

There some significant clashes between the two northern regions, not least the outrage when the NEDC was accused of 'poaching' in 1968 due to a targeted marketing

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[464] TNA EW 7/238 Yorkshire & Humberside EPC Minutes, 15 May 1965.
[465] 'Effectiveness of regional planning councils questioned', *Guardian,* 16 January 1968.
[466] TNA EW7/876 Note of meeting between Hunt Committee and YHEPC, 16 February 1968.
[467] TNA EW7/1197 'Minutes of evidence given by the Northern Economic Planning Council, 15 March 1968.

campaign of firms in the West Riding to entice them to relocate. Stevens wrote to the DEA Secretary of State Peter Shore bemoaning a move that was deemed 'mistimed, mistaken and misdirected': 'it achieves nothing except to engender inter-regional rivalry to the benefit of none'.[468]

Such a conscious attempt to not promote more 'Northern' traits of special pleading on the basis of economic exceptionalism led to arms length dealings of the YHEPC and YHDA with the Northern regions, and with Wales and Scotland. In the wake of Kilbrandon Commission on the Constitution, and the devolution proposals it entailed, a 'Campaign for the North' emerged which lobbied for similar proposals for the region though – as Keating has highlighted – with little unity as to its overall aims.[469] Such a view found endorsement in part from members of the NEPC, particularly towards the establishing of development agency similar to Scottish Development Agency (SDA) and Welsh Development Agency (WDA), and it was recorded there were at least 'mixed views' on more radical constitutional change.[470] But not only were the views of the YHEPC antipathetic to both suggestions, a national consciousness and the national interest was again invoked, as the Council alluded to the threat to the Union the Scotland and Wales Bills presented. At the same time 'fairness' was again a central feature of the YHEPC's economic concern, as their response to Scottish and Welsh devolution was to highlight the 'danger' this posed,[471] that despite the intention of the Government to 'secure fairness for all different parts [of the UK] devolution would see pressure '...to give still

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[468] TNA EW7/922 Dawson to Shore, 'Industrial promotion campaign in the West Riding of Yorkshire', 6 May 1968.
[469] Michael Keating, 'The debate on regional reform' in Hogwood and Keating (eds.), *Regional Government,* 244-245.
[470] TNA HLG120/2613 'Devolution: The English Dimension - Summary of Main EPC Comments', 10 October 1977.
[471] Yorkshire and Humberside Economic Planning Council, *Yorkshire and Humberside - Regional Strategy Review 1975: the Next Ten Years* (HMSO, 1976), 11.

further larger shares of national resources to these 2 [*sic*] countries that the shares to which they would, in all equity, be entitled'.[472]

The greatest complaint against such unfairness was directed at the government's grant to the YHDA as the regional means of maintaining economic self-sufficiency in Yorkshire and Humberside. Firstly, in 1976 the YHDA issued a press release proclaiming 'WE WANT A FAIRER DEAL', comparing their £15,000 sum from central government to the £150,000 received by the SCDI and £540,000 provided to the SDA for publicity and research.[473] The following year, the Association – despite its grant being doubled – would highlight to the Government the much greater sums going to the NWIDA and NEDC, noting that though the Association would 'find it hard to put a reasoned case for parity' with them, the situation deserved examination if it was accepted the other two regions 'are getting a fair deal'.[474]

Such was indicative of a regional identity portrayed by the region that saw itself somewhat separate from the North, not only in terms of its industrial structure and physical geography, but in the way the YHDA in particular tried to incorporate and pursue a more 'central' image by mixing these metaphors; alongside traits that Featherstone has identified as aligned with Englishness such as 'inarticulate patriotism', fairness and a sense of fair play.[475] Such sentiments were mixed with more regionally-specific stereotypes such as invocations of 'typical Yorkshire grit' and stoicism in the face of

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[472] TNA HLG120/2637 'Devolution: The English Dimension - Views of the Yorkshire and Humberside Economic Planning Council', 7 March 1977.
[473] HHC U DPW3/248 'Press Information - WE WANT A FAIRER DEAL', 7 September 1976.
[474] HHC U DPW3/248 Watson to Binning, 16 September 1977.
[475] Featherstone, *Englishness*, 15-16, 27.

adverse economic conditions,[476] or the straightforward 'non-bureaucratic manner' with which the YHDA was reported to assist foreign investors.[477]

IV

Finally, discussion of Yorkshire and Humberside's regional economic bodies' contingent and ambiguous relationships with the imaginative geographies of 'North' and 'South' requires some consideration of intra-regional relations. Within the increasing literature from the 1980s on increasing economic disparities between North and South, or the 'core' and 'periphery' of the UK, several scholars and commentators highlighted the need to recognise the importance of locally concentrated inequalities and increasingly uneven regional economic development.[478] Brenner argued that the restructuring processes of globalisation and deindustrialization produced contradictions in the spatial-Keynesian policies adopted across Europe that led to the proliferation of more focused state spatial projects.[479] In the UK context, these supposed spaces in neoliberalism took the form of Enterprise Zones and urban development corporations that in some respects were the ultimate rejection of the 'planning moment' of the 1960s in representing experiments in 'non-planning'. Assistance to industry also became much less spatially focused under the Thatcher Government, exacerbating intra-regional economic disparities. When observing the work of the YHDA and other evidence during the 1970s and 1980s, particularly in relation to the regional 'image' it constructed and marketed as noted above, such issues are apparent with regional industrial promotion. However the novelty of such dynamics in the period identified by new regional geographers is seemingly more questionable.

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[476] 'Facing up to economic distress with pride', *Guardian,* 25 March 1981.

[477] 'Why Norwegian companies come to Yorkshire and Humberside', *Development Digest,* March 1983.

[478] E.g. Allen, Massey and Cochrane *et al., Rethinking the Region*; Balchin, *Regional policy in Britain.*

[479] Brenner, *New State Spaces.*

In economic terms, the West Yorkshire sub-region and, at its heart, the city of Leeds has been considered by a number of studies for its supposed success in engendering growth and regeneration. Dutton has noted that 'the concentration of contemporary economic growth in Leeds shatters many doom-laden predictions, so prevalent in the early 1980s, of the peripheral role cities play - particularly industrial cities in the north of England - in an increasingly post-industrial economy.[480] The forefront of such a boom was a significant increase in service employment, most notably financial services. Employment in financial services from 1979-87 in Yorkshire and Humberside grew by some 50,000, alongside large increases in other service sector industries, growth that outstripped other prosperous 'Southern' regions such as the neighbouring East Midlands.[481] This reflected the sub-region's engendering of the 'central' image created by the YHDA. The successes in West Yorkshire were not confined to Leeds. Urry has highlighted how Bradford, with no previous tourist industry, was able to generate one from the early 1980s through its use of its

> proximity to international attractions such as Haworth and the Dales and the Moors; a substantially intact industrial heritage of buildings, railways and canals derived from Bradford's status as "Worstedopolis"; its location within the high-profile county of Yorkshire; and the existence of a large and vigorous Asian culture that had generated a plethora of small enterprises.[482]

Also nearby in North Yorkshire was the 'retirement town' of Harrogate, which also held economic importance as a centre for office, conference and tourist facilities from the 1970s.[483] Alongside York, Harrogate and other suburban hotels within West Yorkshire

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[480] Paul Dutton, 'Leeds Calling: The Influence of London on the Gentrification of Regional Cities', *Urban Studies,* 40:12 (2003), 2570.

[481] Balchin, *Regional Policy in Britain,* 18-19.

[482] Urry, *The Tourist Gaze*, 107-109; Lindsay Smales, 'Desperate pragmatism or shrewd optimism? The image and selling of West Yorkshire', in Graham Houghton and David Whitney (eds.), *Reinventing a Region: Restructuring in West Yorkshire* (Aldershot, 1994), 41-46.

[483] YHEPC, *Yorkshire and Humberside - Regional Strategy Review 1975,* 21.

were seen to be large beneficiaries from the large expansion of tourism noted in the previous section.[484]

Such economic successes were harder to replicate across the rest of the region, in part because they were less able to emulate the image created for the region by promotional campaigns. The YHDA had stated themselves that they would be much more selective in their promotional campaigns and the areas they would promote as early as 1982. Even so, South Yorkshire, through its Enterprise Zones, its rail and north/south road links with the M1 and A1, and its location on the edge of the Peak District, was more able to share in the economic recovery of the late 1980s. However, Humberside – and in particular Hull – did not share these fortunes. The picture in Hull was significantly bleak; for example in 1987 the council claimed that in its 22 wards, nine had unemployment rates greater than 20 per cent, and two of those were in excess of 25 per cent. The city at least externally exhibited much of the special pleading and dependency associated with the more negative aspects of the North rather than the reconstructed aspirant wider economic region, traits that had brought criticism from elsewhere in Yorkshire in the 1970s.

As well as the basic geographical difficulties inherent in adopting this new image of a 'centre' region, Hull and Humberside in general faced criticisms for their failure to adopt the new spatial and temporal paradigm of place marketing. Of particular note was its continuation of a high-modernist approach towards urban planning well into the 1970s, the removal of its history being somewhat aligned with the industrial decline it was seemingly facing. As one article written in 1976 put it:

> Once the second port of the kingdom, with a sixteenth-century charter and the status of a county, to some eyes Hull now presents a sad spectacle. Many historic

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[484] D. Jeffrey, 'Trends and fluctuations in visitor flows to Yorkshire and Humberside hotels: An analysis of daily bed occupancy rates, 1982-1984, *Regional Studies,* 19:6 (1985), 517-520.

streets and buildings, escaping second World War bombs, succumbed to corporate bulldozers.[485]

Similar scathing remarks were even forthcoming from businessmen within Hull, as articulated in one article in the YHDA's own magazine *Development Digest* in 1983, where it was claimed that public relations and marketing techniques 'had been sadly lacking until comparatively recently'. It went on, in relation to Hull's image as a fish port that

> The City Fathers have less to complain about now. That is not because the fishing industry, now in its death throes, had had its voice stilled. It is more because they have discovered that more favourable identities arise from doing more positive things, like putting a stop to knocking their historic city down and trying instead to retain and restore it.[486]

As is considered in the next chapter, despite more support for Humberside as a county evident in the 1960s and 1970s than has been popularly suggested, much of the articulations against its existence stemmed from its dislocation from a real and imagined geography of Yorkshire; one formed from a conception of place based both on space and time. The heightened campaign against the county in the late 1980s leaned on the area having an modernist ahistoricism that was economic as well as social and cultural. As the East Yorkshire Action Group (EYAG) claimed in 1988: 'its structure plan is still based on that idea of expansion, Nissan factories and the low technology culture of the 1960s'.[487] It was also claimed in their material that 'Yorkshire is a far better brand name that needs no promoting'.[488] In this vein, the image of Humberside, as separate and anachronistic to Yorkshire, was claimed to be repelling Yorkshire's booming tourism, as

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[485] 'Who Belongs to Humberside?', *Illustrated London News,* 27 March 1976.
[486] 'Public Relations on Humberside', *Development Digest,* March 1983.
[487] HCC UDEY1/1 EYAG Chairman to Environment Secretary, 31 July 1988.
[488] HCC UDEY1/3 EYAG leaflet 'East Yorkshire is your County, Support it Now!!', u.d. c.1989-90.

one letter to a local paper stated: 'we are desperate to attract tourists but who wants to visit Humberside?'[489]

An important aspect of this, however, is the distinct reflexivity in the construction of such images, both for the imagined economy and environment of Hull, and by wider association Humberside. Though the Hull's Industrial Development Director and the YHDA would put much of its initial resources into highlighting the ports and potential of the Humber, such promotional messages found a much more skeptical and unsympathetic hearing that was the case for other parts of the region. The former's attempt to demonstrate the enterprising spirit of the City in a *Guardian* report saw such self-help characterised rather harshly as Hull aiming to stand 'on its own webbed feet'.[490]

The *Financial Times* was similarly dismissive in its own assessment:

> The slogan "The Humber Estuary - In the Centre of Britain" on some of the publicity literature distributed by [the YHDA] is probably more a reflection of over-enthusiastic salesman than strict geographical accuracy. Humberside is, in fact, off the beaten track and difficulty in communications has been one of the besetting faults of this area since industrial development first began.[491]

Such statements illustrate then not only the intraregional complexities and contingencies within the construction and articulation of a coherent economic region and regional identity, particularly with the increasingly liberalised and globalised context of the late 1970s and 1980s, or the important interrelationships not only of the imagined geography of a region from within and without, but also the basis such imaginations have within the region. Both these real and imagined geographies shape and inform each other in their implications for the social environments of these regions and localities.

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[489] 'Natural division', *Beverley Guardian,* 17 July 1988.
[490] 'Hoping to stand on its own webbed feet', *Guardian,* 21 May 1973.
[491] 'Coming in from the Cold', *The Financial Times,* 19 January 1977.

Importantly these constructions are rooted not only in space but also real and imagined temporalities.

2.6 Conclusion

The aspects of economic regionalism discussed within this chapter have been primarily the interests of capital over labour, highlighting how regionalism formed primarily a middle class pursuit. This aligns with Jim Phillips' argument about the origins of Scottish industrial devolution being found in the Scottish Council for Development and Industry (SCDI), a business leaders' organisation similar to the YHDA, but in the case of Yorkshire and Humberside we can see less trade union and other forms of support for economic regionalism.[492] Contrary to the more pessimistic pronouncements on the power of regionalism, we can see the creation of a regional economic lobby with similar political efficacy to that of other private lobbies that Hilton, McKay Crowson and Mouhot have argued have become increasingly important in British politics.[493] Regional associations showed a regional identity, distinct from the broad sweeps of 'peripheral' north and 'core' south(east). The Yorkshire and Humberside regional identity was articulated as a separate function of these forms, demonstrating a particular appeal to expertise (increasingly from the advertising sphere) over overt 'political action'; a distinct concern for the environment and transport infrastructure; and cultivating an image that tapped into popular imaginative geographies of the 'north' and 'south' to attempt to articulate a best of both worlds 'centre' approach. This led to an ambiguous, fluid and conditional attitude to both northern authorities and southern and central authorities. As part of this distinct economic regionalism, we can see various other themes: an appeal to the

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[492] Phillips, *The Industrial Politics of Devolution*.
[493] Hiiton, McKay, Crowson and Mouhot, *The Politics of Expertise.*

national interest and to unionism, and an aversion to financial assistance through regional policy over other forms of 'self-help'. Examining these institutions indicates that the geographical, political, economic and social diversity of the region – and the acknowledgement of this – was fundamental to the unique shape of these institutions.

On wider debates than regionalism, this chapter also serves to partly affirm Brenner's assessment that

> the 1970s is thus best viewed as a transitional period in which state institutions at various spatial scales attempted to adjust to the destabilising national, regional, and local effects of geo-economic restructuring. It was characterised by interscalar struggles between political alliances concerned to preserve the nationalised institutional infrastructures of spatial Keynesianism and other, newly formed political coalitions concerned (a) to scale back the redistributive insterscalar relays associated with postwar welfarism and (b) to introduce more place-sensitive frameworks of economic governance. Although the new regulatory spaces sought by such modernising coalitions remained relatively inchoate at both national and local scales, they were generally grounded upon a rejection of nationally encompassing models of territorial development and oriented towards the goal of promoting endogenous local and regional growth within particular places.[494]

However, in examining this in Yorkshire and Humberside, it is possible to see such ideas of competitive regionalism developing in less teleological ways;[495] and to see a greater degree of 'policy assemblage', continuity and contingency in the actions that emerged,[496] very much shaped by context. The YHDA survived to become the template for the Yorkshire Forward Regional Development Agency (RDA) in 1999 under New Labour, and in some ways represented the template for such 'third way' policies.

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[494] Brenner, *New State Spaces*, 198.
[495] As is sometimes evident in discourses on Thatcherism that concentrate on spatial scales, e.g. Allen, Massey and Cochrane*, Rethinking the Region*.
[496] Sue Brownhill, 'From planning to opportunism? Re-examining the creation of the London Docklands Development Corporation', *Planning Perspectives,* 30:4 (2015), 537-570; Wetherell, 'Freedom planned'.

Chapter 3: Political Regionalism: "Yorkshire Forever – Humberside Never":[497] the creation and abolition of Humberside County Council, c.1962-c.1996

> Utopia is the perfect society – therefore it cannot exist. A Utopian is an impractical dreamer. Utopians have always stood at the crossroads of history. If the paths they chose led to nowhere, if they failed to take mankind with them, if a world of peace and harmony remains a pipedream, they remain, nonetheless honourable losers... So it is with Humberside.[498]

3.1 Introduction

I

The previous chapter explored the ways in which semi-representative quasi-NGOs mobilised various images and ideas of Yorkshire towards a functional economic regionalism. These images were selective and partial, and were both national and international facing. The result was that the eastern side of the region – the area that would become Humberside in the reorganisation of local government the early 1970s – fitted awkwardly into this model of regionalism. The dissonance of the natural landscape with the 'heartlands' of Yorkshire, the industrial and social profile of the area, and its physical remoteness from south and west Yorkshire all served to marginalise the Humberside sub-region within the popular imagination of either Yorkshire or the industrial 'North'.

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[497] 'A county by a New Name Doesn't Smell as Sweet', *New York Times,* 31 May 1989: the article notes that, when interviewed, Trevor Pearson wore a sweater 'bearing the white rose of Yorkshire' and this slogan.

[498] Ivan E. Broadhead, *Portrait of Humberside* (London, 1983), 12.

This chapter explores the political and discursive creation of Humberside in the 1960s and 1970s within this 'regional moment'. As with the economic regionalism that emerged from the modernising, professionalising impulse of the time, it focuses particularly on how such changes brought the administrative area of 'Humberside' into national parlance and policy. In doing so this chapter briefly touches on the contemporary debates on the feasibility and desirability of a 'regional' tier of governance. It argues that though these intended reforms and their rationale were characterised as a top-down, high-modernist and technocratic imposition – as particularly displayed in the work of the Redcliffe-Maud Commission on local government – in the creation of Humberside, this process involved a degree of support, negotiation and appropriation from official and semi-official actors within the area. Of particular importance within this were various large-scale infrastructural proposals and developments, such as a mooted 'New City' on the banks of the Humber; a major new deep-water port complex to rival Rotterdam; and road transport crossing for the Humber Estuary.

II

The first two sections of this chapter consider the political circumstances in which a non-metropolitan county of Humberside was established by the Local Government Act of 1972. The following section then focuses on the concerted campaign to have the new local authority of Humberside abolished – which would emerge 'almost the day after the decision was announced', as Beverley MP James Cran claimed in 1994.[499]

The persistent and varied campaigns against reforms to the traditional boundaries of local government is an aspect of modern British politics that has received surprisingly

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[499] 'Local Government Reorganisation (Humberside)', *House of Commons Debates, Vol. 244,* 26 May 1994, 492.

little attention from historians.[500] Where local government in England in the 1970s and 1980s has been the focus of studies, this has tended to be in relation to either the role of the Greater London Council (GLC), Metropolitan County Councils (MCCs) and Metropolitan Boroughs (such as Liverpool or the 'Socialist Republic of South Yorkshire') in mobilising alliances of new social movements and 'local socialisms' as pockets of resistance against Thatcherism; or the attendant diminishing role, autonomy and influence experienced by local authorities as a result of the changes in economic and planning policies highlighted in the previous chapter.[501]

Despite this comparative neglect, this section argues that the grassroots – and arguably genuinely popular – campaigns against new patterns of local government demonstrates not only the construction and articulation of concerted alternative regionalisms against official and statist regional definitions, but also provides a new perspective on contemporary British politics and political ideologies from the late 1970s. Though the various societies and associations formed to oppose Humberside – in particular the Yorkshire Ridings Society (YRS), the East Yorkshire Action Group (EYAG), and the North Lincolnshire Association (NLA) – reflected and embodied aspects of mainstream Conservatism in the 1980s, certain other aspects of their lobbying, correspondence and activities contradicted key tenets of Thatcherism. Exploring these groups and the debates their actions provoked also provides perspectives on many of the core dimensions of British politics debated by political historians: the uses and role of heritage and 'heritage panics'; the construction of 'imagined communities'; the backlash against a professional society; and the 'privatisation of politics'. Though arguably ideologically anathema to the regionalism practiced by the regional economic bodies discussed in the

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[500] Some local studies exist with varying focuses, such as Martin Johnes' study on the establishment of South Glamorgan County Council, or Daisy Payling's examination of the politics of Sheffield City Council.

[501] Ken Young and Nirmula Rao, *Local Government Since 1945 (Oxford, 1997)*.

previous chapter, this section also highlights some similarities in method and organisation that speak to the discernible associational culture of Yorkshire.

Finally, this core sample will discuss the intrinsic and important role the Humber Bridge played within the competing forms of regionalism and regional identity articulated on Humberside. Despite its contingent origins, the Humber Bridge became a central, almost obsessive focus of abolitionist activities, as well as a central *raison d'etre* for those who defended Humberside's existence. Its symbolic power is a significant dimension to understanding contested political identities within the sub-region of Humberside.

In addition to official reports, publications and local government archival sources from both national and local record offices, this chapter examines primary evidence deposited at the Hull History Centre by members of the citizens' action groups against the Humberside authority. It also considers records of national coordinating organisations such as the Association of British Counties (ABC). This broadens understanding of the debates on local government from the limited focus on the top-down reforms of local government in the 1980s and 1990s, particularly their financial motivations,[502] and help in exploring the complex relationship between localism, regionalism and nationalism. These documents also begin to explain the longer historical foundations of arch conservative interests that have recently mobilised identity politics as a means to build popular support across traditional party boundaries and allegiances, to particular effect since the 2010s. Examining the complex lobbying groups formed out of an stated interest to uphold an imagined 'Yorkshire' culture against perceived 'internal colonialism', and to abolish 'unnatural' political institutions, further serves to highlight the complex interaction between relational and physical attributes of regionalism as emphasised in this thesis.

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[502] Ibid., 213-218; David Wilson and Chris Game, *Local Government in the United Kingdom* (Basingstoke, 1994), 55-58.

3.2   The birth of 'Humberside' in context, 1962-1966

I

By the end of the 1960s, Humberside had become widely established as an area with a broadly recognisable geography, one that was central to debates on the economic, social and (perhaps most crucially) political future of the assumed sub-region around the Humber Estuary. Such widespread usage of the term is remarkable in itself. Unlike other northern estuarine conurbations that had (since Victorian industrialisation) at least been known colloquially and semi-officially as Tyneside and Merseyside, Humberside was a term of little usage, definition or cachet before the 1960s.[503] This itself did not preclude well-established functional and associational 'cross-Humber' links; David Neave for example has highlighted an appreciable number of societies and organisation that by the end of the nineteenth century were operating on a Hull, East Riding and North Lincolnshire basis, as were local newspapers such as the *Hull Daily Mail* and other publications.[504] It was the context of the early 1960s that served as the formative period for the emergence of Humberside as a recognised sub-regional entity.

II

Though given impetus by the modernising and professionalizing political culture that pervaded public life in the early 1960s, the reform of English local government was debated and advocated frequently since the creation of administrative counties by the Local Government Act in 1888. Though C.B. Fawcett's highly influential *Provinces of*

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[503] Robert Doherty, '"Uncertain Waters Beneath the Rainbow Arch": The Building of the Tyne Bridge 1920-1929', North East History, 41 (2010), 43-77; Belchem, 'A city apart', 217-232.
[504] Neave, 'The identity of the East Riding of Yorkshire', 196-197.

England (first published in 1919) was primarily framed around providing a federal solution to the Irish Question, much of the rationale for the changes put forward was the increasingly 'extreme complexity' of the local government divisions that had proliferated since the 1888 Act, that were overlaid with additional divisions for public utilities and central government functions. The provinces Fawcett devised in 1919 were justified not only as more rational units for public administration, but also that significant revisions to the boundaries denoted neither anything 'sacrosanct' in them, nor popular attachment to the administrative counties.[505] The following two decades until the outbreak of the Second World War did little to demonstrate the efficacy of this pattern of local authorities. Local government finance was plunged into crisis by the sectoral slumps and global economic shocks of the 1920s and 1930s respectively. This led to a reduction in the autonomy of local authorities through increased central control, through both the imposition of financial restrictions, and through the transfer of functions to central government and to *ad hoc* bodies with varying degrees of centralised control.[506] But such measures, including the 1929 Local Government Act that provided for a review of county districts, did little to fundamentally alter the local government map.

Despite this, local government arrangements and boundaries remained subject to continued academic discussion – mainly amongst human geographers and planners – through the 1920s to the 1940s. Arguments were consistently in favour of larger 'regional' units of government, particularly from members of the Garden Cities and Town Planning Association (later the Town and Country Planning Association, TCPA), and the Fabian Society.[507] From the latter, G.D.H. Cole's *The Future of Local Government* (1921) argued that increased central government finance would inevitably necessitate

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[505] Fawcett, *Provinces of England*, 17-29, 31-49.
[506] William A. Robson, *Local Government in Crisis* (London, 1968), 51.
[507] G.D.H. Cole, *The Future of Local Government* (London, 1921), 8.

increased central control. Rather than a federal solution, Cole argued that large regional authorities should be established whose responsibilities would be 'local' rather than parliamentary in scope, with their role envisaged as centred on regional planning. Though believing the rural districts to be too small to effectively carry out their intended functions, county boroughs (in addition to many urban districts) – 'town' – should remain distinct from the more rural county council areas, the 'country'.[508]

Though there were broad similarities between the provinces of Fawcett and the regions of Cole, their differences underlined the plurality of schemes produced, with no easy consensus emerging. Despite this, regionalisation of various public and private bodies continued at pace in the 1930s, highlighting the distinct lack of any standardisation in boundaries. Provincial regional 'capitals' such as Birmingham, Leeds, Manchester, Nottingham and Newcastle were frequently the chosen administrative centres, but in 1939 E.W. Gilbert was able to produce no fewer than twenty-five different geographical divisions of England and Wales either proposed or in use by public and private bodies, some with significant differences in their boundaries.[509] This heterogeneity was matched by the multiple schemes advanced by various reformers; with some, such as Cole, prefiguring indirect election to a 'Federal Council';[510] others favouring more direct electoral accountability along the lines of Fawcett's provincial 'parliaments';[511] or *ad hoc*

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[508] Ibid., 36-37.
[509] E.W. Gilbert, 'Practical Regionalism in England and Wales', *The Geographical Journal,* 94, 1 (1939), 29-44.
[510] G.D.H. Cole, 'The Future of Local Government', *Political Quarterly,* 12:4 (1941), 411-412; Edgar Ashby, 'Regional Government; or, The Next Step in Public Administration', *Public Administration,* 7:4 (1929), 369.
[511] Fawcett, *Provinces of England,* 17-24.

arrangements between local authorities on larger scales than had previously been attempted, as advocated by W.A. Robson and other writers on local government.[512]

Despite contention over the desirable scale of administrative units – one that was undoubtedly bolstered by the party political distinctions between urban and rural – broad academic consensus existed on the need for planning of service provision on a larger scale than possible through the pattern of councils. A 1929 essay, in rather Whiggish terms, claimed this to be self-evident: 'the deliberate adoption of larger [local government] units' represented the logical line of development as 'the tendency of to-day throughout the whole sphere of human activity is towards the larger unit'.[513] Even prior to the Second World War, increases in personal mobility meant that a town/country distinction appeared to most observers an unacceptable 'geographical anomaly'.[514] The necessity to plan the physical and social environment over a greater area than allowed through traditional urban/rural distinctions was at the heart of Ebenezer Howard's *Garden Cities of Tomorrow*, first published in 1898. Though largely concerned with the practicalities of financing and self-sustaining his 'Garden Cities' proposals, the principles of Howard's work (the need to plan settlements on a regional basis, and the channelling of urban growth rather than unlimited sprawl) were strongly promoted in the interwar years through the association established to develop its ideas, what would become the TCPA.

Howard and Fawcett's centrality to the discussions on the reform of public administration at a local and regional level emphasises the rather cautious and contingent approach that formed towards American and European ideas and reforms in this period. In urban

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[512] W.A. Robson, *The Development of Local Government* (2nd edn. London, 1948), 50; C.J. Robertson, 'Some Administrative Aspects of Regionalism', *Public Administration,* 19:1 (1941), 22.
[513] Ashby, 'Regional Government', 365-366.
[514] Lord Redcliffe-Maud and Bruce Wood, *English Local Government Reformed* (Oxford, 1974), 26-31.

planning terms, this period saw distinct differences between Anglo-American problems and the high density, socially mixed centres of continental European cities.[515] Transatlantic ideas of town planning remained somewhat distinct from their continental European counterparts,[516] and it was to the 'Metropolitan Regionalism' of the United States of America that many of essays on English regional administration referred in the interwar period.[517] An aversion to the type of regional standardisation and 'planning' instituted in the interwar years by totalitarian regimes in Germany and the Soviet Union spurred officials and commentators to embrace *ad hoc* (social, economic and political) regionalism, as demonstrated by the Tennessee Valley Authority.[518] An important factor in scepticism towards political regionalism in larger units was the supposed strength of 'local jealousies and vested interests'.[519] The issue of supposed regional 'capitals' elicited considerable debate over designating any urban hierarchy. As one responder to Fawcett's initial provincial proposals posited in 1917, 'I feel the most troublesome thing, if the scheme were to be carried out, would be, not the want of local patriotism, but the excess of it. Could one ever get Liverpool and Manchester to agree as to either being a capital?'.[520] Manchester's adoption over Liverpool in all regional administrative schemes of the state was mirrored by Leeds' adoption over Sheffield – a problem Fawcett had sought to solve with the inclusion of the 'Peakdon' province.[521] Vocal local opposition, particularly from the local authorities themselves, was cited as one of the reasons for the government's rejection of the 1937 Royal Commission on Tyneside's recommendation

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[515] Peter Hall, *Great Planning Disasters* (London, 1980), 31.

[516] Mark Clapson, *Suburban Century: Social Change and Urban Growth in England and the United States* (Oxford, 2003), 4.

[517] E.g. Gilbert, 'Practical Regionalism', 38. However, the influence of French social scientists was evident, for example in the work of Cole and Patrick Geddes: David Massey, 'Regional Planning 1909-1939: "The Experimental Era"', in Garside and Hebbert (eds.), *British Regionalism*, 62.

[518] Robertson, 'Some Administrative Aspects', 13-16; Gilbert, 'Practical Regionalism', 43.

[519] Robertson, 'Some Administrative Aspects', 22.

[520] Thomas Holdich *et al,* 'National Divisions of England', *The Geographical Journal,* 49:2 (1917), 138.

[521] Gilbert, 'Practical Regionalism', 40.

that a regional council be established with responsibility for some services.[522] Another key context of this debate was a strong current of pastoralism, and continuous reference to 'natural' boundaries and/or regions. Much like the regional geography of Vidal in France sought to balance the competing pulls of the local rural community and of rationalising urban industrial modernity,[523] Howard's Garden City movement sought to blend the competing magnets of the town and country. Within many of the proposals was a desire to check 'the drift to the towns' and the attendant 'alienation from the soil of the country' this had facilitated.[524]

These three factors would each remain core aspects of the debate on local or regional government reform in the post-war period. With the outbreak of the Second World War, the *ad hoc* regional administration that had emerged in the preceding years was replaced by a full regional system. The urgency of civil defence and the necessity for an intermediate commander should the threat of invasion materialise, meant the appointment of twelve Regional Commissioners (ten for England and one each for Scotland and Wales).[525] In additional to their organisational imperative regarding civil defence, the Commissioners were effectively assigned 'to act as the eyes, ears and mouth of the central government in the region'.[526] Given the exceptional circumstances that led to this constitutional imposition, and the autocratic nature of the Commissioners, their abolition at the end of the war stood as one of the few points of agreement amongst the local authorities.[527]

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[522] W. A. Robson, 'The Regional Commissioners', *Political Quarterly,* 12:2 (1941), 147; Robertson, 'Some Administrative Aspects', 22.

[523] Nigel Thrift, "Taking aim at the heart of the region," *Human geography: Society, space, and social science* (London, 1994), 204–207.

[524] Edgar Ashby, 'Regional government', 373.

[525] Robson, 'The Regional Commissioners'; Asterley Jones, 'Post-war Machinery,' 201.

[526] Robson, 'The Regional Commissioners', 150.

[527] Robson, *Local Government in Crisis,* 82; Smith, *Regionalism in England* vol. II, 12-13.

Though a weight of evidence demonstrated the obsolescence of the existing system of local government, central government resisted radical reform whilst no consensus on its likely scope existed. The absence of consensus was effectively assured by mutual antagonism between the respective associations of the municipal corporations and county councils.[528] There was some official movement towards the discussion of radical change outside the 'county/county borough system' through the Local Government Boundary Commission (LGBC) founded in 1945. But despite making general proposals around optimal sizes for single and two-tier authorities that would have seen the abolition of the some of the 'unfit' units of government,[529] the LGBC was abolished in 1949 with none of its proposals adopted. Timidity towards reform in this period was also argued by Robson as an aversion of the LGBC towards advocacy of anything resembling provincial regionalism.[530] This highlighted the issue Cole had raised: that due to what he saw as 'terminological misfortune', 'region' in the federal sense had become confused with the notion of remodelled local authorities or functional city-regions, as were being widely advocated after the war.[531] An important related factor, as Bulpitt famously argued, was the conscious attempt to uphold fragmented and largely depoliticised 'peripheral government' in this period as a means to maintain a separation between national and local political interest. Though there may not have been the constitutional calculation credited to the Centre by Bulpitt, the nationalisation of various industries by the Attlee Government precipitated further geographically uneven regional arrangements and further centralisation.[532] In this context, maintaining largely unreformed local

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[528] Alan Alexander, 'Structure, Centralization and the Position of Local Government', in Martin Loughlin, M. David Gelfand and Ken Young (eds.), *Half a Century of Municipal Decline 1935-1985* (London, 1985), 50-54.

[529] Robson, *Local Government in Crisis,* 94.

[530] Ibid., 95.

[531] Cole, 'The Future of Local Government', 417; Michael Keating, 'The debate on regional reform', in Hogwood and Keating (eds.), *Regional Government*, 238-239.

[532] Keating, 'The debate on regional reform', 239; Alexander, 'Structure, Centralization', 56.

government may have appeared the most desirable option, particularly with little local official or public enthusiasm for sweeping change.

III

This lack of consensus saw attention shift instead to what was seen as the more immediate concern of reconstruction. As highlighted in the previous chapter, more centralised and regionalised economic and physical planning absorbed regional energy during the 1940s; nationalisation of key industries and public services went alongside more sustained regional economic policy with the 1945 Distribution of Industry Act. The Town and Country Planning Act (1947) extended the planning powers of local authorities to allow for comprehensive redevelopment under 'top-down' supervision from the newly-established Ministry of Town and Country Planning.[533] The 1946 New Towns Act also facilitated central planning towards varied regional objectives, such as controlled urban overspill around London, and promoting economic development in North East England and Scotland.[534] The centralised focus of policy saw interest in political regionalism wane in the late 1940s and early 1950s.[535] The extension of the post-war welfare state further sapped the autonomy of local authorities post-1945, as more power was concentrated in Westminster.[536] In housing, the scale of reconstruction served to render them 'more the agents of a national housing policy than autonomous providers for their local communities'.[537]

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[533] Massey, 'Regional Planning', 74.
[534] Meryl Aldridge, *The British New Towns: A programme without a policy* (London, 1979), 132-133.
[535] Smith, *Regionalism in England* 2, 17; Keating, 'The debate on regional reform', 240.
[536] Fielding, *Labour and cultural change*, 19.
[537] Alexander, 'Structure, Centralization', 58.

Developments towards the end of the 1950s reinforced frustrations with the existing system of local government, while continuing to offer no wholesale radical solution. Despite a developing academic consensus, the changes made in this decade maintained the principle of separation between town and country. As with regional policy, the post-war controls of the Attlee government relaxed over this decade, frustrating planning circles such as the TCPA.[538] The Conservative government drew criticism from Robson and other campaigners due to the attitude of the Ministry of Housing and Local Government that no fundamental change in administration could be countenanced without the agreement of all local government associations.[539] The 1958 Local Government Act created another Local Government Commission for England with limited powers to propose extensions to the county boroughs, but only for continuous suburbs of urbanised areas. Some marginal headway was made, with mergers and rationalisations to county boroughs and councils in Cambridgeshire and around Birmingham in particular. But bitter local political opposition between neighbouring shire and city authorities saw many more defeats for the commission.[540]

So though there was a long established critique of the administrative, geographical and planning framework of local authorities prior to the 1960s, the main drivers of change remained the economic shocks of the late 1950s. As discussed, 'declinist' debates spurred a widespread discussion about both the nature, structure and culture of British society.[541] The national mood that evoked 'dynamism' and 'planning' had at its heart however a drive towards not only increased efficiency, but within that a rejection of the supposed amateurism of both British industry and the state. The most vehement critique

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[538] Hardy, *From New Towns to Green Politics*, 39-43.
[539] Robson, *Local Government in Crisis*, 115-128.
[540] Redcliffe-Maud and Wood, *English Local Government Reformed*, 27-28.
[541] Grant, 'Historians, the Penguin Special', 30; Jim Tomlinson, 'Thrice Denied: 'Declinism' as a Recurrent Theme in British History in the Long Twentieth Century', *Twentieth Century British History,* 20:2 (2009), 227-251.

against 'country' interests came from Perry Anderson's 'Origins of the Present Crisis' in 1964. At the heart of Anderson's diagnosis of the fundamental weaknesses in British society were the incomplete nature of the bourgeois revolution that had defined the landed aristocracy as the 'dominant capitalist class'. Through this economic dominance, he argued, they had culturally buttressed their social position through various cultural insignia to maintain the social relations of the 'countryside', ideologically underpinned by Burkean conservatism. Though Anderson's structural Marxism was not in itself indicative of popular thought, his article built on and endorsed more popular works such as Shonfield's *British Economic Policy since the War* and Shanks' *The Stagnant Society.*[542] His emphasis on 'the pronounced personality type of the governing class: aristocratic, amateur and, "normatively" agrarian' highlighted an appetite to challenge the overriding parochialism of local government in the shires, and for the urban as the source of modern dynamism. This technocratic, scientific and professional modernism was set in contrast to the supposed amateurism of the country gentleman; as shown in the image somewhat successfully cultivated of Harold MacMillan and Alec Douglas-Home by the Labour Party led by Harold Wilson in 1964.

As with economic issues, this urban shift in politics was led by an initial focus on the metropolis. New town development around London, and the decentralisation of the capital's population, strained existing local government patterns as larger districts clashed with county councils. The Herbert Commission was therefore established in 1957 to look specifically at the problems of the main 'built-up' area of Greater London. The recommendations from the Commission's report led to the creation of the GLC, which was provided with responsibility for major local services (such as strategic planning, overspill housing and later public transport) with thirty-two boroughs that had

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[542] Tomlinson, *The Politics of Decline*, 38.

immediate welfare, children, housing and maintenance services. Campaigners for reform

of local government and those advocating wider regionalism similarly saw this as a

positive, if incomplete, measure. Though the creation of a top-tier authority with

democratic accountability was commended by Robson and others, this primarily

represented an extension of the existing system rather than functional reform. True

political regionalism, it was argued, would require – as the Herbert Commission had

admitted – an authority to govern over a much larger area, and for this authority to be

given some centralised functions, such as the development of highways.[543]

The ascent of 'the city' – defined in highly rational, abstract and high-modernist terms –

became much more central in academic and planning policy discourse at this time. This

reflected anxieties about the increasing suburbanisation of (particularly) the English

population, with the increasing affluence and concerted low-density home building

programmes of the 1950s. This was posed as a cultural threat to civic and political

engagement, with Lewis Mumford most famously arguing in *The City in History* that the

'ultimate outcome of the suburbs' was passivity and alienation from the city.[544] A radical

solution was required to address the estimated population increase of three million in

the next fifteen years. If the overspill problems of the major cities were to be solved, the

report *Let Our Cities Live* argued, 'it is necessary to establish one or two New Cities with

the same purpose as New Towns'.[545] As Ortolano has documented, prior to the

construction of Milton Keynes, ambitious plans for a 'North Bucks New City' – imagined

as a carefully planned conurbation for 250,000 – were promoted by Buckinghamshire

county's architect and planner Fred Pooley.[546] More ambitious plans were articulated by

other planners, such as Derek Rigby Childs' 'Counterdrift Cities' proposals, which also

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[543] Robson, *Local Government in Crisis*, 152-156; Smith, *Regionalism in England 2*, 18.
[544] Clapson, *Suburban Century*, 5.
[545] Ibid., 15.
[546] Ortolano, 'Planning the Urban Future', 477-507.

took industrial decline as their reference point, proposing a series of 'new growth' points within 'development zones': concentrated corridors imagined to contain dynamic employment opportunities. These zones included proposals for new 'regional centres', urban complexes that would be efficiently planned to provide local, national and even international transport links. Peter Self, the new chairman of the TCPA, also advanced similar planning proposals 'to match the pace and intensity of urban growth' in the South East; through channelling resources into growth elsewhere in the country.[547]

Such ideas borrowed heavily from the European high-modernist tradition, such as the work of Le Corbusier.[548] They assertively claimed the obsolescence of the traditional city, eschewing the existing British traditions of planning, and arguing, hand in hand with economic planning, for urban planning on a much greater scale with more even and efficient distribution of people and services. Though Thrift has attributed the more rationalising and totalising neglect of place in the regional geography in the 1960s and 1970s to a Marxist tradition, the highly statist, modernist embrace of such ideas appeared to cut across the political spectrum in Britain at this time.[549] In the 'planning fervour' from the early 1960s both the left and right saw a necessity to arrest the supposed 'drift to the south' through economic, social and urban planning.[550]

As regions supported by the EPCs and designated by Whitehall emerged as a means to transform the UK's economic future, so intense top-down interest was sparked in 'regions' as the basis for a redrawing of the form and function of local government. The creation of the LGBC in 1963 had shown the potential for fundamental reform around larger geographical areas. Again the debate focused on what the ideal units for

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[547] Hardy, *From New Towns to Green Politics*, 70.
[548] Scott, *Seeing Like a State*, 103-111.
[549] Jim Bulpitt, *Territory and Power in the United Kingdom: an interpretation* (Manchester, 2008 edn.), 148.
[550] O'Hara, *Dreams to Disillusionment*, 33.

functional service provision should be: tensions still existed between whether the preferred 'intermediate tier' of governance should provincial in size (like the EPCs) or more 'city-region' authorities.[551] The latter conception found its most cogent and public articulation through Derek Senior. His exploration of 'the city-region as an administrative unit' in a 1965 *Political Quarterly* article which distilled arguments for a radical reform of local government. The transformative effects of motor transport on the functional geographies of the conurbations was established from the outset. Senior repeated that that local authorities were neither of sufficient size or quality to fulfil their former functions, and it was as much the reluctance of local government officials to countenance reform that had led to many of their former functions being vested within *ad hoc* central government bodies.[552] As an alternative Senior saw a 'city region' defined as 'an area whose inhabitants look to a common centre for those specialised facilities and services... whose economic provision demands a user population of large but less than national proportions'. He identified thirty or so 'units' that fitted four typologies: 'mature, emergent, embryonic or potential'.[553] Local government, should instead of the former 'counties' reflect these units.

The most striking aspect of the article was Senior's attitude towards local cultural identities and historical antecedents in local government:

> Culturally speaking, townsfolk and countryfolk in the same region are ceasing to differ: both are demanding all the satisfactions, urban and rural, that modern technology and personal mobility are making available to all. Few of us can be said in any meaningful sense, to *live* in town or country, no matter where we may sleep: the range of our normal activities is region-wide.[554]

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[551] Mackintosh, *The Devolution of Power*, 190; Keating, 'The debate on regional reform', 242.
[552] Derek Senior, 'The City Region as an Administrative Unit', *Political Quarterly,* 36:1 (1965), 90-91.
[553] Ibid., 84.
[554] Ibid., 85-86.

Senior argued that administration on the basis of the historical 'counties' allowed councillors to inspire 'blind' loyalty through a 'confidence trick' that elided their administrative areas with geographical units.[555] In a broadly modernist manner, Senior stated that functional identity was of greater importance than cultural identities:

> It cannot, of course, be pretended that even the mature city regions are yet communities in the corporate sense that towns and sometimes counties used to be in the pre-motor age. There is, indeed, a school of thought which... holds that no unit can inspire a sense of belonging until it has been defined, named and institutionalised. What *can* be claimed is that the city region, even in its embryonic form, is a social entity much more relevant to the concerns of local government than any other now that the motor-vehicle has come into general use.[556]

Of the thirty city regions Senior defined, he argued that all save Newbury and Ashford had ready-made cultural resources; particularly public transport services, universities and local print newspapers with sales that were 'virtually self-contained'.[557]

It was this somewhat highly centralised, paternalistic if not authoritarian attitude towards reform of the national map, coupled with the supposed necessity for radical modernisation of England's institutions to stem the rapid national 'decline', that provided the catalyst for action. In 1966, Richard Crossman as the Minister for Housing and Local Government in Harold Wilson's Labour Government wound up the Local Government Commission that had operated since 1958, and established a Royal Commission on Local Government in England and Wales under the chairmanship of Sir John Maud (who would be Lord Redcliffe-Maud by the time of the Commission's report). The commissioners appointed included Senior, T. Dan Smith and Evelyn Sharpe, who for the previous decade had served as Permanent Secretary in the MHLG and had 'remarked at

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[555] Ibid., 88.
[556] Ibid., 85.
[557] Ibid., 85.

length on the decline in quality of the councillors'.[558] The work of the Commission consequently reflected the scientific, modernising and urban impulses that had assumed intellectual and political dominance by the mid-1960s. Whereas the Herbert Commission had been criticised for the lack of an social scientific representation amongst its members, Redcliffe-Maud enlisted the expertise of L.J. Sharpe to conduct a number of national sample surveys to establish the optimal unit of 'functional effectiveness'. Sharpe's three surveys reinforced the preconceptions that had led to the Commissions appointment: they indicated over-representation on local authorities by 'elderly and higher status men'; 'a worrying degree of [public] apathy towards local government'; and that in urban areas local citizens did not demonstrate 'parochial attachments to specific districts or neighbourhoods'.[559]

IV

In this context, the area that would become Humberside is exemplary of these dynamics. The debates around town and country; the tensions between county boroughs and county councils; the extent to which suburbanisation highlighted the inappropriateness of traditional local authority boundaries; the increasing concern around the calibre and competency of local government representatives and officials; and the national imperative for economic modernisation and urbanisation to counter anxieties around industrial 'decline' were all at play in the Humberside area.

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[558] L.J. Sharpe, 'Elected Representatives in Local Government', *The British Journal of Sociology,* 13:3 (1962), 201-202.
[559] Savage, *Identities and Social Change*, 188-189.

Compared to the 'moth-eaten blanket' of county boroughs within the county councils elsewhere across the industrial areas of Yorkshire and Lancashire,[560] the area contained only two county boroughs across the East Riding and the northern Parts of Lindsey councils that became known as Humberside; the town of Grimsby on south bank, and the city of Hull on the north. In the mid-1960s, the two county boroughs accounted for around fifty per cent of the population what would substantively become the area of the county council, with Hull – at just under 300,000 inhabitants – around three times the size of Grimsby. The only other urban area of significance was the steel town of Scunthorpe. The vast majority of the rest of the East Riding and Northern Parts of Lindsey remained remarkably rural and sparsely populated, save for the coastal resort towns such as Hornsea and Bridlington in the former, and Cleethorpes in the latter county.

As noted in the previous chapter, the physical geography around the Humber, stretching up the coast through the East Riding, was in general markedly different from the space myth or geosophy that has framed the 'North'.[561] Instead, as an industrial survey of Humberside from 1970 asserted, 'its relief, climate and prevailing systems of agriculture belong firmly to lowland eastern and southern England'.[562] Through intensive warping of the soil around the estuary from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, both banks of the Humber consisted primarily of high quality 'carefully drained' agricultural land.[563] The average size of farms in Humberside through this period continued to be both significantly larger than the national average, and relatively profitable.[564] In terms of social organisation the area remained distinctive even into the twentieth century, with

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[560] As used to describe Lancashire in John Barr, 'What is Lancashire?', *New Society,* 5 January 1967.

[561] Shields, *Places on the Margin,* 229-231; Baker and Billinge, 'Cultural constructions', 181.

[562] Lewis and Jones, *Humberside Region*, 30.

[563] Ibid., 30-31; G. De Baer, 'History of the Humber Coastline', in Jones (ed.), *A Dynamic Estuary*, 19-20.

[564] J. North, 'Development of the Humber Region during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries', in Ellis and Crowther (eds.), *Humber Perspectives*, 433.

'the continuance of hiring and living-in' of servants who would move from farm to farm, rarely staying in one place for more than a year. Beverley, the historic county town of the East Riding, was in the post-war period increasingly middle-class,[565] but possessed a handful of significant industrial concerns.[566] However, despite being little more than 10 miles from Hull, it was significantly different demographically. The concentration of the City's economy around the port and the fishing industry meant it had consequently a much higher proportion of unskilled and/or casual manual low-wage labour than the national average.[567] Though less economically diverse, such a social structure was shared by Grimsby on the South Bank, due to the town's reliance on the fishing and food processing industries.[568] The more middle class population of Beverley meshed more readily with the smaller working class contingent of the town through myriad voluntary and other associations.[569]

This created a deep political divide between town and country, with the overtly 'socialist' council in Hull in contrast to Beverley's staunchly 'Independent' local government.[570] This distinction between town and country was more starkly marked by the composition of East Riding County Council (ERCC). Graham Turner in his exploration of the *North Country* in 1967 noted that, much like the North Riding, it was:

> ...the world of big country houses and spacious estates that has been touched surprisingly little by the industrial society to the west. The majority of the big landed magnates have no business interests whatsoever: in case after case, the entries in

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[565] A. P. Baggs, L. M. Brown, G. C. F. Forster, I. Hall, R. E. Horrox, G. H. R. Kent and D. Neave, 'Modern Beverley: Beverley after 1945', in *A History of the County of York East Riding: Volume 6, the Borough and Liberties of Beverley,* ed. K. J. Allison (London, 1989), 154-160. *British History Online,* http://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/yorks/east/vol6/pp154-160 [accessed 9 July 2017].

[566] Stefan Ramsden, 'Remaking Working-Class Community: Sociability, Belonging and 'Affluence' in a Small Town', *Contemporary British History,* 29:1 (2015), 9.

[567] Dorling, 'Distressed times and areas', 52-53.

[568] Lewis and Jones, *Humberside Region,* 174.

[569] Stefan Ramsden, *Working-Class Community in the Age of Affluence* (London, 2017), 131.

[570] Ibid., 160-161; John Barr, 'Hull and Humberside', *New Society,* 29 September 1966, 486.

> *Who's Who?* list not a single company directorship among the catalogues of public service and the support of charity.[571]

Turner also emphasised the feudal intertwining of these landed interests with local government, as well as the associational life of the county, as almost the archetype of both the amateurism and social malaise the reformers of the 1960s saw as complicit in supposed national decline:

> [Lord Halifax] himself has been a county councillor since 1947, and his wife, a member since 1951, is chairman of the education committee amongst other things...
>
> Both Lord Hotham and Sir Tatton Sykes, who both own estates that are significantly bigger that Halifax's, are county aldermen, and the chairman of the county is Sir John Dunnington-Jefferson, a squire who has been a member since 1922. Halifax is also a local magistrate and he acts as a figurehead in any number of social functions.[572]

This deep embedded nature of local officials and civic leaders was not however restricted to the county council's operations. There was significant disquiet regarding the receptiveness of Hull City Council's (HCC) to industrial interests in the area, with one critic in 1966 claiming that 'these old socialists can't get out of the 1920s and 30s... they just don't understand'.[573] Indeed, local Labour grandee Sir Leo Shultz served as leader of the City Council for all but two years until its dissolution, having first been elected in 1926.[574] Other prominent council councillors such as Fred Holmes had served since the 1930s. One paper noted that '...the geographical isolation, coupled with the

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[571] Graham Turner, *The North Country* (London, 1967), 164-167.
[572] Ibid., 171.
[573] John Barr, 'Hull and Humberside', *New Society,* 29 September 1966, 486.
[574] Howard Elcock, 'English Local Government Reformed: The Politics of Humberside', *Public Administration,* 53:2 (1975), 161-162.

social immobility which is the result of its industrial base, produces an aggressive insularity, not least among councillors'.[575]

The political and geographical separation between town and country belied more artificial separations in local government areas. Though Hull itself had been rather static in its population and social structure, the mid-1950s had seen a significant increase in suburbanisation to the villages and market towns covered by Haltemprice Urban District Council (UDC). That these affluent areas of Hessle, Cotttingham, Anlaby and elsewhere fell within the functional area of the City was recognised by the Local Government Commission in its later days in 1964, who recommended an extension of the Borough boundaries to include the greater part of this area as it was 'dependent commercially and industrially on the City'. However an appeal from ERCC that loss of these areas would threaten their limited resources led to a reversal of this decision.[576]

The continuities provided by the agricultural base of much of the East Yorkshire and North Lincolnshire were an important context for the debates surrounding Humberside and its creation. This, combined with the geographical distinctiveness of the area, indicated the enduring social structures which Phythian-Adams has argued must serve as

> the most immediate filter between people on the ground and the wider social organisation of the nation. The latter furnishes, as it were, a vocabulary of possible options, the particular mix and interpretation of which will vary in turn across the country according to the structure that becomes traditional to each localised society in the environing cultural context of its own specific topographic, historic, demographic and economic circumstances.[577]

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[575] A.P. Brier, 'The Decision Process in Local Government: A case Study in Fluoridation in Hull', *Public Administration,* 48:2 (1970), 154.

[576] HHC U DMC/34A HCC, 'Annual Report of the Town Planning Officer 1966/1967' (1967).

[577] Charles Phythian-Adams, 'Introduction: An Agenda for English Local History', in Charles Phythian-Adams (ed.), *Societies, Cultures and Kinship, 1580-1850: Cultural Provinces and English Local History* (Leicester, 1994), 5.

V

Humberside found very little usage in local or national popular parlance prior to the late 1950s. Where reference was made to Humberside, it was generally to the immediate areas around both banks. As an estuary that was four miles at its widest, the Humber presented a formidable barrier, broadly recognised as a natural division rather than a functionally unifying waterway. But this did not preclude a degree of cultural and associational exchange, and some economic links due to the shared common agricultural base between the East Riding and North Lindsey, and the Humber ports.[578] What groups did exist tended to retain in their names distinctions between Hull, East Yorkshire and North Lincolnshire.[579]

'Humberside' as a spatial designation thus emerged initially from the top down. The potentialities of the Humber excited planners, commentators and officials for a number of reasons. The first were the national and regional planning potentialities the area offered, both in economic and physical terms, based on their desire to harness the dynamism of 'growth pole' industries to modernise industry and arrest economic decline.[580] The seeming success of such initiatives was demonstrated by Europoort in Rotterdam, which had by the early 1960s become the busiest cargo port in the world. Rigby Child's 'counterdrift' strategy emphasised that 'new growth points' should be centred on estuarine areas (including the Humber). It was clear to planners that the Humber appeared particularly well placed. As one commentator noted in the mid-1960s:

> Almost every month one reads of some new major industrial or port development on Humberside: the new East Midlands Gas Board £6.5m plant at Kinningholme [sic]; a new 600 acre oil refinery to be served by 100,000 ton tankers; new docks

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[578] Neave, 'The identity of the East Riding of Yorkshire', 197; Lewis and Jones, *Humberside Region,* 165-202.
[579] Neave, 'The identity of the East Riding of Yorkshire', 197.
[580] Tomlinson, *The Politics of Decline,* 16-21; Hopkins, 'Translating the Transnational', 172; McCrone, *Regional Policy,* 71-72.

at Hull; new coal export facilities to Italy and the Continent… and gas gushing from the North Sea from drillings opposite the Humber.[581]

The surprise find of natural oil and gas in 1959 in the North Sea, whilst generating particular political interest and public euphoria,[582] also served to increase interest in Humberside. The expected need to accommodate a vastly increased population of up to 20 million more people by 2000 also underpinned interest in the Humber: its sparse population and easy physical landscape offered possibilities. A number of in academic journals proclaimed, in particularly modernist terms that:

> A new metropolitan city, based on international trade and commerce, at the head of the Humber Estuary (as part of a National Plan and as a rival to London) could be Britain's greatest enterprise in the second half of the twentieth century.[583]

Ambitious proposals were envisaged by planners, who saw the possibility for the creation of a 'Humberopolis' city for one million people, joined not only by a road bridge but also a barrage. Press interest also intensified, with *The Times* producing a special supplement on 'Humberside' in April 1965. This noted how, paradoxically, many of the features that had been seen as disadvantageous for growth, were now seen as points of strength:

> … England in the latter half of the twentieth century abhors a vacuum, and the situation behind the Humber is no longer described as lack of hinterland, but as ample space for development. The Humber offers plenty of undeveloped land around reasonably deep water within reasonable distance (by today's new standards) of large centres of population, and there are few such places left in England.[584]

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[581] Lesley Lane, *Humber – Plan for a new metropolitan city* (reprinted from *The Architects' Journal*), 19 January 1966.

[582] June Morris, 'Thomas Balogh and the Fight for North Sea Revenue', *Contemporary British History,* 12:2 (1998), 108; Adrian Hamilton, *North Sea Impact: Off-shore Oil and the British Economy* (London, 1978), 11.

[583] Lane, *Humber*.

[584] 'Humberside', *The Times, 26 April 1965.*

The ascent of regional planning in within government policy circles was most crucial to ensuring that Humberside would emerge as a descriptor for an imagined region around the Humber, a commitment that was only signalled rather than embodied by the creation of the Yorkshire and Humberside standard planning region under the DEA. As early as 1964, the Ministry of Housing and Local Government had indicated to Hull City Council that there would be a preliminary 'regional study' of the East Riding and Lindsey over a new development.[585] At the 1965 Labour Party conference, Housing Minister Richard Crossman revealed that 'I have my eye on the Humber... with a Humber Bridge you might really get a new town of 750,000 inhabitants south of the Humber, if we have the courage to make the right decisions'.[586] Labour would also use the crucial North Hull by-election in early 1966 to reiterate enthusiasm for this: Harold Wilson himself noted that 'linked by a bridge, Humberside...could become... the most promising area for a really large new town'.[587] Following emphatic victory in both the by-election, and then the 1966 General Election, it was agreed that Humberside would become the site for perhaps the Wilson Government's purest attempt at combining regional economic and physical planning. In July 1966 it was announced by George Brown that a Central Unit for Environmental Planning had been established under the DEA to explore the possibility.

A consistent theme across almost all of the literature of this period, especially volumes written with distance from the public and intellectual modernist climate of the 1960s, is the implicit assertion that the forms of political city-regionalism that was advanced in academic circles found no official indigenous support and/or public resistance or, more likely, public apathy. But an examination of 'Humberside' instead indicates a local endorsement and appropriation of the term. However, there were key differences in the

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[585] HCC WA/A/7 Mann to HBB Clerk, 18 September 1964.
[586] TNA EW6/66 'Note of Message from P. Downey', 27 March 1969.
[587] HHC WA/A/7 News Release: Harold Wilson to McNamara, 21 January 1966.

manner through which a notion of a region of Humberside was articulated and understood from a bottom-up perspective, in comparison to how city-regionalism was conceived as advanced by the likes of Senior and the TCPA.

3.3 'Humber mania' and the creation of Humberside County Council, 1966-1972

I

The origins of Humberside as a spatial classification in the early to mid-1960s were broadly top-down and primarily defined outside of the area. This provided physical boundaries for the region, but crucially would also give both the emerging sub-regional area and political administrative unit a distinctly temporal regional form; siting it conceptually in the modernism and urbanism that characterised public policy in the 1960s. Despite these outsider origins for Humberside, and the formidable barriers in both physical and cultural terms that existed for its local adoption, how the new designation was understood and articulated locally in the late 1960s into the 1970s demonstrates a much more complex discursive relationship than the popular narratives surrounding Humberside's abolition in the 1990s indicate. The understanding and use of Humberside was indicative of more complex spatial relationships than simply the centre/periphery distinctions that would be stressed by academics in the 1980s.

II

The national political and economic attention that was placed on Humberside in the 1960s stood somewhat in stark contrast to how the areas on the North and South Bank of the Humber had been viewed prior to this period. As discussed in the introduction, North Humberside, and Hull in particular, had been subject to remarks about 'otherness' and remoteness dating back to interwar period. This was still the case in the 1960s, as a member of the Yorkshire Coast Resorts Chambers of Trade informed Patrick Wall in 1966: 'a short time ago the Port of Hull was described on the BBC as being the City thirty miles from England'.[588] Other similar characterisations such as 'a town at the end of a railway siding' appeared in the press and elsewhere.[589] This isolation was apparent to John Barr when writing about Hull and Humberside in *New Society* in September 1966:

> One is most conscious of the loneliness of Hull, 22 miles from sea, nearly 40 road or rail miles from another city, 30 miles east of the country's transport spine, a vast rural hinterland around it, the unbridged Humber before it. The Lindsey coast opposite is another land, only two miles away over one of the country's most disgraceful trunk roads, half an hour away by the paddle steamers of one of the country's most expensive ferries.[590]

This illustrated the significance of both distance and the transport infrastructure of the area: before the final section of the M62 was built in the mid 1970s, the region was served by a road single carriageway road from Hull to Selby and the A1. The situation was worse in South Humberside, and it had led on both banks to 'traffic saturation, congestion, slow frustrating journeys and interminable delays'.[591] Such isolation found form in cultural flows and tastes. Graham Turner in his book on the North in 1967 compared Hull unfavourably to Merseyside, both in terms of nightlife and intellectual

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[588] HHC U DPW 3/156 Dunn to Wall, 7 March 1966.
[589] E.g. 'Who belongs to Humberside?', *London Illustrated News,* 27 March 1976.
[590] John Barr, 'Hull and Humberside', *New Society,* 29 September 1966, 484.
[591] Lewis and Jones, *Humberside Region,* 36.

fodder, characterising it as 'an immensely parochial, ingrown sort of town'.[592] Shiva Naipaul, writing of a tour of Humberside in 1978, wrote of Hull that 'cultural life has ground to a standstill', and that:

> until recently, the girls of Hull wore mini-skirts – fashions come late and change slowly in this part of the world. The town, stuck out on a limb, is on the way to nowhere. It lends itself to being passed by.[593]

The attention of the 1960s was thus an opportunity to break such national and regional isolation, and to achieve greater prominence. Hull in particular claimed a wider national standing (against Manchester) as Britain's Third Port.[594] Barr's 1966 *New Society* article quoted one resident who emphasised this desire for greater recognition:

> It's not an aggressive insularity, but negative, almost begrudging. We take pride in our city, but not in our insularity... we really want to plug into the mainstream.[595]

There was a sense from citizens and civic leaders alike that 'with a little bit more prodding this area will go like a bomb'.[596]

As the expert-led regional planning paradigm was embraced by economic interests across Yorkshire and Humberside in the 1960s, perhaps the most enthusiastic adoption came from the North Bank of the Humber. A *Tribune* article on the subject noted that 'Hullinsians see the answer to their problems – and much else besides – in stronger regional planning. indeed Hull must be the most regional planning conscious city in the country, judging by the frequency with which the subject crops up in conversation'.[597] The most enthusiastic adopters of 'Humberside' were the city's Corporation, who formed a

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[592] Turner, *North Country,* 186.
[593] 'The road to nowhere, *Spectator,* 18 February 1978.
[594] eg. 'Mainstay of City's Prosperity', *The Times,* 26 April 1965. Such a claim was based on Customs and Excise returns of £499m handled in foreign trade in 1963.
[595] John Barr, 'Hull and Humberside', *New Society,* 29 September 1966, 484.
[596] Mainstay of City's Prosperity', *The Times,* 26 April 1965.
[597] Horam, 'Hull: City in search of a region', *Tribune,* 1 December 1967.

Regional Development (Special) Committee of the Council in November 1965, with Leo Shultz as its chairman. The committee's founding terms of reference revealed something of the contingent nature with which the local authority embraced economic and political regionalism, namely 'to give continuing consideration to the problems associated with regional developments and the safeguarding of the interests of the City in such development'.[598] The leaders of the Council implored the area to 'think in terms of Humberside', with Shultz stating in a response to Adamson's 'Humberopolis' plan that:

> Unfortunately he is saying nothing strikingly new or original! The Hull Corporation has long been thinking on Regional lines and has set up [a committee]... to consider and propagate Regionalisation in all its aspects, in particular to cooperate with all other authorities in the Region to secure as far as practical Rationally planned development.[599]

Apparent though in this adoption of the language of regionalism was a sense that, though wider interest in the potentialities of Humberside offered opportunities for Hull to break into the 'mainstream' of national life, this also carried apparent threats. The CUEP's Physical Planning Unit had established its base in Barton-Upon-Humber in North Lincolnshire, and it was more than apparent prior to the long-delayed publication of the *Feasibility Study* that the South Bank was the favoured for large-scale urban development, accompanied by continued major industrial development in the rapidly expanding growth areas around Immingham.[600] If similar development was to happen on the North Bank it was envisaged to be to the West and East of Hull respectively (figure 3.1).

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[598] Regional Development (Special) Committee Minutes, 15 November 1965, *Kingston Upon Hull Municipal Corporation and Urban Sanitary Authority: Minutes of Proceedings, Committees 2.*
[599] 'The Humberopolis Debate', *Perspective East Yorkshire,* November/December 1966.
[600] *Humberside - A Feasibility Study* (HMSO, 1969), 25-27.
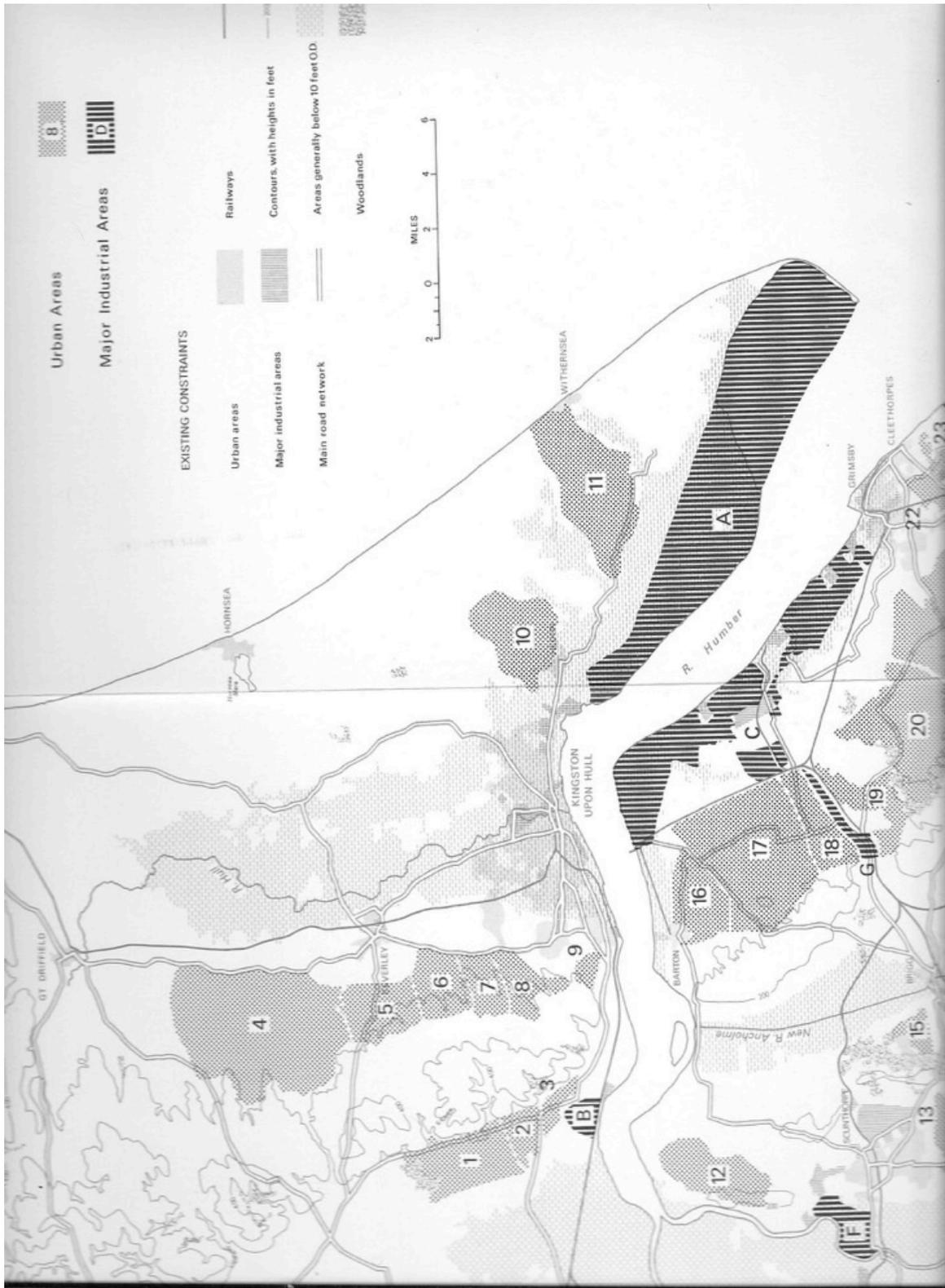
Figure 3.1 - From 'New areas physically suitable for development', in CUEP, *Humberside – A Feasibility Study* (HMSO, 1969).

Additionally, as discussed in the previous chapter, the increasing economic difficulties and rising unemployment of Hull, rather the export-led growth demanded by the *National Plan* in the late 1960s, made clear the precariousness of the City's existing industrial base and led to the North Bank's designation an 'Intermediate Area'.[601] Worries over the consequences of not aligning Humberside fortunes wholeheartedly with Hull and the North Bank were noted by *New Society* in 1966, that 'in recent years they have become conscious… that North Lincolnshire, not Hull, is setting the pace'.[602] The fear then that fervour towards 'Humberside' would continue to exacerbate Hull's peripherality underpinned the approach towards the regionalist agenda of the 1960s. While the CUEP continued their own economic and physical planning assessment of the area, the Regional Development Committee asserted their independence, commissioning their own consultants to conduct an initial appraisal of the industrial future and potential of the area.

Industry on Humberside: Growth and Potential, published in 1967, recognised that the 'internal situation and potential on Humberside is favourable to bid-scale industrial development', and linked this to the need for much better communications infrastructure to allow it to function on a much higher economic level as 'a gateway into Europe'.[603] Industrial strength was indicated by employment growth in the region being greatest in four of the six fastest growing industrial groups nationally. Contrary to the conception of the South Bank's propulsive nature, the report argued that 'Professional and Scientific Services' employment was growing 'much faster' (a 31.5 per cent increase compared to

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[601] Ibid., 51-53.
[602] John Barr, 'Hull and Humberside', *New Society,* 29 September 1966, 484-485.
[603] Hull City Council, *Industry on Humberside: Growth and Potential* (February 1967), 37.

a national increase of 23.3 per cent nationally).[604] The publication of the report gave

Shultz the opportunity to firmly align Hull with Humberside:

> Speaking at a press conference to introduce the report he said that Hull was the natural capital of the region and the centre of educational, recreational, industrial and commercial activity.[605]

The assertion that the city served as its 'capital' was a common motif, also advanced in

the City's promotional material on a national level (Figure 3.2). Alongside this was the

idea that the area was a 'Gateway to Europe': representing both enthusiasm of officials

and industrialists for potential entry into the Common Market (as was the case across

the Yorkshire and Humberside during the 1960s and into the 1970s)[606], and a regional

identity stronger than the 'embryonic' city-regionalism Senior had detected. This

regionalism was constructed as industrial, progressive and modern; outwardly

enthusiastic about the 'potential' offered by Humberside.

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[604] Ibid., 5-6.
[605] 'New bridge key to Humberside', *The Times,* 21 March 1967.
[606] Ibid.

Figure 3.2 - Advert from *The Times*, 26 June 1968.

III

Importantly, the regional aspirations of Hull's civic leaders in the late 1960s found a significant audience with the area's organisations, who also sought to construct and represent a functional unity across the Humber. The *Hull Daily Mail,* with established circulation on both the North Bank and North Lincolnshire since the late nineteenth century,[607] was a consistent proponent of the possibilities offered by Humberside in these years, extolling the 'enormous future and unlimited scope' planners and academics predicted for the Humber,[608] and also investing in the campaign for the construction of the Humber Bridge (see below).

Increased public collaboration between industrialists and labour groups with a regional agenda visibly emerged in this period. After a report on regional development around the Humber Estuary by Hull's Chamber of Commerce sparked interest, a Humber Area Development Committee was established. Its activities included the publication of a pamphlet advocating the construction of barrage across the Estuary from Grimsby Docks; the intention being to simultaneously provide deep water port facilities to rival those in Europe, and also to provide closer physical ties across the Humber. In 1964, prior to the full agreement of the Wilson Government's regional planning apparatus, the trade journal *Voice of Yorkshire and Humberside Industry* and a socialist newspaper, *Humberside Voice*, were founded. Though both publications emphasised the existence of a divide between North Humberside and South Humberside, they demonstrated a local acceptance and appropriation of the regional designation, and included many invocations to overcome barriers to unity. MP Tony Crosland in *Humberside Voice*

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[607] Neave, 'The identity of the East Riding of Yorkshire', 196-197.
[608] *Hull Daily Mail,* 15 November 1966.

implored readers 'let's stop assuming Hull and Grimsby are continents apart';[609] one report in the *Voice of Industry* was more emphatic:

> It is essential to think in terms of a united Humberside with a view of the 21st century before any sane forecast of the shape of things to come can be made. Therefore, administratively, Humberside will be one unit capable of developing in the next century as a whole to meet the challenges of trade with a united Europe.[610]

Much of these hopes, however, rested on an imagined regional economic future, and the calls for unity concealed weaknesses in these ties.

But there were also other productions of a Humberside identity that seeped into popular culture, that were much more closely rooted in place. The folk duo Christopher Rowe and Ian Clark recorded first *Songs for Humberside* in 1968, which was followed by a second record – *More Songs for Humberside* – in 1970. Despite the title, the subject matter of the songs was primarily focused around Hull and its uneasy social and political relationship the more affluent suburbs of Hedon and Haltemprice, despite the city's vital economic function ('Hull's Best Friends'; 'Keep your Hands Off Haltemprice'), though allusions were made to the landmarks and history of the area, along with (on the first record) strong references to a potential Humber Bridge ('Humber Bridge').[611] Though grounded in a distinct locality, and tinged with distinct humour and the isolation and dislocation O'Brien has identified in the work of poets in Hull,[612] Clark's sleeve on the first EP notes a unifying intention to their work, that '...music and humour can link almost

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[609] *Humberside Voice,* January 1965.
[610] 'Our ports - today and the way they could be in the year 2000', *Voice of Yorkshire and Humberside Industry, March 1965.*
[611] HAS/LP896 Christopher Rowe and Ian Clark, *Songs for Humberside* (John Hassell Recordings, 1968); HAS/LP1109 Christopher Rowe and Ian Clark, *More Songs for Humberside* (John Hassell Recordings, 1970).
[612] Sean O'Brien, 'The Unknown City'.

anything and armed with both we set out to take a long look at Humberside'.[613] By the time of the second release he noted that the *Songs* had been sung live and on television to a wide variety of audiences providing something of a '"fragrance" of Humberside' to many outside the area.[614]

Despite the strong local associations placed on Humberside with Hull, the subtleties of which were generally lost on a national press and government that knew little of the area, this did not preclude both official and more popular enthusiasm for stronger ties from the South Bank. Turner (with surprise) noted this alignment of Yorkshire and Humberside with the identities of North Lincolnshire residents, quoting a Cleethorpes woman saying there was '...only the Humber between us and Yorkshire'.[615] The authorities in Scunthorpe in particular consistently desired closer links with the North Bank, as in their 1966 'Scunthorpe Study'.[616] Grimsby's Corporation also indicated to the Redcliffe-Maud Commission that they favoured the creation of a higher tier provincial authority to include 'the entire Humber Estuary' rather than one based on the geographical county of Lincolnshire.[617]

IV

But while there were enthusiastic calls for unity among economic interests, the press, sections of the population and urban authorities, and attempts to construct a locally understood Humberside that aligned with national priorities, divisions between town and

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[613] Rowe and Clark, *Songs for Humberside*, http://www.45cat.com/record/haslp896897 (accessed 2 August 2017).

[614] Rowe and Clark, *More Songs for Humberside,* http://www.45cat.com/record/haslp1109 (accessed 20 November 2017).

[615] Turner, *North Country,* 14.

[616] Hull City Council, *Industry on Humberside: Growth and Potential* (February 1967), 20; 'The Humberopolis Debate', *Perspective East Yorkshire,* November/December 1966.

[617] *Royal Commission on Local Government in England : Written Evidence of County Borough Councils* (HMSO, 1968), 83.

country continued to be a point of controversy and resistance. Both North Lindsey County and East Riding County Councils would continue to assert their own identities against the emerging functional, economic and political unity of the two banks. The East Riding in particular set out both its geographical suitability as a unit of government, but also its cultural alignment with continuing rural patterns of life. The Council was emphatic in its written evidence to the Redcliffe-Maud Commission:

> The East Riding has a natural entity, imposed by boundaries which are almost completely natural and obvious. The sea is on the east and the Humber Estuary on the south. To the west and north are the rivers Ouse and Derwent.[618]

It claimed to be a local authority representing a 'natural' area and to refute 'expert opinion calling for as much as possible a dissolution of the distinction between town and country in the 'motor age'. The Council stated that 'the antithesis between town and country is something quite fundamental and, even in this overcrowded island, it remains true that each represents a way of life substantially different from each other'.[619] As Patrick Wall noted, the possibility of 'drastic local government re-organisation had led to 'a genuine fear that rural areas will be dominated by City of [Hull]'.[620]

The most obvious example of this tension came from the Ministry of Housing and Local Government's recommendation in 1967 that there should be a coordinating 'Joint Planning Body'.[621] The initial attempt to form such a body proved a non-starter, as the Unit were informed by the Yorkshire and Humberside Economic Planning Board (YHEPB) that after enquiries, both Lindsey and the East Riding 'feel strongly that machinery of the kind envisaged is not necessary. These authorities are very jealous of their individual

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[618] *Royal Commission on Local Government in England: Written evidence of County Councils* (HMSO, 1968), 332.
[619] Ibid., 333-334.
[620] 'The Humberopolis Debate', *Perspective East Yorkshire,* November/December 1966.
[621] TNA EW6/18 CUEP Minutes, 7 August 1967.

responsibilities'.[622] When the idea was resurrected it was again rejected by the county councils despite some enthusiasm from the more urban authorities.[623]

Many of the issues surrounding the political future of Humberside would begin to come to a head in 1969. The *Feasibility Study* was finally published in April, following significant and heated internal discussions between various departments, most notably the Treasury and the DEA. Rather than signal the immediate unleashing of the growth potential of the region, it instead deferred the decision on whether any new settlement for 250,000 people should go ahead on the Humber to 1972.[624] As it was, any action on the wider recommendations, beyond the early construction of a Humber Bridge for opening in 1976, were quietly dropped by the DEA's successor, the Department for the Environment (DOE), in 1971.[625]

In June 1969, Lord Redcliffe-Maud's report on local government in England was also finally published. The recommendations endorsed many of the criticisms that had led to the Commission: that local government no longer reflected the pattern of modern life, and that county boroughs 'as islands in the counties' led to fragmented service provision.[626] The report argued that town and country needed to be recognised as interdependent.[627] The recommendation of the report was that, to ensure more efficient provision of services and reduce the number of councils, unitary authorities should be created with population sizes ranging from 1 million to 250,000 inhabitants. From these local authorities there would be an indirectly elected provincial council. This majority report recommended the creation of unitary authorities on both banks: North

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[622] TNA EW6/23 Onslow to Mole, 8 January 1968.
[623] TNA EW6/23 'Summary of comments from local planning authorities on CUEP study on Humberside', 31 December 1969.
[624] See Rob Doherty, unpublished MA dissertation, Durham University, 2010.
[625] TNA EW6/154 Husain, Draft Memorandum RD CU144/70, 26 January 1971.
[626] Cmnd. 4040, *Royal Commission on Local Government in England 1966-1969: Vol I, Report* (1969), 2.
[627] Ibid., 25-26.

Humberside encompassing Hull, with its 'strong influence' of the surrounding areas, and the vast majority of the East Riding; and South Humberside, which contained both Scunthorpe and Grimsby, primarily as the Commissioners argued neither was sufficiently large to be an effective unit on their own, but that their character was sufficiently distinctive from the rest of Lindsey.[628] In his memorandum of dissent, Derek Senior, questioning the logic used for the viable size of unitary authorities, argued that instead there should be primary tiers at regional and district level; with a regional tier of government centred on Hull and spanning the Humber, and three district councils supporting the urban areas. Though these proposals including much larger areas of Lindsey in the districts for Scunthorpe and Grimsby, the third district on the North Bank again reflected broad boundaries of the East Riding.[629]

The proposals were subject to significant national debate in the early 1970s, influenced also by the change in government of the 1970 General Election.[630] Peter Walker as Environment Secretary made more ready concessions to 'local sentiment and historic ties' than the Redcliffe-Maud proposals had done.[631] However, a decision on how the Humber area should be governed prior to the Local Government Act proved perhaps the most difficult for the DOE in 1971. The Heath Government's first white paper in February 1971, noting their commitment to a two-tier authority structure that would put decision-making in the hands of local interests, set out two counties almost wholly consisting of the historic East Riding (with the town of Goole) and Lincolnshire respectively.[632] However, when boundaries were revised in November following consultations with the

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[628] Cmnd. 4040, *Royal Commission on Local Government in England 1966-1969: Vol I, Report* (1969), 201-202.

[629] Cmnd 4040-1, *Royal Commission on Local Government in England 1966-1969: Vol II, Memorandum of Dissent* (1969), 189-191.

[630] Alexander, 'Position of local government', 66-67; Young and Rao, *Local Government,* 203-204.

[631] Young and Rao, *Local Government*, 205.

[632] WYAS C/146/2 DOE Circular 8/71, 'Local Government Reorganisation in England: Proposed New Areas', 16 February 1971.

local authorities and publicity in the local press, the amendments set out a united Humberside, more along the lines proposed by Senior.[633]

Such a change was primarily driven not by a top-down insistence from Whitehall but by civic leaders in the urban areas of Humberside. The embrace of the region again demonstrated the traditional local distinctions between town and country. The mayors of Hull, Scunthorpe and Grimsby felt moved in December to send a letter to Walker expressing 'unreservedly our wholehearted support and that of our respective authorities for the formation of a new Humberside county', whilst pledging that the important role of agriculture and the balance of town and country would be maintained.[634] Both Hull's political leaders and Chamber of Commerce, and also civic leaders from the small authorities areas such as Isle of Axholme and Beverley Rural District Council (RDC), declared themselves 'unitedly delighted'. For the East Riding, the potential loss of name was seen to 'add injury to insult'.[635] But rather than assert the counties' historic boundaries, the council proposed instead that a new 'East Yorkshire' county council be formed from the inclusion of Scarborough 'and possibly the York area' due to their 'affinities with East Yorkshire'.[636] In the hastily arranged consultation meeting, local representative Alderman Bisby put it bluntly when he claimed 'the East Riding did not like Hull' suggesting an 'estuarine county' could be formed.[637]

Lindsey County Council put up even more vehement opposition, especially over the prospect of being divided between the Humberside and Lincolnshire counties, and as a result took its own initiative in arranging three postal county 'plebiscites' in March 1972,

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[633] WYAS C/146/2 Press Notice, 'Local Government Bill', 4 November 1971.
[634] 'Mayor launch attack on critics of the plan', *Lincolnshire Echo,* 3 December 1971.
[635] TNA HLG 29/897 'Newspaper comments on Humberside', u.d. (indicated in summary from 4-9 November).
[636] TNA HLG 29/897 Bisby to Walker, 'Local Government Reorganisation', 8 November 1971.
[637] TNA HLG 29/897 Note of Meeting with local authorities, 24 November 1971.

to demonstrate the strength of feeling for an 'All-Lincolnshire County'.[638] However, the results from the plebiscite were not as overwhelming as expected for a wholly new county that existing councils argued did not reflect the 'natural' region. Officials in the DOE noted that, compared with similar moves in other counties such as Poynton and North Somerset, and 'considering the amount of propaganda and the natural preference for the existing county name', the majority of 73 per cent (or roughly 47 per cent based on turnout) was quite small.[639] Alongside the vehement protests of the county councils were statements from prominent figures such as the Bishop of Lincoln, who articulated the common heritage - discussed in chapter 5 – of the 'great agricultural county, with great agricultural industry', and 'sad' that the great record of associational ties between statutory and voluntary associations would be broken.

These debates demonstrate the existence of a contested regional identity, but one representative of the cultural moment of the 1960s. Its existence and creation was more negotiated than accepted, interacting uneasily with existing social and political relations. It was a product of the cultural productions of authority and expertise that favoured modern, urban and industrial imagined geographies. Glanford Brigg RDC, in protesting to the DOE, stated that through the proposal for a Humberside county 'could be diagnosed as a touch of Humber mania', it highlighted a national but also local phenomenon. The RDC also noted that the move for Humberside focused on potential unity rather than an immediate reality, adding: 'it is always a mistake to equate thinking for the future with telling somebody else to go and live in it'.[640]

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[638] TNA HLG 29/897 'County boundaries: Humberside and Lincolnshire', 24 March 1972.
[639] TNA HLG 29/897 R.A. Stead, 'Humberside', 29 March 1972.
[640] TNA HLG 29/897 'Notes on behalf of Glanford Brigg RDC', 22 November 1971.

3.4 Regional identity and the campaign to abolish Humberside

I

Following the creation of the new metropolitan and non-metropolitan county councils in 1974, it was claimed in the late 1980s and 1990s that the campaign to abolish the new local authorities, and to 'Save our Shires', was both fervent and instantaneous. This was supposedly strongest in 'Britain's Newest County' – the slogan used by the Humberside County Council. Resistance to Humberside, and the campaign to abolish Humberside County Council, is perhaps the most fitting prism through which to consider this phenomenon, which has been little considered in twentieth century British history. This section will set out how local and national relationships with Humberside were much more complex, spatially expedient and temporally contingent than popular narratives asserted. These constructions of place, of alternative regions or historic counties, were grounded in broader political, social, economic and cultural changes in late twentieth century Britain, most notably declinism and its relationship to the rise of concern over and commodification of heritage, the 'privatisation of politics', the rejection of technocratic expertise, and decreasing satisfaction with government.

II

When finally established in 1974, the promoters of this new system of local government were keen to emphasise that the new counties themselves, particularly the non-metropolitan counties made up of wholly new areas (namely Cleveland, Avon and Humberside), were intended purely for administrative purposes, and did not supplant the

historical counties.[641] It was argued that the historic counties themselves had long ceased to fulfil a direct administrative purpose due to the 'hotch-potch' of county boroughs that had emerged since 1888.[642] In many respects it appears that in first few years of the County Council's existence, its existence was broadly accepted, if somewhat begrudgingly and conditionally. An article in the *Illustrated London News* in 1976, though bearing the rather ominous title of 'Who Belongs to Humberside', found a significant degree of adherence to the county unit whilst indicating it was 'hard work'. The article focused primarily on the more rural areas, including a quote from the chief executive of the North Wolds district that joined Bridlington to Pocklington that 'we are completely loyal to Humberside as an administrative unit'; and quoted Jeremy Elwes (see chapter 5) that having protested, he now 'accepted the decision and was keen for Humberside to succeed'.[643] But much remained conditional on the potential of the Humber Bridge to functionally unite the two sides of the Humber.

In political terms the largest divide across the county was again between urban and rural. In the first elections for the county council, Labour gained a narrow majority almost entirely gained in the urban areas of Hull, Grimsby and Scunthorpe (save two rural seats).[644] The Council would continue to be contested along urban and rural lines, and control would change hands several times over the life of the Council. As Elcock highlighted, the Labour Group sought to portray the professional, modern identity that tinged the imagined geography and potential of Humberside, choosing to name a chief executive rather than a clerk (though the role was taken by the former clerk of Hull City Council, and both the role and committee structures remained fairly traditional in

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[641] Redcliffe-Maud and Wood, *English Local Government Reformed,* 48-49.
[642] Ibid., 9, 24-28.
[643] 'Who belongs to Humberside?', *London Illustrated News,* 27 March 1976.
[644] Elcock, 'English Local Government', 160.

scope).[645] The tight nature of Council meant that there was an uneasy balance between urban and rural interests, as the Labour Council gave assurances that the approaches around the Humber Bridge was not be subject to large-scale development, and committed to careful limits on its public spending.[646] Conservative control from 1977 also brought about significant promises of financial stringency as they sought to keep the rate burden down.[647]

However, the effect of deindustrialization on the urban areas of the Humber would undermine the initial aspirations for what Humberside could become as a region. The effects of the 'Cod War' in the mid 1970s were particularly damaging for an area where up to 75,000 people were dependent on the industry.[648] Rather than gaining from its locational advantages as the 'Gateway to Europe', the Humber's ports struggled against increased EEC competition. As North noted, 'this industrial and commercial facade' in Humberside was 'dominated by a backcloth of prosperous agriculture', as the farming of the area remained efficient and innovative.[649] From Intermediate status, both Hull and Grimsby would become full Development Areas in 1977.[650] It was also hampered by the County Council's failure in the early 1980s to entice Japanese car manufacturers to establish factories in the region. These structural issues began to place strain on the concept of Humberside, as by the late 1970s Grimsby's District Council were seeking a reform of the boundaries, so that the town was part of a North Lincolnshire authority. One councillor claimed:

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[645] Elcock, 'English Local Government', 163-165.
[646] 'Who belongs to Humberside?', *London Illustrated News,* 27 March 1976; 'Bridge on the sly', *Guardian,* 2 November 1974.
[647] 'Conservatives wield the big axe in the war on waste', *Guardian,* 7 May 1977.
[648] 'The Humber's grim horizons', *Guardian,* 3 December 1976.
[649] North, 'Development of the Humber Region.'
[650] Warren, 'Yorkshire and Humberside', 321.

> There is a widespread feeling we have lost our identity. We have little in common with the people living in North Humberside. The Humber is a great divide and will continue to be a great divide even when the Humber Bridge is built.[651]

In April 1977 the North Lincolnshire Association (NLA) was founded in Grimsby, and claimed 7,000 signatures on a petition to abolish the county in only three weeks. The East Yorkshire Action Group (EYAG) at the same time claimed 57,500 signatures on their own petition.[652] This demonstrates the growing unrest of the former county boroughs over their former powers, and the issues with administering 'ideological politics' in local government.[653]

III

Such rumblings in the late 1970s were the beginnings of a more concerted campaign for the abolition of Humberside that would build to a crescendo in the late 1980s, due to the opportunity for reform provided by the scheduled review by the Local Government Boundary Commission (LGBC). The politics of such movements, and how they constructed notions of identity in relation to local government politics, are highly complex. Neave highlights that when the LGBC proposed no radical changes to the county in 1990, it received 81,500 signatures on 26 petitions, with only two in support (totalling little more than 100 names).[654] This however suggests a homogeneity that is less clear in an examination of the major agitating associations.

The political context outlined above was a reflection of broader trends in British society, particularly in the declinist critique. Guy Ortolano has argued that declinism represented

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[651] 'Severing Humber's Civic ties', 27 August 1977.
[652] Ibid.
[653] John Gyford, 'The politicization of local government', in Loughlin *et al.* (eds.) *Half a Century of Municipal Decline 1935-1985,* 89-97.
[654] Neave, 'The identity of the East Riding of Yorkshire', 197.

a 'rhetorical weapon', and that the critique itself differed between the left and right.[655] The failures of the 1960s to bring about the planned modern future, as Tomlinson argues, led in part to the 'panic' of the 1970s that saw a clear 'right-wing shift in political discussion'.[656] Part of this political shift also included both an increasing distrust of experts, and an increasingly centralised and bureaucratic state that was losing confidence, as it appeared in constant crisis and overburdened.[657] The panics of the 1970s and 1980s led to an explosion of interest in national heritage through organisations like the National Trust and Council for the Preservation of Rural England.[658] As discussed in chapter 5, the supposed threats to 'country' heritage articulated prior to these flashpoints, and resistance to the modernising rhetoric of the period, claimed a more libertarian, anti-statist ideology.

In the construction of identity in opposition to Humberside it was such images and political ideas that were mobilised. The most apparent example of such resistance were the Yorkshire Ridings Society (YRS) that was founded in Beverley in 1974. The YRS articulated a distinct sense of region and identity that located Yorkshire not only in space but in time. Their stated objective on foundation was to campaign for 'recognition of the continued unchanged existence of the whole Yorkshire within its three Ridings', including an eight point 'Yorkshire code' that 'refuses the new local government areas "a geographical status not intended them by the 1972"'.[659] The most overt of the Society's assertion of a Yorkshire identity was the creation of 'Yorkshire Day' in 1975, celebrated on the 1 August to commemorate the battle of Minden in 1759 where they claimed soldiers from the Yorkshire regiments 'picked white roses from nearby fields as a tribute

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[655] Ortolano, 'Decline as a weapon', 202.
[656] Tomlinson, *Politics of Decline,* 90.
[657] O'Hara, *Governing Post-war Britain,* 5-8.
[658] Raphael Samuel, *Theatres of Memory, Volume 1: Past and Present in Contemporary Culture* (London*,* 1994)*,* 295.
[659] Ftr. Francis, *The Strange Case of the Counties that Didn't Change* (1988), 126.

to their colleagues'.[660] A number of events were arranged on this day each year and it continued to receive active press coverage for this, such travelling the coastline handing out 1,101 sand castle flags emblazoned with white roses in 1977; one for every year of Yorkshire's supposed existence.[661] Additionally the Society would campaign actively, amongst other things, to Yorkshire addresses accepted by the Post Office and 'roadside boundary signs to mark the Ridings', which they were eventually to get Humberside County Council to agree to in 1990.[662]

The actions taken by the YRS clearly aligned Hobsbawm's arguments on the 'invention' of tradition, where the 'rapid transformation' of societies can be seen as destroying the social patterns of old traditions as part of modernisation.[663] However, given that the historic Ridings had not existed as used in their traditional boundaries during the twentieth century, these practices of regional construction appear to align more with conceptions of 'nostalgia' of place identified and articulated by Savage, which 'takes its reference to the past, not literally but to stake a contemporary claim'; such that can use discursive space distinctions as a means of distinguishing between 'insiders' and 'outsiders'.[664] By the late 1980s, the effect had been so compelling that it was noted that it was remarked 'it is evidently now seen by some as an ancient festival of mysterious origin'.[665]

However, these imagined geographies in the actions of the YRS were supported by more real social structures and landscapes associated with Yorkshire. The Society with the associational culture observed previously within Yorkshire, in not only continuing to

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[660] HHC U DAB 3/61 YRS, 'The Fight For Yorkshire', u.d. leaflet (c.1990).
[661] 'Keeping White Rose flag flying high', *Guardian,* 1 August 1977.
[662] HHC U DAB 3/61 Walker to Heseltine, 5 March 1991.
[663] Eric Hobsbawm, 'Introduction: Inventing Traditions', in Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (eds.), *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge, 1983), 4.
[664] Savage, *Identities and Social Change,* 24.
[665] Michael Bradford', *The Fight for Yorkshire* (Beverley, 1988), 83.

describe itself as 'non-political and voluntary' but also establishing a 'Yorkshire Day' charity.[666] Similarly, the YRS sought to align themselves strongly with nationalism and the national interest, not just in evoking the battle of Minden, but also in the rising of the 'Yorkshire flag' alongside the Union Flag on Yorkshire Day. In its founding aims it wished to keep the Ridings intact as 'an integral part of the UK' indicating the strong unionist ideology.[667] In Michael Bradford's 1988 book *The Fight for Yorkshire,* which was heavily supported by the YRS, the author invoked not only the importance of associations and societies in the sense of 'belonging' people in Yorkshire, he also named a chapter on local government reorganisation 'betrayal', in seeing the move as sabotage of the historic county's national loyalty and service.[668]

Though the YRS was both important and visible from a cultural standpoint they were secondary to the active campaigning for abolition that came from the EYAG and NLA, who even in 1981 were able to present petitions with over 120,000 and 50,000 names respectively to the Conservative Government.[669] The foundations of the former were very much on similar grounds to the YRS, as were its expressions of identity. However, in the late 1970s and through to the late 1980s, Trevor Pearson, a Conservative councillor in the North Wolds District Council restricted the efforts of his newly formed Group not to abolishing the County Council, but to securing a change of its name to 'East Yorkshire and North Lincolnshire' and resisting and change to the Postal address. The anti-bureaucratic nature of these protests became framed around resistance to perceived imperial imposition from the centre, a centre which these groups deemed had little regard for patterns of community life and local identities. As a report in the *New York Times* with Pearson, and the YRS Chairman Colin Holt quoted as saying: 'The bureaucrats

[666] HHC U DAB 3/61 YRS, 'Support Yorkshire Day on August 1st', u.d. leaflet (c. 1990s).
[667] Bradford, *Fight for Yorkshire,* 82.
[668] Ibid*.,* 67-80.
[669] 'Scrap county' action pledge', *Grimsby Evening Telegraph,* 10 December 1981.

in London sit in their offices, and they don't care about such things but really Yorkshire is something that's in the mind'. As Pearson also noted it's got to end, for sanity's sake as well as common sense'.[670] However, the EYAG (which had by the late 1980s turned its attention to the full abolition of the county), though demonstrating a strong sense of place in its campaigning was less doctrinaire that in that while acknowledging the 'sensible natural boundary' of the former East Riding, the EYAG and made clear in their submissions that 'Our wish is to firmly think of the future… we are by no means thinking nostalgically'.[671]

A large part of the EYAG's campaigning, in preparing submissions for the LGBC inquiries in the 1980s and Local Government Commission for England in 1992 appeared clearly to invoke an 'imagined community', attempting to forge an 'image of communion' or 'kinship' as Anderson has explored in relations to the formation of nationalisms, and using print media in a similar way Anderson argues made national consciousness imaginable in industrialising capitalist societies.[672] The members of the EYAG collected as many examples from the national and local press, including the *Hull Daily Mail, Beverley Guardian* and *Lincolnshire Echo* which had by the 1980s all editorially aligned against the county, of local and national businesses, organisations and groups that continued to use the Humber as a 'natural boundary', or maintained East Yorkshire in their name, including new clubs to show that allegiances persist. Such added to their conviction that a division based on the river was both 'common sense' and universally desired. As a note included within these press cuttings indicated:

> Here is a further selection of evidence of the way in which local clubs, societies and organisations choose to observe the natural river boundary in name their

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[670] 'A County by a new name doesn't Smell as Sweet' *New York Times,* 31 May 1989.
[671] HHC U DEY 1/3 EYAG 'The case against Humberside', 24 October 1988.
[672] Benedict Anderson, *imagined Communities* (London, 2006)*,* 5-6, 42-44.

institutions according to the traditional north bank East Yorkshire/East Riding names.[673]

That the campaigns for abolition were due in part of the continued modernist aspirations and image of the County Council was highlighted in the previous chapter. The failure of these aspirations and the continued peripherality of the area leading to a perceived lack of material benefit was clear - as the EYAG's submission in response to the LGBC's initial submission for no boundary change indicated: 'If fourteen years of Humberside is supposed to have brought benefits then what are they? Why are people not recognising or asking for them?'.[674] In such a climate, there was an increasing narrative of unilateral central imposition and invasive urbanism onto a region conceived as primarily agricultural. Within many citizens as well as the abolition groups began to articulate a regionalism based on the discourse and rhetoric of nationalism and resistance on both Banks of the Humber. Trevor Pearson continually referred to the 'Bureaucratic Baboons' of Whitehall claimed to other campaigners his interest was in inciting 'resistance' to them.[675]

For the NLA, not only was Humberside County Council 'thrust upon us', there were continued claims of supposed favouritism towards the North Bank and in particular Hull.[676] The Council's Hull based Chief Executive Terry Geraghty was increasingly cast as a 'dictator' overseeing 'his empire'.[677] The supposed tyranny and imposition was also shown in the invoking of assertions of nationalism elsewhere, as one Peer in the Lords remarked 'The Government have made clear that the wishes of the majority of those who

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[673] HHC U DEY1/2/1 EYAG, typed note u.d. (c.1989).
[674] HHC U DEY 1/3 EYAG 'The case against Humberside', 24 October 1988.
[675] HHC U DAB 3/59 Pearson to Stout, 15 January 1982.
[676] 'An artificial county', *Grimsby Evening Telegraph,* 20 March 1989.
[677] 'Beware those with empires to protect', *Grimsby Evening Telegraph,* 23 March 1989.

live in the Falkland, Gibraltar and in Northern Ireland will be upheld. Surely that should also apply to those that live in Humberside'.[678]

The nationalist discourse employed by the 'Shire' organisations, despite their differences in aims, was also intended to lend legitimacy to their claims of a heritage under threat, and of the colonial imposition of dominion rather than of self-determination. One letter to the *Yorkshire Post* claimed that the 'imposition' of Humberside by 'the powers that be in Whitehall' was to 'break up two of the largest counties in the country hoping to prevent us developing into provincial power blocks such as those of the Celtic fringe'.[679] A letter signed by fourteen member of a Methodist young group stressing a desire 'to keep our Yorkshire heritage and identity within the geographical area of the Three Ridings of Yorkshire' stated that:

> we are all under the age of 20 and have suffered the full-force of the "Empire-building" of the bogus County officials and vested interest of the Local media Radio and Television stations intended to obliterate our Yorkshire birthright.[680]

IV

The stridency of the EYAG, NLA and other organisations intensified in the late 1980s and early 1990s precisely because of increasing popular identification with Humberside, particularly generationally. This was evident of the broader cultural conflict caused by increasing affluence and class 'dealignment' that was making conceptions of place more malleable. Both industrialists and younger generations found a sense of belonging and identification with Humberside, in part with its monumental imagery in the Humber

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[678] HHC U DAB 3/10 Extract from 'Humber County Debate', 13 June 1990.
[679] HHC U DAB 3/10, 'Letters to the Editor – Beyond the Bounds', *Yorkshire Post,* press cutting, u.d. (c. March 1989).
[680] HHC U DAB 3/59 Sunday at Eight Anglican Methodist Youth Group to unnamed, 'Local Government reforms', June 1992.

Bridge. The County Council in 1989 were clear that not only was there 'no case for disturbing the County as an administrative unit' but also that '…over time people's allegiances present undisputed resistance to the County's name will diminish'.[681]

The County Council in the late 1980s was not without successes, despite its apparent negative internal and external regional and administrative image. In 1988 the LGBC's initial decision that no change should be made was based on the assessment it provided 'effective and convenient local government' and that economic development had been similar on both Banks of the Humber. During the 1980s the County had also overseen GDP per head rise from 87 per cent of the national average to 99.1 per cent.[682] Schools in Lincolnshire and other areas also sent letters to parents and appeals in the local press urging support for retention of the county due to the services it provided.[683]

Though the EYAG had collected copious examples of national and local businesses that saw the Humber as a 'natural divide', they remained unable to get business leaders to support their cause. In 1989, the Chairman wrote to several business leaders, asking if 'a group of industrialists would be prepared to make a submission' to LGBC to demonstrate the 'economic and commercial arguments', so 'that the Commissioners do not get the impression that the only groups that want to see change are the EYAG and Ridings Society'.[684] Unable to secure this, and with the County Council claiming the support of businesses and education associations throughout Humberside was crucial in the initial decision for not change in 1989,[685] eventually the EYAG would argue on the basis of the absence of 'Humberside' from North Sea Ferries or British Aerospace

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[681] HHC U DAB 3/17 Humberside County Council 'A report to the Boundary Commission', May 1989.
[682] HHC U DAB 3/10 'Humberside County Council's Favoured Options', 15 July 1992.
[683] HHC U DAB 3/16 'Don't save on education save Humberside!' *Grimsby Target*, 17 January 1991; Turnbull to parents, 'Review of the county of Humberside,' 12 December 1990.
[684] HHC U DEY 1/3 Wilson to Morgan, 2 May 1989.
[685] HHC U DEY 1/3 HCC to Education Service Staff, 30 November 1990.

literature, and a local press quote from the Chairman of Northern Foods that Humberside was 'a disaster.'[686] All affinity was considered to be somewhat conspiratorial on behalf of the County Council. when a public debate was held in January 1991, a motion supporting the retention of Humberside was defeated somewhat narrowly by a margin of 81 to 60. The EYAG made clear that the small venue and arrangements made the meeting 'heavily biased in Humberside's favour'.[687] Even in North Lincolnshire, a independent poll run in 1989 noted that some 32 per cent of residents wished to be in Humberside, with 62 per cent for Lincolnshire showing that support was not overwhelming.[688]

Generational change was also evident. When submitting their case to a further review of the area in 1992, Humberside were able to claim that 'opinion polls have shown that a majority of 16-17 year olds in the county identify strongly with Humberside'.[689] The supposed 'loss' of a traditional county identity among youth had been a significant anxiety for campaigners from the beginning of their actions, as Michael Bradford in his *Fight for Yorkshire* had stated, 'once you are a Yorkshireman you stay one: but what about the unborn?'[690] Such fears were now seemingly realised, as one abolitionist bemoaned to *This England:*

> The whole thing has got into one enormous muddle and where as some adults are able to comprehend the situation the vast majority of our young people are totally unaware of the situation and are suffering from insipid education in this filed or are being "brain-washed" by the new empire-building L.A. Counties.
>
> In 1986 and onwards, when we began collecting signatures for the Boundary Changes (East Riding)... the young people were keen to retain their Yorkshire heritage and readily signed the petition as most were born around the time L.A. changes occurred. Now in 1992, the new generations of young people are not so

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[686] HHC U DAB 3/17 EYAG to LGBC, 7 January 1991.
[687] HHC U DAB 3/17 EYAG 'Further evidence and appendices relating to LGBC', 29 January 1991.
[688] HHC U DAB 3/17 NLA Meeting minutes. 10 October 1989.
[689] HHC U DAB 3/10 'Humberside County Council's Favoured Options', 15 July 1992.
[690] Bradford, *Fight for Yorkshire*, 45.

informed and it is proving a longer job to obtain signatures for the "Yorkshire real Counties" petition.[691]

When finally in 1993 the Local Government Commission for England ruled that Humberside should be divided into four unitary authorities for Hull, the East Riding, North Lincolnshire and North East Lincolnshire, it noted that these authorities would accord closer with both community and identity. However, even in the evidence provided it demonstrated that these identities were more complex and contingent than was assumed. Despite its short existence, the lack of realisation of much of its founding principles, and the overlaying of strong traditional identities, 34 per cent of those surveyed by MORI indicated 'very or fairly strongly' identifying with Humberside, against 49 and 80 per cent for Lincolnshire and Yorkshire respectively.[692]

3.5 'Nowhere to Nowhere': The Humber Bridge, Hull and Humberside

I

In *Cities in Modernity,* Dennis emphasises the active role of space in 'stimulating new forms of representation and shaping new identities'. He argues that 'space is not simply a container in which modern life is played out. Rather the ways we conceptualise and operationalise space are products of political, economic, social and cultural processes'.[693] Tellingly, his book begins with an examination and discussion of perhaps

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[691] HHC U DAB 3/10, Roger Dykes to R. Faiers, 3 June 1992.
[692] Local Government Commission for England, *The Future of Local Government from the Humber to the Wash: A Report to Local People* (HMSO, 1993), 23.
[693] Richard Dennis, *Cities in Modernity and Productions of Metropolitan Space, 1840-1930* (Cambridge, 2008), p. 3.

the most dramatic transformation of space: bridges – namely the Brooklyn Bridge, Tower Bridge and Bloor Street Viaduct. Dennis argues such bridges are also highly contested spaces: for all the opportunities that arise from a bridge, there are also anxieties over power dynamics, and the possibility that they might bring different peoples and activities 'too close' together.[694] This is true of the Tyne Bridge between Newcastle and Gateshead, being a closely managed extension of the authority and identity of the larger corporation over the smaller.[695]

Dennis' chapter on bridges illustrates an important issues raised by their construction, namely the uneven distribution of spatial power and authority they represent. Such tensions were evident in the building of the Humber Bridge, opened to the public in 1981 after almost a century of proposals and deliberations, and – as above – which informed the debates surrounding the viability of Humberside as a region. Though seemingly 'regional' in function and origin, the bridge served not only as a literal and figurative representation of the competing historical political and cultural identities discussed in the previous section, but also of competing political ideologies in late twentieth century England; of the perceived imposition of an centralising, technocratic urban modernism onto deeper rooted, popular identities. It highlights aspects of wider debates and controversies on-going in Britain during this period about its 'past, present and future' and the role of the civil servant as an 'expert'.

II

On the opening of the bridge in the summer of 1981, there was cautiously optimistic hope that the bridge would finally serve to stimulate a unified cultural, economic and

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694 Ibid. pp. 19-20.
695 Doherty, ''Uncertain Waters'', 43-76.

functional identity between the two banks of the Humber – and finally give shape to the non-metropolitan county of Humberside. It was implied that the bridge was deemed central to the logic of the region, and was imbued with a regional aspiration. However, similarly obvious in this commentary was a significant degree of animosity, pessimism and anxiety, with the same articles deeming the bridge 'a white elephant' or 'the bridge from nowhere to nowhere':[696] from Hessle, five miles west of Hull, to the tiny Barton-upon-Humber. The Humber Bridge is one of Britain's most controversial transport projects: its cost increased from original estimates of £19 million to over £90 million at the point of its completion (a debt that spiralled to greater than £320 million within a decade), and it finally opened five years behind schedule. By the mid-1980s the bridge was also carrying barely more than a third of the initial projected vehicles per day.[697]

But despite the Hull Corporation's general belief that a bridge over the Humber would open up access to the south of England and provide the basis for a route of national importance, the Conservative government of the 1950s was emphatic that a bridge would be of 'primarily regional value'.[698] A significant factor in this was the government's aversion to taking on the not insignificant cost of the bridge (estimated at £15,750,000 in 1959),[699] as it would if it was included in the trunk road network. The disparity in thinking about the importance of the Bridge was clear. When the construction of the first Severn Bridge was authorised in the early 1960s, the clerk of the Humber Bridge Board wrote to the Ministry of Transport requesting clarification on what the 'dividing line' was between a 'national' and 'regional' bridge project.[700] The consulting engineers for the

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[696] David Simon, 'Spanning muddy waters: the Humber Bridge and regional development,' *Regional Studies* 21:1 (1987), 25.
[697] Ibid., 27.
[698] Parliamentary Committee Minutes, *Hull Municipal Corporation: Minutes of Proceedings, Committees 2*, 25 January 1946, 51-52.
[699] HHC U/DPW/3/104 'Meeting with Minister of Transport: Statement of Case to be Submitted, 30 March 1965'.
[700] HHC WA/A/7 H.B.B. Clerk to Ministry of Transport, 19 July 1962.

Bridge Board, Freeman Fox and Partners, assured them in 1963 that their estimates for traffic flows demonstrated a Humber Bridge would have flows of 'national' traffic similar to the Severn Bridge. It was a source of frustration therefore that the Ministry took six months to reply and provided no empirical reason for their decision.

The case made to the Labour Minister of Transport Tom Fraser in March 1965 from the Humber Bridge Board made clear the 'barrier effect of the estuary' was perceived for an area much greater than the south bank of the river, opening with:

> The River Humber is the only main river in England without a bridge or tunnel crossing. The estuary is a formidable barrier to traffic moving between the North and the south [sic] and South-west, extending 40 miles from Spurn Head, or roughly one third of the distance from the East coast to the West coast…
>
> Any journey to the South or Midlands from Hull, other than by the ferry service… must be preceded by a 28-30 mile trip to the west before turning South.[701]

The supposed utility of a Humber Bridge in connecting Hull to the rest of England took precedence in the Board's thinking, even in light of the regional paradigm opened up by the interest in Humberside. The statement of case did not mention 'Humberside' until page six of its nine pages, and its importance to Hull rather than the broader region was what was emphasised:

> If the [sic] Humberside is to mean anything in the Government's scheme of regional economic planning and growth, the Humber Bridge must be commenced immediately. By so doing, not only would the industrial and economic potential of the region be developed, but the regional centre facilities of Kingston upon Hull for shopping, culture and education, such as its University and College of Technology, would become available for the whole of the Humberside.[702]

As such, Humberside is fundamental to understanding the Humber Bridge. The Humber Bridge was intrinsic to the supposed aspirations for national importance of Hull city.

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[701] HHC U/DPW/3/104 'Meeting with Minister of Transport: Statement of Case to be Submitted, 30 March 1965'.
[702] Ibid.

Rather than access to the south bank of the Humber and the opening up of the regional potentialities that informed the central debate over Humberside in the 1960s, it was towards the south of England and London in particular that civic officials in Hull looked. Following the end of the Second World War, with the passing of the Trunk Roads Act (1946) and an increasingly powerful roads lobby pushing plans for a new network of highways,[703] the Corporation had successfully canvassed twenty-seven other authorities to seek the approval of the Ministry of Transport for the construction of an 'Eastern Highway' to run parallel to the Great North Road (later A1). A bridge over the Humber was an integral part of this highway and argued to be of 'national importance'.[704]

Though the dramatic cuts to public expenditure introduced by the Attlee Government removed any prospect of an early realisation of this idea, a major road through the Eastern Counties remained a part of proposals into the 1950s. Haltemprice UDC submitted a preliminary suggestion to a meeting with MPs and representatives of local authorities to push for a new road, the route of which would run from London's Docklands and then to the east of Cambridge, Peterborough and Lincoln. After crossing the Humber it would join the A1 around Boroughbridge. As such this would serve to make the Bridge a national asset and provide a 'further justification' for a bridge.[705]

When the Feasibility Study was finally published in April 1969, it indicated that – despite the economic case remaining inconclusive – the early completion of a Humber Bridge by 1976 would be fundamental to integrating the banks of the Humber, bringing positive 'psychological' effects to the region.[706] This, rather than the supposed election pledge in

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[703] Mick Hamer, *Wheels Within Wheels: A study of the road lobby* (London, 1987), 44-46; George Charlesworth, *A History of British Motorways* (London, 1984), 20, 25.

[704] Parliamentary Committee Minutes, *Hull Municipal Corporation: Minutes of Proceedings, Committees 2*, 25 January 1946, 5-6.

[705] HHC U DPW/3/103 'Humber Bridge: Proposal submitted by Haltemprice Urban District Council', April 1956.

[706] *Humberside - A Feasibility Study* (HMSO, 1969), 32.

1966, was the basis of the Government's final decision in May 1971 to support the construction of the Bridge through loans. It was followed in November by the designation of Humberside as a single administrative unit. The Humber Bridge, from a national perspective at least, was therefore seen as the embodiment of an aspiring regionalism on the Humber.

In the view of those who would later campaign for the Humberside County Council's abolition, Humberside and the Humber Bridge were thus inextricably linked in this high-modernist regional paradigm: both imposed; both a product of their time. This narrative, however, glaringly discounts the fact that the bridge campaign had a much longer local history, and preceded the external designation of the area as Humberside. As argued by the clerk of Glanford Brigg RDC in opposition to their inclusion in Humberside, 'the Humber Bridge has been used by the Government as an argument for the creation of Humber County. The Bridge itself however is not the Government's creation. It's rather rubbing salt in the wound if a Humber County were created.'[707]

The campaign for the Bridge had been initiated in the late 1920s, and over time myriad cultural significances had been attached to it locally. Central to all initiatives were the interests of the City of Hull. It was the Corporation's parliamentary committee that maintained pressure on the government into the post-war period and ultimately obtained powers for the Bridge in 1959, leading to the creation of the Humber Bridge Board. The composition of the Bridge Board makes apparent just how much of a civic, rather than regional, initiative this embodied. The only authorities committed to financial contribution to the Bridge were Hull and the small UDCs of Haltemprice, and Barton-Upon-Humber.[708]

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[707] TNA HLG 29/897 'Notes on behalf of Glanford Brigg RDC', 22 November 1971.
[708] HHC WA/A/2 Humber Bridge Board minutes, 12 December 1966.

III

The Bridge was thus linked to Hull's particular civic cultural identity discussed earlier in this thesis; one constructed from a sense of physical and social isolation, but which fostered aspirations to overcome such difficulties. The Humber Bridge was therefore envisaged as providing a physical end to the isolation of the city, with a much wider local significance than the immediate regional importance the government attributed to it in the 1970s. For Hull, the significance of the bridge was as much a product of the indirect psychological aspirations attached to it. Its monumental and psychological power to the City were made evident in Kevin McNamara's (Hull North MP) comment piece on Roland Adamson's 'Humberopolis' plan, noting the importance a Humber Bridge would have:

> The Northern Bank of the Humber missed out after 1945 and it is now trying desperately to catch up. This is why the Humber Bridge is so important. A barrage might well be better if its cost did not make it prohibitive: but the Humber Bridge, ending the isolation of the North Bank while linking both banks of the estuary is psychologically more important. It means a realisation of Hull's potential. It promises in the foreseeable future better jobs, more money, less drift from the Region.[709]

Playwright Alan Plater, who as honorary editor of the journal had sounded local dignitaries for responses, noted his agreement with McNamara's when thanking him for his contribution:

> One point I particularly agree with is the psychological importance of the Bridge. I suspect this is one of those things that prevents Hull from realising itself as a big city and not a large town. I think mentally we've got a slow burning fuse; we want to believe we're important but there's a psychological block that the bridge might well demolish.[710]

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[709] Sir Leo Shultz, R.A. Alec-Smith *et al.,* 'The Humberopolis Debate', *Perspective East Yorkshire,* November/December 1966, 424.
[710] HHC U DMC/34A Plater to McNamara, 11 October 1966.

Rowe and Clark's song 'Humber Bridge' carried a rhetorical refrain asking whether the Humber would always be an 'exception to the rule' of bridging waterways.[711]

Plater re-examined this psychological block in his 1973 Play for Today *Land of Green Ginger.* Though Cooke suggests the theme of the play was 'separation from northern roots',[712] the highly place specific nature of the play – set in Hull – emphasises more the particularism and isolation of what Plater termed a 'misty and magical city' than a more general northernness.[713] In a central scene, the protagonist Sally - visiting the city of her birth from London – is taken by Mike, an old boyfriend, to see the site of the Humber Bridge. Both characters then discuss its possibilities:

> Sally: What'll happen when it's built?
> Mike: I think they're hoping that people'll drive across it... No, what it is I'll tell 'yer. I think they're hoping it'll bring trade and prosperity to Hull. Said so in the paper, must be true! Be like the Klondike round here; we're all gonna make our fortunes. Ten grand a year; big houses near Kirk Ella Golf Course; three weeks at Butlins; Hull's gonna beat Kingston Rovers in the final at Wembley, fifty points to nil; City's going to win the European Cup three years running; I'll be Lord Mayor... and I'll pack in the fishing.
> Sally: Will you pack it in?
> Mike: I'll pop down here at weekends, just for relaxation. That'll be the salmon. You See you'll be able to sit here and see the salmon leaping.
> Sally: When the Bridge is built.
> Mike: Aye, round about then. Might take a week or two longer for the salmon...
> Sally: When does the Bridge open?
> Mike: Well you can see, they're well on with it now! [camera pans to empty estuary]. 1976...[714]

In the play, the Bridge is not framed in the context of Humberside, more in its importance to Hull. Though Mike's scepticism about the potentialities of the Bridge was merited in Plater's eyes, his cynicism, insularity and localism seemingly reflected a broader

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[711] HAS/LP896 Christopher Rowe and Ian Clark, *Songs for Humberside* (John Hassell Recordings, 1968).

[712] Cooke, *A Sense of Place,* 131.

[713] Ibid., 130. Although the play itself shares many of the themes David Russell identifies in northern plays, such as a stoic and dryly humorous male character facing harsh social realities: Russell, *Looking North,* 147-173.

[714] BBC, *Land of Green Ginger* (1973), https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GgwRC6ZzQGY.

frustration of Plater's. This was demonstrated in Sally's admission at the end of the play that Mike and herself 'didn't look hard enough' for the eponymous Land of Green Ginger, representing the failure of the two lead characters to find 'magic' of the city.[715]

For its promoters, the psychological importance of a bridge, or more importantly *the* Bridge, was apparent. Leo Shultz, the leader of the Labour group on the council in Hull, and his Conservative counterpart Rupert Alec-Smith, had both been actively involved in the Bridge proposals since efforts were revived post-1945. Fred Holmes – the Bridge Board's Chairman in 1960s – had been actively involved in the promotion of the Bill in the 1930-1 that had progressed through Parliament before the government grant was withdrawn. Not only did Holmes in particular remain convinced of the role the Bridge would play in linking Hull to the Midlands and south of England, he argued vehemently that it must be a bridge, and it must be in the location agreed. Having promoted the Humber Bridge Bill in 1959, Holmes had held the long history of the campaign as almost self-evident of its virtue. A meeting of the Board and MPs in July 1960 resolving to seek a deputation with the Minister had been told that: 'It was also true that the Ministry knew all about the scheme which had been before them for years and it was important to remember that the then Minister of Transport promised a grant of 75 per cent in 1930'.[716] In the end, Ernest Maples had met with three MPs (Harry Pursey, Patrick Wall and Michael) and been emphatic in his dismissal of any kind of Ministry support, to the extent that Pursey's note of the meeting to Holmes that:

> the Minister had a full brief of the whole history – everything that happened in the past is dead – we can only deal with current information. To sum up it will not be a national project in 5 to 10 years – may not be in 20 years or ever. We have to

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[715] Ibid.; Land of Green Ginger is a street in Hull city centre. Plater himself stated in his script suggestions that 'you don't expect cold reason in a town that calls a street the Land of Green Ginger'; quoted in Cooke, *Sense of Place,* 130.
[716] HHC WA/A/7 'Memorandum of a meeting', 13 July 1960.

forget about it being a national project – if Hull ever decides to go ahead they are on their own.[717]

Despite his objection to a bridge, the Minister had informally suggested that consideration should be given to the construction of a tunnel. Other proposals were also forthcoming later in the decade as the national interest in Humberside increased. The option of sinking a prefabricated tunnel into the Humber was put before the Bridge Board on several occasions as a possible alternative. Another notable proposal was calls for investigation into the feasibility of a Humber barrage from the Chambers of Commerce as discussed above. When Cyril Osborne, MP for Louth, raised the possibility of exploring the tunnel option in Commons he sparked a forceful rebuke from Holmes who – it was reported in the *Hull Daily Mail* – pronounced 'that he was fed up of hearing proposals for crossing the Humber put forward by bodies without any authority or responsibility':

> Unofficial bodies which were putting out ideas for such things as barrages across the Humber and tunnels under it were, he said, only trying to sidetrack the board from what is was going on with. "We know what we are going for, said Ald. Holmes, "and we should not let anything stop us".[718]

Holmes' own limited records deposited in the archives in the Hull History Centre demonstrate that the imagery of a bridge; its representation to the city officials was highly influential in his actions – and, if anything, was as much a consideration as the practical benefits it would bring to Hull. Several artist's impressions of the single span suspension bridge design are included amongst his papers.

So deeply ingrained was a belief in the essential nature of the Bridge that the Bridge Board even found themselves in the position of opposing the Ministry of Transport's

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[717] HHC WA/A/7 'Memorandum of verbal report given by Commander Pursey MP, to Alderman Holmes and Mr. Baslington upon interview with Minister of Transport (Mr. Marples), 18 February 1961.
[718] ''Fed up' with unofficial schemes', *Hull Daily Mail,* 5 July 1967.

proposals for linking Hull to the east-west M62 motorway. It was a move for which they found little to no support politically, or amongst the city's industrial interests. The Ministry had sounded opinion from the Board in February 1965 when they had agreed to adopt the recommendations of their engineers that the future trunk road of the north bank of the Humber would require an interchange with the Great North Road immediately south of Ferrybridge, crossing the River Ouse by a high level bridge at Hook near Goole.[719] The prospect of a major high level bridge at Hook – with an estimated cost in excess of £8 million – roughly 20 miles from the site of the proposed bridge over the Humber, became a central cause for concern for the Board, despite its purpose to remediate the inadequate road links to Lancashire and West Yorkshire. Despite opposition from the local authorities in the East Riding and Lindsey, and flat refusal from the YHEPC to countenance supporting reopening of the issue at a meeting where the Council were at pains to 'emphasise... was taking place at the request of the Humber Bridge Board and... the members of the Economic Planning Council will do as they think fit',[720] the Board met with both Castle and Crossman in mid-1966 to lobby for the proposed motorway route to join the Great North Road further north at Ledsham. The meeting led to a further review of the arrangements to the consternation of local interests. Holmes, as Chairman of the Bridge Board, informed the press that the Bridge at Hook was 'inconceivable' following a small Government grant to carry out soil and aerodynamic tests on the sites on the Humber.[721]

Although Barbara Castle confirmed the M62 would go ahead as planned in the 1970s along the route previously confirmed with a bridge at Hook,[722] such incidents and actions

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[719] HHC W/A/18 Lawrence to HBB Clerk, 'Trunk road communications in the area between Hull and Great North Road and Humber Bridge', 17 February 1965.
[720] HHC W/A/18 'Notes of Meeting between representatives of the Humber Bridge Board and the Development Group of the YHEPC', 8 February 1966.
[721] *Yorkshire Post,* 13 December 1966.
[722] *Hansard,* 25 January 1967, Col. 1495.

of a Hull-dominated Bridge Board served to further strain goodwill towards a Humber crossing and patience with various interests on Humberside, and contribute to the hostility shown towards the Corporation. With a road network described as 'medieval', the lobbying for a Humber Bridge to the detriment of other projects did not sit well with other authorities who claimed they were not opposed to a scheme in principle. In the region's trade journals, and in the press, industrialists were clear in their position that east-west road connections were far more vital to the viability of Humberside. This did not preclude a strong desire to improve the transport services across the Humber in the short-term. The prospect of commencing a hovercraft service as a means of 'socially linking' the communities of Lincolnshire and Yorkshire gained traction in the 1960s.[723]

Another example of this exclusionary and extraversionary representation of Humber Bridge, illustrating the intended civic rather than regional symbolism, is a 1980s pamphlet 'Hull and the Humber Bridge: A Modern Gateway to an ancient city'. Tellingly, it contains *no* explicit mention of Humberside, and contains German, French and Dutch translations; echoing a remark made in a special issue of *The Times* that 'it had sometimes seemed the Bridge was really being thrust across the North Sea'.[724] Indeed Larkin's poem 'Bridge for the Living' to commemorate the opening (which is on the handout), had noted Hull the 'isolate city' with its face half-turned to Europe.[725] All seem to suggest an intention to generate an international iconic status for the Bridge, and specifically Hull.

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[723] 'Humber hovercraft on way from factory', *Grimsby Evening Telegraph,* 19 July 1968.
[724] 'Hull and the Humber Bridge: A Modern Gateway to an ancient city', pamphlet u.d. (c. 1980s); 'The Humber Bridge', *Times*, 17 July 1981.
[725] Motion, *Philip Larkin*, 487-488.

IV

That the bridge served instead to exacerbate existing intra-regional tensions, rather than being a source of regional unity, was probably to be expected. Despite increasing support over time for both the county and the bridge from Scunthorpe, Grimsby, the only other major urban centre in South Humberside, had always steadfastly refused to contribute financially to the Bridge, and had bluntly told the Humber Bridge Board that the bridge was 'of little value to them on economic or historical grounds'.[726] In the early 1970s, the area determinately referred to itself as South Humberside, maintaining the apparent distinction. By June 1978, with unemployment over six percent and with further erosion of the fishing industry affecting the town, the leader of the Borough Council lamented what he saw as 'this stupid Humber Bridge' – indeed even in 1989 a resident of North Lincolnshire bemoaned the influence of Hull in the county, which was believed to have been propped up by their money.[727]

It is therefore unsurprising that the most vociferous anti-Humberside lobby sprung from the more remote areas of the county. The East Yorkshire Action Group was coordinated – by the colourful pint-sized pool hall owner Trevor Pearson – from the northerly seaside resort of Bridlington almost immediately after Humberside's creation, and was matched by the North Lincolnshire Association on the opposite bank. The records of the Action Group emphasise persistent frustrations, particularly with Humberside's economic modernising agenda, lamenting in a letter to the Local Government Boundary Commission in 1988 that people were 'heartily sick of that word potential'.[728] As Pearson and other opposition groups campaigned tirelessly to the Local Government Boundary

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[726] *Hull Daily Mail,* 5 July 1967.

[727] 'Fishing port strives to offset depression,' *Times,* 13 June 1978; 'No-one loves the county of "Blunderside",' *Grimsby Evening Telegraph,* 30 March 1989.

[728] HHC U DEY 1/3 EYAG 'The case against Humberside', 24 October 1988.

Commission, the Bridge and its perceived failings became a central target of the Group's protests; the Bridge was seen as an unnatural imposition on the area.

By the late 1980s, the failure of the bridge to bring the supposed vibrant future, visible signs of economic growth, or an end to either physical or psychological isolation appears to have led even some of the citizens of Hull to turn against both the Bridge and the idea of Humberside, and from here perhaps can be seen the growth of this narrative of imposition. In March 1990, before the local elections, there were palpable attempts to disown the Bridge as well as the County – such as a report in *The Times* entitled 'Hull laments its loss of identity in a super-region', in which blame for both the county and the Bridge were attributed to Dick Crossman.[729] A report on the East Yorkshire Action Group's campaign in the Daily Telegraph in 1988 had also declared the Bridge had been conceived in 1966, neglecting its long history that had previously been extolled.[730]

3.6 Conclusion

This chapter has observed how private interests constructed their own oppositional regional identities against what were perceived as the imposition of official forms of regional colonisation in the case of Humberside. Though arguably forms of localism rather than political regionalism, groups such as the Yorkshire Ridings Society, East Yorkshire Action Group and North Lincolnshire Association formed associational links beyond their localities, and constructed county identities through appeals to imagined communities and the invention of tradition. Examining these more conservative forms of regionalism also sheds light on contemporary English political culture; emphasising the

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[729] 'Hull laments its loss of identity in a super-region', *Times*, 1 May 1990.
[730] 'Humber Bridge: the message that never got across', *Daily Telegraph*, 30 September 1988.

ideologies and organisational roots of movements that have challenged perceived political domination from the Centre, and have been able to forge wider and more populist political support.

This chapter has also highlighted the complex and contingent history of the reorganisation of local government and the complicit – and often enthusiastic – role of regional actors in these developments in the late 1960s and early 1970s. It also emphasises the broader point (also made in Chapter 2 and Chapter 5) of Humberside's liminal and ambiguous relationship with the wider Yorkshire region.

'Humberside' was conditionally embraced as a political regional project and emergent identity in the 1960s; the resistance observed in the 1970s and 1980s only became more vocal after the failure to realise the high modern industrial future that had been put forward. In this construction of Humberside, strong local identities interacted with political and cultural identities that extended beyond immediate localities and imagined Yorkshire as a region.

Chapter 4: Transport and Regionalism: The campaign for a 'Yorkshire Airport', c.1945-c.1980

4.1 Introduction

I

Transport is central to issues of regional development, not least in the nineteenth and twentieth century with the onset of the Industrial Revolution. The economic distinctiveness that industrialisation brought to many parts of England – integral to the social formation of regional particularisms – was intrinsically linked to the role played by various transport infrastructures. John Langton, for example, has argued that the canal network became crucial to the processes that led to the emergence of regional capitals with their own political lobbies.[731] The advent of mass transport by the mid-nineteenth century surmounted the relatively large social and cultural differences that made large parts of England 'foreign' to outsiders.[732] Not only did the railways lead to a practical expansion of regions, but the commercial considerations of the railway produced an expansion of the 'iconography' and 'cartographic imagination' or language of regions; culturally producing a space discipline in which constructions could be either inclusive or exclusive.[733] These processes also emphasise that transport's role in economic, social and cultural specialisation in Britain (or more specifically England) was a facilitating rather than determining one. The natural landscape itself remained an important part of the regional economic specialisms that emerged from the resource-based industrial

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[731] Langton, 'The Industrial Revolution', 162-163.
[732] Suliman, 'Diamonds or Beasts?', 151-152.
[733] Rawnsley, 'Constructing 'The North'', 9-10.

development in the English regions;[734] for example in the concentration of the woollen and worsted textile industries in the West Riding, coalmining in the North East and the steel industries in Sheffield and South Yorkshire.[735] Even with the possibilities offered by transport, the delimiting effect of natural frontiers such as watersheds and valleys in the designation of regions was stated to be of 'great importance' for Fawcett in establishing his principles for regional division, as highlighted in the previously.[736]

Transport issues and development are therefore crucial to considering both the functional and cultural constructions of region in any examination of regionalism and regional identity in England. This chapter intends to provide this perspective through an examination of an almost wholly overlooked dimension of regional transport, regional airport development. The issue of airport provision, I argue here, is a particularly appropriate case study not only for the period considered by this thesis, but also for the region of Yorkshire and Humberside. The region was nationally acknowledged as the most poorly served by airfield and airports in the UK. As this chapter will argue, this brought about a distinctly regional response. Three separate reports on the region's future airport needs were produced in the space of a decade from 1962; each was produced by a different regional sponsor body, each conceived the 'region' in different ways, and each came up alternative solutions to a lack of airport capacity. This chapter sets this debate over regional strategy in the context of the social and cultural conceptions of air travel, through the changing view of air travel by various interests in Yorkshire and Humberside – particularly over a period of significant change in British life and the tumult of the 1970s.

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[734] Hudson, 'The regional perspective', 13-18.
[735] For the West Riding: Pat Hudson, 'Capital and credit in the West Riding wool textile industry', in Hudson (ed.), *Regions and Industries*, 69-72.
[736] Fawcett, *Provinces of England*, 77-80.

II

Transport links and the communication they provide are essential to any conception of a region. In this context, airports may seem like a minor concern compared to the two major modes of inter-urban travel, road and rail. British railways in particular have been a subject of particular interest for their economic development, urbanisation and other demographic changes, in addition to their social and cultural significance in tourism and advertising. Rail has featured heavily in the development of the regional economy of the 'north' and in regional identity.

Railways are not discussed in this core sample for a number of reasons, not least that in post-war England, the railway was primarily a national rather than regional concern.[737] More importantly however, the railways were in eclipse in this period both physically and culturally. Regardless of the contested politics of Beeching's *The Reshaping of British Railways,* the contraction of the passenger network by almost half between 1948 and 1973 demonstrated rail's diminished role. Alongside this change was a more fundamental shifting of the meaning of the railway in late twentieth century England. Loft has effectively argued for the social and cultural transformation of rail in relation to other forms of transport in the post-war period, from having once been the 'epitome of modernity' to being the preserve of the rural idyll, and as 'eulogised' by Betjeman as evoking the '"[u]nmitigated England" of farms, woods and village churches' in opposition to the '…regimented cars of parked executives'.[738] Where rail was discussed in the 1960s by planners and observers, it was primarily urban monorails that 'promised to

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[737] See Mike Anson and Gerald Compton, 'Predicting, Providing, Sustaining, Integrating? British Transport Policy since 1945', in Richard Coopey and Peter Lyth (eds.), *Business in Britain in the Twentieth Century: Decline and Renaissance?* (Oxford, 2009).

[738] Charles Loft, *Government, the Railways and the Modernization of Britain: Beeching's Last Trains* (Routledge, 2006).

take Britain into the future' as public transport's compliment to the motor-car.[739] The seemingly outmoded nature of traditional rail transport was in stark contrast to the 'reign' of modernity signalled by the jet age, and the (fleeting) unbounded optimism encompassed within it.[740]

Though a case study of road travel and motorways might also have been appropriate in discussing regional dynamics in this period, I argue that the cultural pervasiveness of the 'motor age' by the 1960s makes this subject more intrinsic and pervasive – and therefore less easy to disentangle and define. The effects and importance of 'automobility' are inherent to the other studies in this thesis: such as the prevalence of multi-storey car parks in the planning proposals of local authorities, YHEPC's 'stress' on the 'seriousness and urgency of the requirement' for new roads in Chapter 2,[741] and the significances attached locally to the Humber Bridge as discussed in Chapter 3. The increasing responses to these concerns, and the broader objections to perceived encroachment upon traditional identities as also highlighted in the discussion of Humberside in Chapter 3, formed part of cultural trends that saw NGOs, 'non-experts' and private citizens challenging the '...belief that you don't restrain the car';[742] and saw increasing public objection to further (especially urban) motorway construction in the 1970s.[743] The 'motor car' even forms part of the context to the final chapter of this thesis, as illustrated in John Betjeman's involvement in the establishment of the Lincolnshire Arts Association (see below).

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[739] Ortolano, 'Planning the urban future', 491.
[740] Adrian Smith, 'The dawn of the jet age in austerity Britain: David Lean's *The Sound Barrier* (1952)', *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television,* 30:4 (2010), 489.
[741] YHEPC, *Review of Yorkshire and Humberside*, 56, Para. 310.
[742] Quote taken from Amory and Cruickshank, *The Rape of Britain*, 14.
[743] Paul Truelove, 'Transport Planning', in Cullingworth (ed.), *British Planning*, 201-204; Charlesworth, *A History of British Motorways*, 79-82.

There are also other reasons why this chapter examines airports policy over roads. The dynamism of the development of the civil aviation in this period, and the ambiguities and difficulties this presented for their administration – as discussed below – stands somewhat in contrast to road transport provision in England. Much of the legislation used in the construction of motorways was effectively in place by the end of the 1940s,[744] and the cost-benefit methods through which schemes were justified – though contentious – were also well-established.[745] In the 1960s there were no such administrative settlement for airports, and the attempts to provide greater social and economic sureties in provision would spark considerable political controversy. Furthermore, though the politics of road transport, particularly in an urban context, has been a subject of attention for planners, geographers and historians alike, air transport remains largely undocumented and discussed for this period in modern Britain. Though the Roskill Commission, Maplin Sands and the recent Davies Commission have garnered some interest, this has rarely, if ever, extended to a regional case study. Most importantly, however, in the context of this thesis, the question of airports – more than any other area of transport policy – highlights the institutional constraint put upon regional action in England, which forms an important contention to Harvie's claim that regionalism has 'never barked'.

Despite having a somewhat separate focus to the modernisation programmes surrounding road and rail concerns from the mid-1950s onwards, airport policy had considerable thematic parallels.[746] Simon Gunn argues that this supposed national cultural shift towards increasing 'automobility' in this period was equivocal rather than

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[744] Charlesworth, *A History of British Motorways*, 28.
[745] Ibid.
[746] Certain parallels are even evident from earlier periods, such as the 'collapse of the Railway Mania in 1846', in which MPs failed to act to ensure an efficient railways system for primarily local 'political' reasons; see Mark Casson, *The World's First Railway System: Enterprise, Competition, and Regulation on the Railway Network in Victorian Britain* (Oxford, 2009), 16-29.

totalising, closely associated with and reflective of the uneven spatial distribution of increased affluence.[747] As this chapter will demonstrate, these social issues were also amplified in debates surrounding civil aviation; an important part of these debates was whether increased airport capacity should be provided for to facilitate increased leisure travel (or – as conceived by some – 'inessential travel').[748] An increasing consideration for environmental concerns in all forms were central to debates surrounding airports. These related in some ways to the concerns considered elsewhere, but also had different nuances in some ways.

III

This chapter will briefly outline the context for these debates surrounding regional and national air transport and policy from the 1960s onwards. It will consider how the geographic pattern of civil airports and aerodromes came about, and highlight how long-running ambiguous policy decisions towards airline ownership and operations contributed to this geography. In turn, it will highlight the implications this had for civil aviation in Yorkshire and the Humber, in particular the decisions made by local authorities in relation to the aerodrome facility at Yeadon (later Leeds-Bradford Airport). As is discussed, the long-term suitability of Yeadon as not only an airport suitable to serve Yorkshire, but also its physical suitability as a whole was being questioned as early as the 1940s.

This chapter will then discuss the developments of the 1960s, in which the concerted dawn of the 'jet age' was seen to revolutionise air travel, not only for the businessman

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[747] Simon Gunn, 'People and the car: the expansion of automobility in urban Britain, c.1955-70', *Social History,* 38:2 (2013),226-231.
[748] TNA PRO AVIA 86/45 Frost to Vernon, 11 January 1972.

but for increasing numbers of leisure travellers.[749] Much greater general interest in and provision for air travel was coupled with the related fervour for (long-term) planning and greater professionalisation in decision making, igniting calls for a more rational and efficient provision of airport facilities. In Yorkshire, the seeming inadequacy of available airports became a matter of pressing concern, leading to the creation of an organisation of interested individuals, the Yorkshire and Humberside Airport Development Association (YAHADA), who were instrumental in the production of two reports on the region's civil aviation needs. In this period, it is possible to see the formation – for a time at least – of a concerted regional purpose in relation to airports and air travel, one in which both industrials and local authorities sought a distinctly regional solution.

This chapter will then consider air transport in relation to Yorkshire and Humberside in the 1970s, at a time when competing political pressures placed further constraint on the possibility of any coherent regional action. The fallout from the Roskill Commission's report on the need for, and location of, a third London airport, and the creation of the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) following the Edwards Committee report on civil aviation in 1969, focused the national government on finally providing a more coherent and deliberately rationalised plan for airport provision, via the white paper *Airports Policy*, published in 1978. At the same time the political, social and cultural context had transformed to such an extent that concerted public opposition made any new development in air transport increasingly difficult to provide.[750] In this climate, and despite the most comprehensive consultants' report on the airport needs of the region in 1972, whatever consensus had existed in Yorkshire began to dissipate.

In this context, the term 'regional airport' is in itself difficult to disaggregate. A 'regional airport' is most readily a spoke within a hub feeder system, which can serve a city-region

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[749] Stephen Wheatcroft, *Air Transport Policy* (London, 1964), 91-108.
[750] Rigas Doganis, *The Airport Business* (London, 1992), 33.

rather than a larger region – such as the broad standard planning region considered here. This highlights the complexity of adequately defining the purpose and function of an airport in itself. As Amoroso and Caruso state, the airport 'is seen as a service to a territory, similar to that of a hospital, a school or a cultural center'.[751] The economic value of airports, however, does not necessarily align with this supposed public utility. Airports are an intermediate good within the aviation industry, rather than a product in themselves.[752] The airlines that use this good represent the final product, and as such airports are reliant on elasticity of demand for the services that they provide. But air links have been argued to be essential for the global competitiveness of businesses and industries, not only for the import and export of goods but also as a means to remain connected with supply chains.[753]

4.2 Context: Post-war civil aviation development, 1945-61

I

The turbulent beginnings for civil aviation in the inter-war years were somewhat an indicator of the issues that would arise in the policy framework for airlines and airports following the end of the Second World War. Decisions made during this period would have significant and long lasting consequences that continued during the development of a more formalised structure of regulation and administration of air transport. Following the lifting of restrictions on civil flying in 1919, there were three British companies

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[751] S. Amoroso and L. Caruso, 'Regional Airport: Study on Economic and Social Profitability', in M. Nadia Postorino (ed.), *Regional Airports* (Southampton, 2011), 99.
[752] International Civil Aviation Organisation, *Economic Contribution of Civil Aviation: Ripples of prosperity* (2002).
[753] Paul Hackett, 'Introduction', in Paul Hackett (ed.), *Making global connections: the potential of the UK's regional airports,* the Smith Institute (July 2014), 3.

providing international passenger services to Paris and Amsterdam from London by early 1920.[754] But the market was short-lived, with the steep early running costs and low initial loads meaning no commercial airline existed by 1921.[755] As Peter Lyth notes, the somewhat reluctant response of the government was an attempt to simultaneously begin subsidies and discourage competition, with Imperial Airways established in 1924. Despite desires for regulation, the burgeoning and unregulated domestic market led to 'a whole rash of small domestic airlines' in the 1930s. The 'bad press' of Imperial Airways and political concerns regarding international prestige saw subsidies additionally granted to British Airways Ltd., a 'newcomer' in international travel, in 1935.[756] Despite these developments, civil aviation in the interwar years was undoubtedly secondary to the military concerns. Edgerton notes that value of civil aircraft sales in 1934 was £0.5m, compared with £6m in sales to the Air Ministry.[757]

Though policy towards aerodromes has received less attention in the inter-war years than the aircraft industry and airline policy, John Myerscough's adept history of aerodromes in this period highlights important issues. Similarly to air travel, and despite the efforts of Frederick Sykes as the first Controller General of Civil Aviation in the Air Ministry to outline the desirability of a 'national scheme' of strategically important aerodromes, airports were afforded a low priority by national government in the early 1920s. An aversion to providing any form of public subsidy was again one of the key reasons for this.[758] Enthusiasm for aerodrome development was more forthcoming from local government however – eventually in part endorsing Sykes' assertion that 'ultimately an

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[754] David Edgerton, *England and the Aeroplane: An essay on a militant and technological nation* (Basingstoke, 1991), 31; Peter J. Lyth, 'The changing role of government in British civil air transport', in Robert Millward and John Singleton (eds.), *The political economy of nationalisation in Britain, 1920-1950* (Cambridge, 1995), 67-68.
[755] Lyth, 'The changing role of government', 68.
[756] Ibid., 72-74.
[757] Edgerton, *England and the Aeroplane*, 19-20.
[758] John Myerscough, 'Airport Provision in the Inter-War Years', *Journal of Contemporary History,* 20:1 (1985), 43-44.

aerodrome will be as necessary to a modern town as a railway station' – with many municipal authorities capitalising on the financial aid from the Unemployment Grants Committee to construct airfields from the late 1920s onwards.[759] Despite heavy investment in facilities, and some 45 local authority aerodromes opening between the wars, demand – though expanding – remained low, with only Liverpool and Brighton providing international services, and costs remained very high.[760]

Three key airports established in this period were Birmingham (Elmdon), Manchester (Ringway) and Liverpool (Speke).[761] The long-term importance of the siting of air facilities was generally given little consideration versus the desire for the early commencement of operations. The prescience therefore of Manchester in relocating their municipal aerodrome from Wythenshawe to Ringway in Cheshire, on the basis of planned ground transport links, excellent visibility and space for expansion, was little replicated elsewhere, but would have significant consequences for future developments.[762]

II

The national picture for civil aviation prior to 1940 was thus a complex one, encompassing a mixture of concerns, and public and private interests. Though there had been some attempts to consolidate and plan what was increasingly acknowledged as an important – but also very expensive – transport sector, this had proved an exceedingly difficult task. In the aftermath of the Second World War, and the election of Clement

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[759] Ibid., 51.

[760] Ibid., 52, 59. Between 1932 and 1937 there was an expansion in internal aviation from 3,260 passengers to 161,500, though the busiest routes were to the islands and over estuaries. Providing the 38 operating airports in 1940 had produced a total expenditure from local authorities of £3,534,678.

[761] Ibid., 53.

[762] Viv Caruana and Colin Simmons, 'The role of traffic growth and capital investment from 1918-82 in the development of Manchester Airport as an international gateway', *Journal of Transport Geography,* 3:3 (1995), 201-203.

Attlee's Labour government, it initially appeared that civil aviation would move towards a more rational and planned approach. In place of the more mixed form of ownership proposed by the Conservatives, Labour nationalised the British Overseas Airways Corporation (BOAC), British European Airways (BEA) and British South American Airways (BSSA) in late 1945.[763] Through them, Labour hoped to experiment with a 'multiplicity of instruments' to ensure what Stafford Cripps termed 'orderly, economic and efficient development of air transport', and that one managerial group would not compromise 'matters of great national importance'.[764] Alongside this development was the earlier 'unanimous' decision by the cabinet sub-committee on civil aviation to nationalise Britain's aerodromes. Beyond the decision itself, there was great uncertainty over what this would entail, but as one member of the civil aviation ministry explained to Hugh Dalton in 1945:

> On what is before me at present, [I] estimate that we shall need eventually, for transport purposes (in addition to international airports) between 70 and 80 airfields of which some are at present owned by local authorities, some by private owners, some have been constructed by the RAF mainly on requisitioned land, and several will have to be constructed.[765]

Despite the overall intentions that this should be a planned, programmed and centralised area of nationally significant transport policy, the picture became no less opaque than in these initial estimates. Hastily assembled figures identified forty four aerodromes that would be acquired as a matter of priority. They expected, based on consultation with BEA, that the majority of traffic (around 250 daily civil aircraft movements) would be through London. Against 108 non-domestic daily flights through London, the Civil Aviation Ministry estimated that provincial airports would handle at most eight international daily movements, and that such traffic would be restricted to

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[763] Cmd. 6712, *British Air Services* (1945), 4.
[764] Lyth, 'The changing role of government', 80-81.
[765] TNA T 225/50 Ministry of Civil Aviation to Hugh Dalton, 29 October 1945.

only a handful of airports.[766] By late 1946, with efforts on-going to acquire those nationally important aerodromes, the intentions of the Ministry had changed somewhat from the BEA's envisaged concentration on the capital. Regional economic policy was a strong impulse for this, as was made clear in the proposals put before Cabinet:

> [I] attach importance to the introduction of services from provincial centres direct to the continent. This will not only give some relief to congestion of air traffic in the London area, but should provide a stimulus to provincial business to help counteract the drift towards London.[767]

Fifty-nine aerodromes were now deemed as required for domestic and continental services and it was intended that these should be nationalised. It was estimated that the demand on the Exchequer would be around £20 million during the initial phase of development, and that a similar sum would be needed in the subsequent phase.[768] These proposals therefore met with some consternation from the Treasury, which opined that 'the programme seems unnecessarily lavish in the provision of aerodromes sufficiently large enough to take continental traffic'.[769]

The strain on public that the envisaged programme would entail almost immediately met with misgivings, as the Attlee Government sought to curtail spending in 1947. Only three days after publishing proposals for the acquisition of aerodromes, the civil aviation ministry issued a supplementary note 'in light of the recent White Paper on the Economic Situation', that noted '[a]lthough it may well be damaging to our prestige to put a deliberate brake on the expansion of internal air services', it might be necessary to halt

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[766] TNA T 225/50 D.H. Andover to I.A.E. Edwards, 25 October 1945.
[767] TNA T 225/50 C.A.C(47)3 'Aerodromes in the United Kingdom' - Memorandum by the Minister of Civil Aviation: Summary of proposals', 25 March 1947. it is worth noting however that this had been scaled back from 'great importance', as described in earlier circulated drafts of this paper, included in this file, from December 1946.
[768] Ibid.
[769] TNA T 225/50 Sir Alan Barlow, 'UK Civil Aerodrome Programme', 15 May 1947.

these developments until the economic situation became 'easier'.[770] What resulted was an *ad hoc* selection of airports to be nationalised. The criteria was more expedient than rational; the 'necessity for providing the main provincial cities with an airport' being set alongside 'the need on social grounds', and the 'pressure on political grounds for providing aerodromes at places which, before the late war, had municipal or licensed airports'.[771] On such regional policy grounds for example, Barrow and Carlisle were deemed essential airports to maintain.[772] The Cabinet would eventually agree to nationalising seven provincial airports for continental services, in part because the Ministry of Civil Aviation had argued that these would 'not only give relief from congestion of air traffic in the London area, but... also provide a stimulus to provincial business and help to counteract the drift towards London'.[773]

As attentions turned to adequate provision for Heathrow as the first London airport, and designation of Gatwick as the site of the second in the mid-1950s,[774] the landscape for the regional airports of the UK continued to drift away from any form of planned system. A number of different factors would determine instead which airports outside of London would continue to develop both in terms of facilities, routes and the airlines they accommodated. For example, Manchester's Corporation, in maintaining municipal control of the Ringway in 1950, benefited not only from the locational advantages of their airpot being a reasonable distance from the city and on over 600 acres of 'remarkably even land', but also from prescience in acting at an early opportunity in the

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[770] NA T 225/50 C.A.C(47)4 'Civil Aerodrome Programme' - Memorandum by the Minister of Civil Aviation, 28 March 1947.
[771] Ibid.
[772] NA T 225/50 C.P.(47)168 'Aerodromes outside the London area', 7 June 1947.
[773] NA T 225/50 C.P.(67) Cabinet Civil Aviation Committee 2nd Meeting, 16 May 1947.
[774] Hall, *Great Planning Disasters*, 16-19.

1950s to extend their runway over 10,000 feet to accommodate large long-haul jets at the earliest opportunity.[775]

The opportunity for airport expansion in the 1950s again emerged from a divergence from initial proposals regarding aviation provision. Charter and private services had been run by a number of small operators after the war and, due to the financial pressures and more limited capacity than envisaged of nationalized carriers, it was agreed by the Air Transport Advisory Council (primarily established as a consumer advisory body) that these airlines and providers should be allowed run these routes as 'associates'. Shortly afterwards, these airlines were permitted to run in direct competition to the national airlines, establishing themselves from humble beginnings through lucrative trooping contracts during the Berlin Airlift and Korean War.[776] The system which until 1960 operated on a basis of dubious legality increased the supply of air services which in turn operated of available number airports and airfields situated across the country and increasingly run by municipal authorities. Licenses for operating aerodromes were readily granted where no physical obstruction existed for flying.[777] The enthusiasm of these local authorities to operate services, which if scheduled were mainly domestic feeder and short-haul in nature, led to a distinctly uneven pattern of airports emerging by the mid-1960s, with Speke and Ringway developing little more than 35 miles apart, and the trio of Birmingham, Coventry and Castle Donington (East Midlands) in the Midlands a mere 10-30 miles apart.[778]

The development of larger and more powerful aircraft necessitated significant capital investment for both central government and the municipal concerns, not only only in

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[775] Caruana and Simmons, 'Manchester', 3, 8.

[776] Lyth, 'Flying Visits', 15-17; Wheatcroft, *Air Transport Policy*, 33-37.

[777] Rigas Doganis, 'A National Airport Plan'*, Fabian Tract* 377 (1967), 3.

[778] Kenneth R. Sealy, 'The siting and Development of British Airports', *The Geographical Journal,* 133:2 (1967), 150.

longer runways, aprons and taxi space, but also in the need for more sophisticated technical services. Higher load (capacity) factors on this newer generation of aircraft also necessitated larger terminal facilities, while at the same time reducing the number of air movements per passenger and therefore squeezing revenues. The consequences of this multiplicity of uncoordinated facilities and *ad hoc* arrangements was severe losses and deficits. Capital losses on the Exchequer in 1955 alone were reported to be £6 million.[779] In 1961, as the Ministry of Aviation concerned turned its attention to the potential need for a third London airport to handle both domestic and international traffic,[780] both they and the Treasury believed a formal separation was required, through relieving:

> …Rigid parliamentary control over the day-to-day management and accounting of airport operations, [to] make use of the enthusiasm of local authorities in running their own airports and reduce the cost to the Exchequer.[781]

The resulting white paper introduced in a matter of months divested the Ministry of 22 of its airports and also an financial responsibility other than the technical requirements for air traffic management.[782] At the same time it semi-formalised the two-tier national-local airport provision, in leading to the creation of a new state Corporation, the British Airports Authority (BAA) to manage the principle national airports of Heathrow, Gatwick, Stansted and Prestwick.[783]

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[779] Doganis, 'National Airport Plan', 2.
[780] Hall, *Great Planning Disasters,* 19-21.
[781] TNA PREM 11/3234 Lloyd to MacMillan, 'Future Airport Policy', 7 June 1961.
[782] Doganis, 'National Airport Plan', 3.
[783] Sealy, 'Airports', 161.

III

In Yorkshire, the immediate post-war period made clear the unsuitability of the aerodrome facilities for future use. The rather contingent and ad hoc nature of the national programme of development in the 1940s – after the initial attempts to plan proposals - not only meant that these deficiencies were not satisfactorily addressed prior to the 1960s, but also contributed to exacerbating these problems. The Second World War had seen the proliferation of military airfields of varying quality being situated in the east of the country including several in the Vale of York (including nine in the vicinity of the City). There therefore were a number of sites for potential use, but they were not necessarily near centres of population.

It was felt in the initial planning phases of aerodrome policy in the late 1940s that aerodromes at York, Doncaster and Yeadon (Leeds-Bradford) would be needed for domestic services, but with some potential for European services to 'Holland, Belgium and the Rhine'. Before a decision was made it was felt by the Ministry of Civil Aviation the aerodrome 2 miles from York would be required to make use of the facilities it already provided in 3 'hard runways', the largest being 4,800 feet. Despite this however, it was subject to 'controversy which as embroiled the local authorities concerned' due to demand to use its approaches for residential development from the RDC in which it was located, despite the wishes York Corporation.[784] Quickly however, as it became clear there was less supply and demand for internal services, it was decided the airport would not be required and would see little further civil use.

More complex than the situation in the North Riding was that in West Riding. The Ministry of Civil Aviation had clear misgivings about the long-term suitability of Yeadon as a civil airport. Despite the 'earmarking' of Leeds for continental services, the Minister had some

[784] TNA T 225/50 Paris to Barnes, 'York Aerodrome', 1 October 1946.

doubt as to the possibility it could be developed into a suitable aerodrome to meet heavy traffic demand. The airfield and buildings had been completed as a joint venture of Leeds and Bradford corporations in 1939 (having opened in 1931), and had seen the installation of two tarmac runways (both less than 4,000 feet in length) when requisitioned and used as an aircraft factory during the War.[785] Its location made it not only the highest aerodrome in the UK and subject to highly changeable meteorological effects such as fog from low lying cloud, but also lack of convenient flat terrain due to its location on a rocky plateau meant it had already been determined it would be difficult to extend. It was already being described to the Ministry as 'heartily disliked' by pilots as deliberations over its use were ongoing.[786]

Despite this clear indications of the unsuitability of the site for future development, local and national political considerations came into play at an early stage, particularly between industrial interests in Leeds, and those in Bradford and the larger textile areas. Leeds' Chamber of Commerce was clear in its deputations to the Ministry in 1946:

> Over eighteen months ago the Leeds Chamber investigated the position and expressed the view that this great industrial area in the West Riding required a Regional airport permitting direct access to the Continent...
>
> ...The Yeadon Aerodrome cannot in its present state fulfil the requirements of an airport to accommodate the aircraft of the size required for direct flights to the Continent and its geographical position is such that it cannot be extended or adapted for the purpose except at prohibitive expense.[787]

Industrial interests in Bradford, Huddersfield and other areas to the west of Leeds were firm that it was they that had greatest need for an airport for convenient international

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[785] TNA BT 217/570 'Yeadon Airport - History', 1 January 1947.
[786] TNA BT 247/107 Extract of copy of letter to D.H. Hanover, 27 November 1945.
[787] TNA BT 247/107 'Statement of proposal to make Yeadon Aerodrome a feeder airport', 21 February 1946.

trade, and any site further to the East, such as those suggested at Sherburn-in-Elmet and Church Fenton, a resolution that was unanimously supported by the Corporation.[788]

However, it was national priorities and the nationalised carriers that had an even greater bearing on air transport in the West Riding, and Yorkshire more generally. By late 1947, despite plans in place for modest extension of the north/south runway to accommodate larger civil aircraft, the BEA were briefing the Ministry that they were 'unlikely to ever require a "Continental" aerodrome in the West riding of Yorkshire'.[789] By mid-1948, the situation was even bleaker with regards to Yeadon. despite its acquisition by the Ministry it was noted that:

> The cold douches flowing from BEA's accounts and the Capital Investment Programme have pushed Yeadon into the distant future so far as scheduled services are concerned. BEA have stated that they will not want it before 1956 and if the Helicopter becomes a commercial proposition by that time, it is highly likely that Yeadon will never be developed.[790]

Yeadon therefore remained in limbo for a variety of complex reasons. Despite its inherent locational disadvantages the strong local agitation for there to be an airport with the potential for continental services, and that this should be conveniently located close to the main industrial areas in this period served keep the potential use of the site in the Ministry's mind, which was a contributing factor in neither York nor Doncaster being developed.[791] However, the exigencies of national resources and the attitudes of BEA in particular also had a bearing on this. Even at this stage it was clear enthusiasm existed for a 'regional' solution within the industrial heartland of the West Riding.

Such dilemmas continued into the 1950s with regards to Yeadon. Though the Ministry had informed the Leeds-Bradford joint committee responsible for aerodrome that it

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[788] TNA BT 247/107 Town Clerk to Ministry of Civil Aviation, 'Civil Aviation', 9 November 1946.
[789] TNA BT 247/107 Munro to Mattheson, 22 December 1947.
[790] TNA BT 247/107 'Yeadon Airport: Note', 13 May 1948.
[791] WYAS BBD1/1/39/2 'Yeadon Aerodrome - Draft Statement', 23 June 1953.

would not be retained as part of the national programme, they then approached the local authorities in 1953 over sale of the site of the site for what appeared to be solely military purposes. The following protracted negotiations over the value of the site between the local authorities and the Ministry indicated it was a site of little value to either party; with the Joint Committee investigating the potential value of a residential development and the Ministry stating that from their point of view purchase 'more a matter of expediency than necessity'.[792] A failure to meet their valuation eventually in 1956 led the City Councils of Leeds and Bradford to rescind their offer of sale and instead to run Yeadon as a civilian airport, despite continuing rumblings that the corporations wished to close the site.[793]

The continuing development of private airlines, the burgeoning expansion of air transport in the late 1950s due to technological innovation and increasing affluence now posed a challenge to the authorities. The company running the site on lease from the corporations, Yeadon Aviation Ltd., made clear the two airlines operating out of the airport were expanding, and that they had been reliably informed that Aer Lingus, KLM and a Belgian airline were interested in operating from the airport 'in the relatively near future', and that the two small existing airlines running services were looking to expand these. However, in order to do so it was made clear a runway of at least 5400 feet was 'essential' to be able to handle newer Viscount V10 aircraft. They informed the Joint Committee that:

> It is apparent with anyone connected with the Aviation Industry and in particular to those who have been engaged in it at Yeadon recently, that Yeadon is the finest possible site for a Commercial Airport, situated as it is at the heart of a large industrial area.[794]

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[792] WYAS BBD1/1/39/2 Hawyward to Fleury, 'Yeadon Aerodrome', 15 November 1955.
[793] WYAS BBD1/1/39/13 Dawson to Patten, 4 December 1956.
[794] WYAS BBD1/1/39/13 'Report from Yeadon Aviation Ltd. to Leeds/Bradford Joint Aerodrome Committee', 9 August 1957.

Even in spite of the inadequacy of the facilities, the expansion of both services and passengers at Yeadon saw dramatic increases, with the number of passengers handled almost trebling between 1959 and 1961.[795] In 1960 despite its small baseline, *Flight* magazine were declaring it Britain's fastest growing airport, and the Joint Committee - now in full control - claimed it required an expanded airport for its 'expanding and prosperous business community with a developing need for air services'.[796] The inadequacy of the facilities and the urgency to capture the hugely expanding market put pressure on the local authorities to act. The *Yorkshire Post* was particularly strong it stating that 'If the airlines have faith in Yeadon they must be backed to the hilt. If they leave Yeadon disillusioned, they will never return'.[797] Such circumstances therefore saw the Joint Committee invest first in the early 1960s in a new runway construction to 5,400 feet at an cost of £600,000, and then in 1964 a new terminal building for around £180,000 that was designed, it was boasted, to handle between 350-500 passengers an hour.[798] Crucially, the runway was not built to a much greater length of over 7,000 feet primarily for cost and potential planning opposition; with no guarantee of a financial return, the Joint Committee were clear they 'have laid their emphasis on providing the minimum extension to secure [*sic*] that the development of the Airport is unimpeded'.[799]

For all the technological innovation, civil aviation maintained a degree of amateurism and an association with military flying. The role of civil aviation within broader transport policy continued to remain rather ambiguous and difficult in a definitional sense in these years, which added to the administrative complexity at a national level. Between the wars

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[795] WYAS BBD1/1/39/32 'Memorandum on the Leeds and Bradford Airport', 11 July 1962.
[796] TNA T 319/94 Cutting from *Flight,* 5 August 1960.
[797] 'Leeds-Bradford Airport move', *Yorkshire Post,* 28 November 1960.
[798] 'Yeadon Airport's £181,000 terminal', *Yorkshire Post,* 8 February 1964.
[799] WYAS BBD1/1/39/32 'Memorandum on the Leeds and Bradford Airport', 11 July 1962.

it was suggested that '...aviation in these years was something of an occult fellowship, which set itself apart from mainstream transport life'.[800]

4.3   A 'Yorkshire Airport': The Yorkshire and Humberside Airport Development Association and regional airport proposals in the 1960s

I

Air transport and airports policy in the UK as it developed in the UK up until the 1960s had been both sporadic and uncoordinated. Decisions and indecision after the war had led to the development of a highly uneven geographical pattern and pattern of ownership for airports and airfields across the UK, with the vast majority of provincial or regional airports in the hands of either one or a consortia of local authorities. The primary concern of central government and the majority of planners and academics in this period would be on the huge controversies that would surround the potential siting and development of the Third London Airport, and highly controversial and long debated Roskill Commission Inquiry, which Peter Hall has argued 'represents a high-water mark for a certain kind of comprehensive planning based on the attempt to qualify'.[801]

In the early 1960s therefore, the local authorities in Yorkshire and Humberside appear to have been particularly progressive, arguably even pre-empting this demand for concentration around a single regional airport. The spur for such action came initially from a body of private interested individuals in 1962, the Yorkshire and Humberside

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[800] Myerscough, 'Airport Provision', 54.
[801] Hall, *Planning Disasters,* 29; see also David McKie, *A Sadly Mismanaged Affair: A Political History of the Third London Airport* (London, 1973); Peter Bromhead, *The Great White Elephant of Maplin Sands: the neglect of comprehensive transport planning in government decision-making* (London, 1973); Peter Self, 'Nonsense on Stilts: The Futility of Roskill', *New Society,* 2 July 1970.

Airport Development Association (YAHADA), who brought local authorities and industrialists together to commission two studies on the possibility of a regional airport for Yorkshire, which form the basis of discussion here: *A Regional Airport For Yorkshire* produced for Development Association in 1963, and *An Airport Programme for Yorkshire and Humberside* produced for the Consultative Committee in 1966; both of these were carried out by Air Transport Consultants Alan Stratford and Associates. The Chairman of YAHADA emphasised in 1964 that

> To get to the heart of the trouble it was realised that Yorkshire's air transport system must be organised on a regional basis and it consequently decided to campaign for a Yorkshire regional airport.[802]

II

Though air links were considered integral for a modern region, the manner in which this was defined in a Yorkshire context was geared towards a primarily industrial and commercial construction of air travel, even after the burgeoning of increased affluence and leisure time for a broader section of the population. As was argued by Caruana and Simmons, the success of Manchester Airport that allowed it to emerge as an 'international gateway' in the late 1970s was the diversification of services achieved through capturing a mixture of scheduled and charter flights (mainly in the form of the Inclusive Tour Package Air Holiday (IT)) from the mid-1960s onwards. Such a strategy, they suggest, helped to insulate against volatility of demand for domestic and international services, and helped to give the airport its edge over competitors such as Birmingham and Liverpool.[803]

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[802] HHC U/DPW/3/155 Yorkshire Airport Development Association Annual Report, 26 September 1964.
[803] Caruana and Simmons, 'Emergence of an International Gateway,' 18-23.

The rapid increase of the IT market in the 1960s was reflective of a combination of technological, economic and social trends. The independent carriers that had emerged after the war as seat-of-the-pants concerns were in a position to capitalise on an increasingly affluent population with more leisure time to offer cheap package holiday deals to seaside resorts in the Costa Brava and other destinations.[804] Though the local authority in Manchester catered for this increasing demand for flights as a means of pleasure, as well as business, such concerns remained far from the minds of the bodies involved in the promotion of airport development in Yorkshire. The original preliminary report by YAHADA into the need for increased airport provision placed 'air cargo' ahead of passengers in its justifications of the necessity of better facilities. The prioritising of manufacturing stimulus, as opposed to that of service industries was also shown in the listing of 'recent new industries' on the Tees and Humber that would serve to gain (including 'paper sacks', 'wallpaper' and 'sporting cartridges').[805] The Leeds-Bradford Joint Airport Committee, even in the midst of a significant boom in leisure passengers – with the numbers of passengers carried on non-London flights increasing almost four-fold in the 1960s – indicated to the consultancy group they had hired to produce the 1972 study that they were unwilling to invest in facilities for the purposes of 'inessential travel'.[806] In some respects, the demands that international tourism placed on the airports system nationally – let alone the economic value of such services – was not fully considered by the Department of the Environment until after the abandonment of Maplin, and the move towards a 'National Airports Strategy'.[807] In considering such statements, however, it is worth bearing in mind even with the increasing level of foreign

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[804] Lyth, 'Flying Visits', 11-30.

[805] HHC U DPW/3/155 Alan H. Stratford, 'A Preliminary Report for the Yorkshire Airport Development Association on the need for a study of air transport and airport development in Yorkshire and North East', 22 November 1962. 5.

[806] TNA AVIA86/41 Frost to Vernon, 11 January 1972.

[807] TNA HLG 156/747 'Foreign Leisure Traffic: Zonal Distribution Predictions', 31 October 1974.

travel that was beginning to be in reach for people, those who used air travel still represented a small fraction of the population. This was likely due to the cost element, falling as it would on the local authorities, but it is arguable that there was also a moral dimension.

The 1960s, in contrast to the early era of civil aviation, were a time where the wonders of jet aircraft and air travel were less the preserve of the waning heroes of Empire and much more attainable. Air travel and the jet era was in many ways the embodiment of the possible achievements of modernity. It harnessed the 'technocratic liberalism' that scientific rigour and a political focus on increasing professionalism in British society. Aircraft were a formed a significant part of this drive, forming one third of what Coopey and Lyth termed 'the triumvirate of modernity' alongside the nuclear and computer industries.[808] Even aside from the supersonic marvel presented by the Concorde programme, airframe technology and the development of civil aircraft formed a significant part of the research and development drive within central government during this period; illustrated most explicitly by Benn's Ministry of Technology (or 'Mintech' as it would be termed).

The accompaniment to increasing national and public interest in aerospace were the airlines themselves and Britain's national airport infrastructure. As was highlighted in the previous section, developments in this area had been rather *ad hoc,* producing with them a number of inconsistencies and inefficiencies. Such a state of affairs however created significant contradictions and paradoxes against the increasingly high technological nature and scientific triumph of aircraft design and production. The first of these was markedly rudimental statistical evidence available on the subject. Stephen Wheatcroft in his study on *Air Transport Policy* in 1964 stated, rather bluntly, that 'statistical facts

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[808] Coopey and Lyth, 'Back to the Future'.

about airline operations are ephemeral'.[809] The records maintained by the managers of

Yeadon in 1960s showed that only basic monthly information on the number of air

movements, the total numbers of passengers and weight of freight handles, and

operational accounts were kept. Prior to the creation of the Civil Aviation Authority these

gave no indications of size and type of aircraft, load factors or performance in relation to

other airports.

All of these issues and tensions become clear in the Yorkshire Airport proposals.

> Such a complex and diverse system of ownership cannot but create confusion and
> local rivalries. There is no machinery for co-ordination, no plan or framework within
> which separate airport authorities can plan their own development in the
> knowledge that their forecasts and expectations will not be upset by developments
> at neighbouring airports. On the contrary, airport owners enjoy almost complete
> freedom of action, especially if they do not need government aid. To attract the
> traffic upon which their revenue and prestige depend they try to outdo each other in
> the facilities they provide. This is both costly and wasteful.[810]

Rather than differences emerging from the local authorities represented on the

consultative council for airport development, it was Ministry of Aviation that appeared

determined to deter a regional solution for civil aviation. A paper sent to the newly-

formed body by the Northern Division of the Ministry of Aviation in November 1965

stated:

> This paper though agreeing that it may be prudent to safeguard the land for such
> an aerodrome nevertheless concludes that there is no foreseeable requirement for
> it whilst the major conurbations of Leeds, Sheffield and Humberside have
> aspirations for their own separate aerodromes.
>
> Regional aerodromes such as Ferrybridge have been a feature of area plans over
> the past thirty years... but none of these have materialised. This is not to say that
> Ferrybridge will follow a similar pattern, but the many good reasons why Regional
> Airports have not been developed are portrayed in subsequent paragraphs.[811]

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[809] Wheatcroft, *Air Transport Policy,* 14.
[810] Ibid.*,* 4.
[811] WYAS BBD 1/39/53 'Regional Aerodromes: A Paper Prepared for the Yorkshire and Humberside Consultative Committee for Airport Development', November 1965.

The reasons listed on reflection appeared to be somewhat short-sighted, or even outdated within the context of 1965. They focused on the interests of local authorities in their own airports (all of which, it was argued 'could be developed to operate the most demanding aircraft known to-day')[812] that it was relatively cheaper for an existing airfields to be developed for commercial air services, and that it was erroneous to believe that regional airports located near motorways would have greater ease of access for users than local 'aerodromes' currently being operated. The conclusions were that 'a Regional aerodrome at Ferrybridge may be required later in the century but no action other than safeguarding the site should be considered at present.[813]

The documents produced regarding airports in Yorkshire by the mid-1960s, starting with the 'Regional Plan for Airport Development' produced by the technical committee of the consultative council in November 1965, demonstrated a commitment to a regional solution to the problems of air service provision that incorporated the broader goals of integrated long-term economic and physical planning. Noting the on-going and planned construction of the M1 between Leeds and Sheffield, the M62 (that would join Liverpool to Hull), the M18 and the A1(M), the plan recognised that

> these four roads of motorway or near motorway standards are going to dictate the pattern of movement and development within this region in the years ahead and land adjacent to them... will assume more importance. If, therefore, an airfield is to be developed in this Region, designed to serve the whole of the Region and areas beyond, then it should be closely related to one or other of these four important highways.[814]

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[812] Ibid.
[813] Ibid.
[814] WYAS BBD 1/39/53 Consultative Council for Airport Development in Yorkshire and Humberside Technical Committee – Formulation of a Regional Plan for Airport Development, 8 November 1965.

In the short term the plan called for modest services to be provided for South Yorkshire, Humberside, and an improvement to the terminal facilities at Yeadon, but in the longer-term it was felt from both a national and regional point of view it was necessary to plan for 'a major long-haul International Airport'.[815]

Despite the well-documented disputes that arose from any site considered for airport development or expansion, particularly those in the south east of England, the identification of Thorne Waste, a site situated close to the intended motorways links near Goole and chosen by the consultants as the most viable location for a potential intercontinental airport once other airports had reached a saturation point in the 1970s, appears to have been relatively uncontroversial. Though proposals never reached anything more than potential, the residents in the vicinity of Thorne do not appear to have actively resisted with the same vehemence as the various groups protesting airport expansion elsewhere. Similarly to the Thorne site, in was hinted that proceeding with the site at Balne Moor would draw as muted a response. Prior to the publication of the later 1972 Metra Consulting report,[816] a spread in the *Yorkshire Post* included a quote form a resident of Balne stating 'it's that quiet they [the residents] probably wouldn't notice even if you did build an airport here. Not until the planes actually started flying in and out that is.'[817]

Despite assertions to the contrary of local fragmentation in airports policy – given institutional licence by the pattern of airport and aerodrome ownership – the movement to stimulate aviation provision in Yorkshire had a strong regional coherence and focus. Though the initiative stemmed from a group of private individuals, that they were able to generate over 200 responses from official and industrial concerns – almost 80 per cent

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[815] Ibid.
[816] METRA Consulting Group, *The Future of Air Transport Facilities in Yorkshire* (1972).
[817] *Yorkshire Post,* 8 March 1972.

'in favour of a Yorkshire Airport' – showed the capacity for a collective solution.[818] The Association later claimed that the first Stratford survey was, in fact, 'supported by 138 local authorities, public bodies and private companies'.[819] Three years later, after the publication of the first Stratford report, the Association was able to bring together fourteen local authorities to form the Consultative Council for Airport Development in Yorkshire and Humberside – including both Leeds and Bradford, despite their on-going development of Yeadon, demonstrated that enthusiasm could be maintained.[820]

This rapid expansion of air travel, and the increasing success of the independent carriers during the mid-1960s – bolstered as they were by the flourishing charter market – did mean that the Ministry's short-term warnings about local conflicts of interests had some validity. Having previously enthusiastically endorsed the original Stratford Report, Hull's Corporation's support – at least in financial terms – began to wane somewhat. The regional development committee 'having regard for the contribution already made by this authority towards the cost of the original survey' declined contribution towards the updated survey.[821] Officials in the city and the surrounding East Riding hinterland, however, were keen to develop flights from the area, and in April 1966 Autair were successful in obtaining a licence to run six weekly services to London via Luton Airport, the inaugural flight taking place on the 3 October.[822] The costs involved in promoting a full airport at that time though appeared to be a stumbling block for the local authorities. Hull City Corporation, MPs James Johnson and Patrick Wall all sought agreement with the

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818 East Riding of Yorkshire Archive Service (ERA) BOBR 2/15/4/2291 Yorkshire Airport Development Committee to local authorities, chambers of commerce and industrial concerns, 'Review of the Case for a Yorkshire Airport', 26 June 1962. The total number of replies received to the initial survey was 216, 176 of which were in favour of a 'Yorkshire Airport' (only 15 against).
819 WYAS C779 'Proposal by the Yorkshire Airport Development Association Ltd. for a regional airport authority for Yorkshire and Humberside', 9 March 1973.
820 WYAS WRC 41/4 Leeds and Bradford Joint Airport Committee Minutes, 5 February 1965.
821 Hull City Council Regional Development (Special) Committee Minutes, 21 March 1965.
822 HHC U DPW 3/156 Threlfall to Wall, 'Hull-London Inaugural Flight', 13 September 1966.

Ministry of Defence for joint civil and military use of the airfield at Leconfield (north of Beverley), as the continued use of the Hawker-Sidderley facility at Brough was compromise by its short runway and the erection of an industrial chimney. When an agreement was reached with the Ministry in 1969, Alderman Leo Shultz was keen to emphasise that 'this is a bargain indeed for the initial costs of a developing service'.[823] The service, however, did not last out the year as Autair ceased its scheduled operations to London from Hull, Carlisle, Blackpool, Dundee and Teesside in October, citing significant losses.[824]

The strong planning problems that would be generated from environmental pressures by promoting a new site for an airport in Yorkshire appear to have effectively excluded the proposals from the national discourse by the mid-1970s. As the second Wilson Labour government sought to move quickly on a national airports plan for at least the next decade, a working party of officials and civil servants drawn from the relevant departments (including the CAA and BAA) and regional offices was formed to produce both national and regional issues. At the first meeting, the representative from the Yorkshire and Humberside Regional Office noted that 'in the longer term it was likely that Yorks and Humberside would need a new international airport if Yeadon were not able to expand'. In response, however, 'it was agreed that new sites would be excluded at this stage: it was doubtful if these were realistic starters and officials would be in the difficult position of having to develop, and appear to promote such proposals'. A desire to 'mitigate the environmental impacts at any one site' – also emphasised within the minutes – undoubtedly played into this desire not consider alternatives. The fifteen

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[823] *Hull Daily Mail,* 28 April 1969.
[824] HHC U DPW 3/158 'Press Statement: Autair International Airways, Future of Regional Services', 31 July 1969.

English 'regional' airports and four London area airports that were listed in original briefing note for the group were settled on for the purposes of the study.[825]

4.4 Airports in the 1970s: Regional airports and national planning to 1978

I

The early 1970s represented perhaps the most concerted regional action with regards to airport development in Yorkshire, but also highlighted the increasing constraints on any proposals for a new airport as a result of a changing national, regional and local policy environment. It also made clear the significant issues that came from a brand of regionalism that sought high-modernist, expert-led guidance as a means of decision-making within this increasingly complex context. This increasing complexity was driven not only by the administrative ambiguity with regards to decision-making at a regional level, but the increasing plurality of competing interest groups and policy considerations that had begun to emerge in relation to the still-ongoing Third London Airport debates.

Though the prospect of a new airport centrally located in the region was openly discussed over this period, it was the extension of Yeadon – despite continued concerns over its suitability – that would be actively pursued by the local authorities in West Yorkshire. This decade would also see the commencement of nominal operations from RAF Kirmington, which would become Humberside Airport, in lieu of any services from the airfields north of the Humber following the failed experiment of the late 1960s. In

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[825] TNA HLG 156/747 Groundside Assessment Working Party, Minutes of Meeting, 14 November 1974. Airports included in the strategy, as per GAWP(74)1 were: Heathrow, Gatwick, Stansted, Luton (London area airports); Birmingham, Bournemouth, Castle Donnington (East Midlands), Manchester, Bristol, Norwich, Blackpool, Carlisle, Exeter, Leeds-Bradford, Liverpool, Newcastle, Teesside, Southampton, Glamorgan (other area airports).

terms of the reason why proposals for larger and more suitable civil aviation facilities were not advanced, YAHADA – who continued their active promotion of the Thorne Waste site – were emphatic that it was squarely the local authorities themselves who were to blame. YAHADA's Director made this plain in letters sent to councillors in the recently-formed South Yorkshire Metropolitan County Council in May 1975:

> That Yorkshire and Humberside remains without a Regional Airport and virtually non-existent air services is attributable, in our view, to two major causes. Firstly, the inability of the old Local Authorities to agree on a common airport policy related to the benefit of the whole region. Secondly, the parochial attitudes which continued to result in calls for the development of the Yeadon Airport long after it had been proved that Yeadon was not only incapable of providing a regional facility because of its location but that its development was environmentally unacceptable.[826]

Though the debates surrounding air transport facilities in the early 1970s would suggest that there was a degree of validity to these charges, the evidence from this period would indicate that in fact there was significant degree of concerted and coherent 'regional' action, as in the 1960s, but that the increasing constraints highlighted above provided no clear means through which to channel and maintain this. This was also exacerbated by an increasingly opaque national picture. In some senses national airports policy would prove to be a true archetype of this characterisation of British politics in the 1970s; epitomise most starkly by the Roskill Commission's report, and the decision to choose Maplin Sands as the location of the third London Airport.

II

The decision made in October 1970 by Secretary of State for the Environment, following the extensive public inquiry held during the previous winter, was to refuse permission for

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[826] WYAS WRC 41/5 The Yorkshire & Humberside Airport Development Association Ltd., 'A Regional Airport for Yorkshire and Humberside,' 14 May 1975.

the extension of the runway at Leeds/Bradford beyond 7,000ft. The reasons for doing so were stated as 'environmental'; most specifically in relation to the noise nuisance the potential use of full jet aircraft would subject the residents around Yeadon to. Despite complaints from MPs and business interests that seventeen days of the hearing had been devoted to the noise issues, compared to only six on the economic operational aspects of the extension, the Government were firm that 'while obviously meriting the most careful consideration, the case in economic and social terms for airport developments must be weighed against the equally pressing need to conserve the environment either to protect the peace of those living in heavily populated areas or to preserve the countryside'.

It was a decision that was generally reflective of the broader public concern in this period, that had escalated since the Wilson Committee on Noise in 1963 and had intensified with protests against Stansted's initial designation as the Third London Airport. Ted Heath had been involved in the decision to designate Heathrow in the 1950s, and as Prime Minister was personally averse to exacerbating a problem increasingly in focus. The close proximity of airfields to urban areas was testing tolerances. As one commentator in *Business Week* remarked 'What was once merely a major nuisance has... grown into roaring calamity for millions of people living near airports. Jet noise stops conversations dead; it keeps people awake at night; it terrifies children; it can damage buildings and lower property levels'.[827] In the 1970s the typical sound of a jet aircraft taking-off at 150 metres measured around 130dB, and the Noise and Number Index (NNI) developed by the Wilson Committee was closely monitored.[828] In the case of Leeds/Bradford, it was not the immediate noise that would be generated but

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[827] Quoted in Donald V. Harper, 'The Dilemma of Aircraft Noise at Major Airports', *Transportation Journal,* 10, 3 (1971), 5.

[828] Colin Waters, 'Fundamental Aspects of Noise and the Sonic Boom', in Alan H. Stratford, *Airports and the Environment: A Study of Air Transport Development and its Impact upon the Social and Economic Well-being of the Community* (London, 1974), 132-134.

more the belief it would be 'impractical' to impose any planning controls related to noise that would limit later developments.

Despite assurances that scheduled services would continue to run from Leeds/Bradford until at least 1975, the threat of withdrawal by Northeast Airlines Ltd. – who provided some 70 per cent of scheduled traffic – and Aer Lingus began to materialise much sooner than this. The Yorkshire and Humberside region's only major airport had already begun to see a marked downturn in its traffic and use in 1970. At a time high passenger growth nationally, particularly in chartered tourist traffic (which saw annual passenger growth rates of 28 per cent prior to the oil crisis), Leeds/Bradford was experiencing decreases. Though the airport could still be used by the majority of the short-range turbo-prop aircraft used by the airlines, the length of Runway 15/33 and the meteorological conditions around Yeadon imposed restrictions on speed and weight of these planes that made questionable the commercial viability for operators whose margins relied so heavily maintaining high load factors on flights.

The authorities in West Yorkshire and the airport committee themselves were quick to act following this setback, as they were faced with the likely obsolescence of a facility on which considerable capital had been spent and which employed several hundred individuals in some capacity. It was decided in the short term that the airport was to be kept open and the decision was to be appealed, but separate meetings were held in December 1970 with the airline operators, MPs and 'representatives of supporting organisations' to assess the options. As the airport committee's minutes recorded:

> Mention was repeatedly made at all three meetings of two basic points - the question of the re-submission of planning applications for the runway extension after an appropriate length of time, and the question of a study in depth of the airport needs of the Yorkshire Region as a whole. Confirmation of the vital importance of these two matters has come from other informed sources, and tied

in with these matters is the question of the need to examine closely the factors of congestion at and overspill from Manchester Ringway Airport.[829]

The need to re-assess the regional requirements, and the possible overspill from Manchester, appear to have directly referenced the second Stratford report and may have been influenced by the input of YAHADA in these debates. But a possible imperative given by capacity issues at Ringway was not forthcoming. The Manchester Airport Authority informed the committee that their 'multi-million pound' proposals for expansion of passenger, freight and aircraft facilities – including the construction of a second runway – was expected to satisfy demand for the next fifteen years. As a result of this, the matter was referred the Yorkshire and Humberside Standing Conference of Local Planning Authorities to consider '…whether it would be advisable for Consultants to be appointed to up-date the [1967 Stratford airport study]'.[830]

The consultants appointed this time were not Alan Stratford and Associates, but instead the Metra Consulting Group. Rather than simply reviewing the provision of airports for West Yorkshire, they were tasked in their terms of reference with taking into account *An Airport Programme for Yorkshire* in producing 'effective estimates of demand for air transport services in Yorkshire and such wider area as may be appropriate…'. From this the consultants were to examine all suitable sites '…identifying those most suitable on operations, economic and financial and transportation grounds, and having particular regard to environmental grounds and, after a more detailed examination in a final report to recommend the most suitable on all grounds'.[831] In this task they liaised more closely with the central government departments associated with air transport as they carried

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[829] WYAS (Wakefield) WRC 41/5 Leeds and Bradford Airport Joint Committee Minutes, 1 January 1971.

[830] WYAS (Wakefield) WRC 41/5 Leeds and Bradford Airport Joint Committee Minutes, 5 March 1971.

[831] Metra Consulting Group (in association with Frederick Snow and Partners), *An Airport for Yorkshire, Vol. II technical report,* May 1972, 7.

out their work in late 1971 and early 1972; namely the DTI, DOE, MOD and National Air Traffic Services. Metra, in association with Frederick Snow and Partners, also made their presence felt in the region as they surveyed the various sites deemed as potential locations for a new 'Yorkshire airport', and in doing so their investigations were keenly investigated by the *Yorkshire Post* and other local press.

In terms of the scope of the study, *An Airport for Yorkshire* was by far the most comprehensive of the reports on air transport in Yorkshire produced to that point. When published in Spring 1972, at a cost to the Leeds/Bradford Airport authorities of £40,000, the technical report volume totalled more that 300 pages. Though an evaluation of the Thorne Waste site was an explicit element of their research, it was made public several months prior to publication that the site had not made the preferred shortlist. Metra made clear their reasons, insisting that the site could not be justified for inclusion on cost, environmental or economic grounds; the claim it would 'attract any more industry to its vicinity' or draw in regional traffic was labelled 'doubtful'.[832] In the end it was a new site that was recommended as an airport to serve the Yorkshire and Humberside, a greenfield location at Balne Moor. It was 'nine miles apart as the crow flies' from the Thorne site,[833] and described in the report as:

> [...] particularly suitable for airport development. It is situated 9 miles from either Doncaster or Selby and lies across the A19 linking these two towns. Access to the projected M62 motorway would be 4 miles to the north of the site. There are no obstructions in its proximity which could represent a hazard to flying...[834]

The *Yorkshire Post* provided a more vivid description of the site that would also be some 20 miles by road from Leeds and Hull following the M62's completion; the moor itself

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[832] Metra Consulting Group, *An Airport for Yorkshire,* 130-131.
[833] As described by Edmund Marshall MP in *House of Commons Debates,* 19 June 1972, vol. 839, col. 136.
[834] Metra Consulting Group, *An Airport for Yorkshire,* 265.

characterised for its readers as 'a vast area of monotonously flat farmland', and Balne itself as:

> ... Not so much a village, more a pub, a parish room and a handful of scattered farms. Hardly a house has been built there since the Second World War. It is as if the march of progress had bypassed Balne and none of the residents made any attempt to divert it.[835]

An Airport for Yorkshire however also contained a degree of pragmatism regarding the short-term imperatives for the maintenance of air travel in the region, and for inevitable difficulties in formulating a regional solution. The consultants' advice was therefore that as an interim measure, there was a need to revisit a possible runway extension at Leeds/Bradford:

> However, owing to the multiplicity of local authorities that would have to be involved in the planning of a new airport and their impending reorganisation, it is possible that no initiative would be taken on the new airport, which may, therefore, not be ready until the eighties. The unemployment problem might ease off by then which would remove some of the reasoning behind the benefits stemming from construction. Moreover, other airports will have developed during the next ten years and Yorkshire could end up not ever having an airport at all.[836]

Having received a new report recommending a new location in the Yorkshire and Humberside region, the local authorities continued to move the matter forward, the Leeds/Bradford authorities pushing for an early meeting officials from the DTI and DOE, from which the official present from the latter department reported that 'it was clear that Leeds and the West Riding are strongly in favour of the Balne Moor recommendations and want to press for an early decision so that the new airport can be in operation before Yeadon goes out of business in 1976'.[837] The following day, the YHEPC' communication

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[835] 'How would YOU feel if you had an international airport about three doors away?', *Yorkshire Post,* 8 March 1972.

[836] Metra Consulting Group, *An Airport for Yorkshire,* 84.

[837] TNA AVIA 86/41 Rogerson to Barnes, 'An Airport for Yorkshire', 12 May 1972. The reservations from Bradford's town clerk were reported to be more a product of a belief that the

group held preliminary discussions on the summary report in which they reportedly 'welcomed' its '"vindication" of the need for a new airport to serve Yorkshire and Humberside'.[838]

III

Why then was there no action on moving forward with a regional airport? The immediate reasons appeared to have less to do with any explicit 'parochialism' as YAHADA would opine, and were due to more pressing factors. The most vital of these was the continuing lack of the necessary political infrastructure to bring a 'regional' project of this nature to fruition. Evident in the public statements of MPs, business organisations and the local authority bodies was not only a significant interest in providing this transport infrastructure that was deemed necessary, but the difference in means represented a combination of praxis and cynicism. In the June 1972 parliamentary debate, spurred by the alarming upsurge in unemployment across Yorkshire and Humberside, the subject of action on the airport question was raised by no fewer than seven MPs and formed a significant part of the discussion. Though this debate demonstrated some preference for an immediate extension of Leeds/Bradford's runway, this did not preclude general adherence amongst Yorkshire politicians for a longer-term regional airport in a new location. Both Conservatives (including Donald Kaberry and Joseph Hiley) and Labour MPs (such as Alfred Broughton and Roy Mason), did not discount a 'Yorkshire' airport in highlighting immediate concerns over Leeds/Bradford. As Alfred Broughton emphasised:

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timeframe for the new airport being able to start operating was unrealistic, and that there was a desire to consider the use of Church Fenton instead.

[838] TNA AVIA 86/41 J.A. Chadwell, 'Survey of air transport facilities for Yorkshire - Notes of discussion at a meeting of Yorkshire and Humberside Economic Planning Council Communication group on 11 May 1972', 15 May 1972.

Members have said already, the region seriously lacks an airport capable of being used by large modern aircraft. We have heard a great deal of talk of the wonderful new airport that we are to have somewhere at some time. However, what is needed very quickly, if only as a temporary measure is an extension of the runway at Yeadon airport.[839]

Even the most strident rejecters of the proposals in the Leeds, Bradford and Huddersfield Chambers of Commerce – who branded the Metra report 'a waste of time and money' – felt there was a long term need for improved services in the area, as they called for 'a massive inter-continental airport *somewhere* in the North by the year 2000 to meet demand from the Midlands and Scotland'.[840] In October 1972, the Standing Conference of Local Planning Authorities of the Yorkshire and Humberside Region were decisive in their resolution that 'this conference is firmly of the opinion that there is a an urgent need for a Regional Airport in Yorkshire and urges the Secretary of State for the Environment to make a formal government commitment now for a Regional Airport to be in operation by the early 1980s'.[841]

What was lacking was any clear institutional means of bringing about these proposals, something that highlighted seemingly wilful contradictions in the 'dual polity' model of British governance articulated by Bullpitt, as the 'centre' attempted to maintain more control in the more tumultuous conditions of the 1970s.[842] During the study period for the report, the Department for Trade and Industry (DTI) and DOE demurred from providing a clear policy steer from central government, insisting – when queried – that as per the 1961 Act it was the responsibility of the local authorities concerned in the first instance to submit planning proposals for any new airports, or a renewed runway

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[839] Sir Alfred Broughton MP, *House of Commons Debates*, 19 June 1972, vol. 839, col. 115.
[840] 'Businessmen turn down airport plan', *Yorkshire Post,* 28 June 1972.
[841] As quoted in WYAS C146/8 'Report of the Executive Director of Structure Planning, West Yorkshire Metropolitan County Council - The Future of Leeds-Bradford Airport', 17 December 1974, 8.
[842] Bulpitt, T*erritory and* Power, 148-162.

extension. Despite purporting to remain objective and removed from this debate there was, however, significant and entrenched opposition from interests, strongly set against any new airport development in Yorkshire and Humberside. The most crucial objections came from the Ministry of Defence (MOD). From an early stage, the concentration of military airfields in Yorkshire and around the Vale of York – particularly Royal Air Force (RAF) Church Fenton, Lindholme, Elvington, Linton-on-Ouse, Scampton and Finningley – due to airspace restrictions elsewhere aroused discussions among government departments.[843] When contacted by the consultants, the MOD were strident in their response:

> The Vale of York from Airway Blue One to the Tees, where most of your selections have been made, contains a number of RAF flying training aerodromes and is designated an Area of Intense Military Air Activity… …The siting of an airport for public transport in this area, together with the establishment of controlled airspace to surround it and link it with the National Airways System in some cases so severely restricting this flying activity that the Ministry of Defence would raise the strongest objections to the proposal.[844]

The MOD had little interest in any of the 'swap' proposals for one of the military air bases for Yeadon, and were clear that the further west an airport was located the better, strongly indicating that if a new airport were to be constructed in Yorkshire and Humberside their preferred location of those shortlisted was a greenfield site at Wintersett, located to the south-east of Wakefield. Though 'strategic defence considerations' were indeed identified as a prime 'cost' for the airport, Metra in their selection of Balne Moor – though Wintersett was short-listed – stated that the site could be accommodated into the pattern of RAF airfields at a cost of £100,000 to realign the air approaches at RAF Finnningley and RAF Linton-on-Ouse.[845] It was a figure the MOD

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[843] TNA AVIA 86/41 W.H. Pope, Loose Minute Ref. CO/121/090 'Yorkshire Airfields Study', 18 November 1971.

[844] TNA AVIA 86/41 E.J. Dickie to A.D. Townend, 'Yorkshire Airport Study', 23 February 1972.

[845] Metra Consulting Group, *An Airport for Yorkshire,* 18-19, 228.

strongly and indignantly contested when the final technical report was discussed by the relevant government departments, with their representative making clear their position would be to '...strongly resist the establishment of a civil airport at Balne Moor, RAF Lindholme, RAF Church Fenton or RAF Elvington. Development of a civil aviation airport at Thorne Waste would also be unacceptable'.[846] The significance of this objection, the continued importance in Britain even in the 1970s of the 'warfare state', particularly in relation to military and civil aviation, has been outlined by David Edgerton comprehensively in several volumes.[847] Such resistance was a pervasive if understated one.

The second department which brought into question autonomy of the local authorities to act in this case had only been in existence for a month at the time of the publication of *An Airport for Yorkshire.* The Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) was established by the 1971 Civil Aviation Act following the recommendation made by the Edwards Committee that the economic and regulatory functions of DTI (Department for Trade and Industry) and the Air Transport Licencing Board should be consolidated into an independent body, one that would also play an advisory role in the development of a national airports policy.[848] It was envisaged from the outset that broad policy and a plan for national airport requirements would take 'several years' for the CAA to produce. The DTI and DOE officials were therefore very clear that CAA consultation would be needed in any decisions within Yorkshire.

The institutional ambiguities that another tier of centralisation created for the authorities in Yorkshire and Humberside, who were told planning applications were their own

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[846] TNA AVIA 86/41 'An Airport for Yorkshire - Notes on Meeting on 31 May 1972'.
[847] Edgerton, *England and the Aeroplane.*
[848] Cmnd. 4018 *British air transport in the seventies: Report of the Committee of Inquiry into civil air transport* (1969), 244-256, 256.

responsibility, was made clear by Edmund Marshall in response to an answer given when enquiring on process:

> In your answer you state that "such proposals in the first instance are for local authorities and other local interests concerned, advised as necessary by the Civil Aviation Authority". Considering the size of Yorkshire and Humberside, I am left wondering which exactly are the local authorities and other local interests concerned... Furthermore, what happens after "the first instance"? To whom should local authorities submit their proposals? Finally, is the Civil Aviation Authority's role, even in the first instance, one of active participation or merely one of giving advice when requested?[849]

The clarification received did little to make overall institutional responsibilities clearer. It stated that the 'local authorities' should put forward any planning application 'in light of advice from the [CAA]' whilst emphasising the Authority's role was primarily for advising on national airports policy.[850]

As it was, the CAA would involve themselves in the debate over a 'Yorkshire airport' from their inception. Frank Thompson, head of the Economic and Statistics Division at the Authority, sought to immediately dampen any imminent realisation of regional aspirations over the plans for a national strategy that would shortly be undertaken. His attitude expressed May 1972 – questioning 'the rationale of a Yorkshire Airport on national airport planning grounds' alongside indicating two years would be the minimum expected time necessary to formulate the plan – appears to have been indicative of the CAA's aspirations to bring a more rationalised pattern of airports and air services across the UK that had been advocated in planning circles since the previous decade.[851] Indeed, this immediate position was admitted to represent Thompson's 'philosophy' in a paper

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[849] TNA AVIA 86/41 Edmund Marshall to Cranley Onslow, 16 June 1972.

[850] TNA AVIA 86/41 Onslow to Marshall, 3 July 1972.

[851] TNA AVIA 86/41 F.P. Thompson, 'Regional Airport for Yorkshire', 2 June 1972; An Airport for Yorkshire - Notes on Meeting on 31 May 1972': some suggestions from Thompson highlighted in the notes included 'a joint Yorks/Lancs airport in place of Ringway and Yeadon, an airport in Staffordshire, and an enlarged Castle Donnington...', proposals similar in principle to the *Central England Airports Study* (1974).

circulated more two years later, with the air transport industry in the 'doldrums' and following the government's abandonment of Maplin.[852] It was a view that DTI would stridently endorse, indicating to the DOE when the issue was raised in relation to regional airports in November 1974 that:

> '…We have got to get away from the line of thinking that expects each region to have within its boundaries its own major airport. The regional airport for Yorkshire and Humberside should probably be East Midlands or Manchester, or Tees-side or a combination of all three'.[853]

IV

The changing cultural context experienced in the 1970s, the increasing rejection of modernity by citizens, the proliferation of post-materialistic and the increasing privatisation and marketisation of politics at this time, were perhaps most strongly emphasised in the popular response to airport expansion. Marc Augé's exploration of the production of 'non-spaces' through the processes of 'supermodernity' highlighted the increasing importance of history and particularism in identity formation that arose from this. At the heart of Augé's thesis is the role of transport as a 'non-place'; the apotheosis of which is air transport and the airport.[854] The inclusion of road travel, motorways and the motor car in the multiplication of non-places faces significant contention from not only from the cultural pervasiveness of 'automobility', particularly in Britain, but also from the role of motor companies Wright identifies in the instrumentalisation of place through use of the landscape and history in the 1980s.[855]

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[852] TNA AT 94/9 F.P. Thompson to S.W. Smith, 25 September 1974; F.P. Thompson, 'The development of the UK airport system - Past, Present and Future' (1974).
[853] TNA BT 338/125 Ledsome to Smith, 'Regional Airports Group', 13 November 1974.
[854] Marc Augé, *Non-Places: An Introduction to Supermodernity*, trans. John Howe (London and New York, 2008).
[855] Wright, *On Living in an Old Country*, 53-59.

Despite increasing use being made of them, airports held no such connection in this reimagining of regional identity based on place. The sense of airports as non-places, and additionally the political need for any new development to inhabit non-places was perhaps best illustrated by the Maplin Sands decision for the third London airport. Andy Beckett emphasised the sparse and indistinct nature of the Foulness site, describing it as 'a great smooth maze of mudflats and grey-brown horizon the size of central London, gleaming dully as an old hubcap off the coast of Essex near Shoeburyness'.[856] Indeed, the attack on the recommendations of the Roskill Commission – most notably in Colin Buchanan's note of dissent – was done in supposed defence of identity against the encroachment of super-modernity; what Peter Hall summarised as '...preservation of the national heritage, in particular its traditional landscapes, is a sacred trust for present and future generations'.[857] Similar concern for the protection of broader based issues of identity, amidst the overarching environmental concern, was apparent in many of the protests against the Cublington and Stansted options at the time.[858]

If Maplin could be described as non-place, the same was certainly true for the Balne Moor site favoured in the 1972 study. The physical description of the site itself by the consultants emphasised the featureless, and hence ahistorical and non-relational location – characterised primarily by the major roads it would be serviced by:

> The site at Balne Moor lies in flat open country in the centre of the Vale of York and is particularly suitable for airport development. It is situated 9 miles from either Doncaster or Selby and lies across the A19 linking these two towns. Access to the projected M62 motorway would be 4 miles to the north of the site. There are no obstructions in its proximity which could represent a hazard to flying... The Ordnance Survey grid reference point closest to the centre of the runway would be

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[856] Andy Beckett, *When the Lights Went Out: Britain in the Seventies* (London, 2009).

[857] Hall, *Great Planning Disasters*, 36.

[858] E.g. McKie, *A Sadly Mismanaged Affair*, 35-37; Patrick Hutber's article in the Sunday Telegraph noted that cutting down a tree might save 6 minutes in mowing the lawn, 'but if your wife loves that tree and won't part with it then the most-cogent cost benefit analysis won't help', 'The Third Airport Row: What cost-benefit analysis can't do', *The Sunday Telegraph,* 31 January 1971.

SE572173…. In our outline plans we have allowed for a parallel taxiway, a terminal building with a floor or 35000m2… , a multi-storey car park for 5,000 cars, a cargo building and apron, a general aviation terminal, a maintenance area, a fire station etc.[859]

In these descriptions can be seen the tenets of this supermodernity, places removed from anthropological space, codified and classified by institutions rather than individuals.[860]

A concern for environmental factors on a regional level was a primary part of the assessments of the optimal place to site an airport in Yorkshire and Humberside, which was not just about access and immediate economic concerns. The Thorne Waste site was, as Edmund Marshall (MP for Goole) pointed out to the House, '…there, on the map, as a bald patch of nothing in a featureless countryside – a stretch of sour, waterlogged land lying low to the south of Goole'.[861] Careful maps and calculations were formed on the sites advocated to try and minimise the noise nuisance experienced by those in the vicinity of the airport. This was somewhat complicated in the 1972 METRA study in which the four sites offered different scales of noise problem: either relatively more people would be subjected to "Very Annoying" to "Unacceptable" levels of noise (Balne Moor Site) or significantly more would experience "A little annoying" to "moderately annoying" disturbances (Wintersett).[862]

In 1974, West Yorkshire County Council (WYCC) bemoaned the difficulties facing them and their 'regional neighbours' over reconciling their own commissioned study with the CAA's Central England Study, which had 'totally different recommendations', though both

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[859] Metra Consulting Group, *An Airport for Yorkshire,* 265.
[860] Augé, *Non-places,* 78-79, 96.
[861] *House of Commons Debates*, 19 June 1972, vol. 839, col. 135-136.
[862] Metra Consulting Group, *An Airport for Yorkshire,* 144-163.

were carried out by the same independent consultants.[863] The view of the Yorkshire and Humberside Economic Planning Council on airports in their 1975 strategy review appeared to signal a diminished enthusiasm for major regional solution to the area's air transport needs. The expansion of Manchester and East Midlands airports as advocated by the Civil Aviation Authority was confirmed 'as being the best solution for main air passenger services in the region'. However, the nature of the overall assessment of the state airport provision in Yorkshire and Humberside suggested that this was an acceptance of circumstances, rather than an ideal situation:

> We recognise that the air services situation in the region which we envisage for the next 10 years or so is far from perfect, and we are aware of the view that the possession of a proper regional airport is needed for stimulating industrial development in the region. Nevertheless, after detailed consideration over many years, and with the benefit of three sets of consultants' reports on the air service requirements of the region we are convinced that our views are a realistic assessment of what is practical in present circumstances.[864]

Inglehart has argued extensively that since the 1960s increasing affluence amongst western societies has witnessed a perceptible and fundamental shift in political culture from immediate economic concerns to more quality of life based issues, including environmentalism.[865] British Airports Authority (BAA)'s optimistic figures on Heathrow's capacity up to 1986 provided ammunition for those opposing the development of Maplin as a third London airport.[866] Within Yorkshire, calls for a new airport – rather than continued extension of the runway despite its increasing redundancy – were countered by the prohibitive upfront expense of a long-term regional alternative;[867] with one speaker to the WYCC declaring 'go to your electors and tell them a new regional airport

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863 WYAS (Wakefield) C146/8 West Yorks. MCC, 'The future of Leeds-Bradford Airport', 17 December 1974.
864 YHEPC, *Yorkshire and Humberside - Regional Strategy Review 1975*, 15.
865 Ronald Inglehart, *Culture Shift in Advanced Industrial Societies* (Princeton, 1990).
866 *The Economist,* 17 March 1973.
867 For example, *Bradford Telegraph & Argus,* 26 July 1967.

will be built at a cost of something about £100m'.[868] Airport development options that limited overall cost and time took precedence, as ultimately no officially agreed or statistically 'legitimate' alternatives were produced.

Public resistance to potential extension of airports, or of new airport sites, was compounded by the growth of environmental concerns, for example the orchestrated campaigns of the North West Essex and Herts Preservation Association and the 'Defenders of Essex'.[869] The expansion of established airports became increasingly politically sensitive, with Manchester airport indicating in 1973 to the CAA that noise levels were the most the public were likely to tolerate.[870] In examining Yorkshire, the residents around Yeadon successfully formed their own Leeds-Bradford Association for the Control of Aircraft Noise with 1,500 reputed members by 1969, and played a significant part in the government's rejection of the proposed runway extension.[871] Despite the calls for adequate airport services that came from commercial and industrial interests, such chambers of commerce and the Trades Union Congress (TUC),[872] the response of the wider public was ambivalent. The local response to a proposed new Yorkshire airport in 1972 was reportedly 'indifference'.[873] Reference to 'the air traveller' in Roskill and other reports indicated that such people were still very much the minority, and leisure travel was not predicted to expand;[874] the Airport Committee in West Riding in 1972 said that they were against investment for the purposes of 'inessential travel'.[875]

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[868] WYAS (Wakefield) C146/8, Tom Batty, speech to WYCC, 16 January 1975.
[869] Hall, *Great Planning Disasters,* p.25; Sandbrook, *State of Emergency*, 193-194.
[870] TNA AVIA86/45 Cunniffe to Jessel, 21 December 1973.
[871] WYAS (Bradford) 3D84/2/73 LACAN Info Sheet No.14, January 1969.
[872] TNA AVIA86.45 TUC, 'Airports Policy', 21 June 1972.
[873] *Yorkshire Post,* 8 March 1972.
[874] *Commission on the Third London Airport: Report* (HMSO, 1971), 6; NA AT94/9 Thompson to Smith, 25 September 1974.
[875] TNA AVIA86/41 Frost to Vernon, 11 January 1972.

Even into the early 1980s in Britain, the majority view remained that 'air travel is only for the rich'.[876]

4.5 Conclusion

I

The mid-1970s onwards finally saw the formalisation of what had been served as implicit government policy towards regional airport for the previous decade or so. With the Department of Trade finally publishing consultation plans in 1976 on how a national airports strategy would relate to regional airports in they made clear the stance of the CAA in relation to two key areas:

> First, the CAA in their various advice to Government do not consider the cases have been made for new airports in, for example, North Cheshire, the North Midlands or Yorkshire and Humberside. The Government see the force of the arguments that led the CAA to their conclusions.[877]

At the same time it was made clear that the Government would now support a new proposal for Leeds/Bradford Airport's runway to be extended to be able to accommodate larger jet engines, in part because the airport's small runway saw again the threat of obsolescence. Following the consultation document, the Government's White Paper on *Airports Policy* was finally published in 1978. It demonstrated the effect on national policy attitudes the abandonment of Maplin four years previous, in stating in the assumptions that above all the massive amount of investment undertaken could not be

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[876] R.E. Caves, 'Airport System Planning – A UK Study', *Transportation Planning and Technology,* 6 (1980), 121.

[877] Department of Trade, *Airport Strategy for Great Britain Part 2: The regional airports, a consultation document* (HMSO, 1976), 10.

ignored and neither could environmental considerations, especially 'the impact of aircraft noise on areas surrounding airports'.[878] It argued that Manchester Airport should serve as the Category A (or 'international gateway') airport for Central England, and that

> The Government does not consider the demand in Yorkshire and Humberside to be such as to justify the massive expense which would be involved in the provision of a new airport in the region.[879]

Again support was forthcoming for an extension of the runway to allow Leeds/Bradford to fully serve as a Category B 'regional' airport; providing feeder services to the larger hub airports of the South East. Given this support the local authorities would again put applications for planning permission to extend the runway, gaining in the process enthusiastic support from industrial bodies such as the YHDA, who argued that

> The sooner the Leeds/Bradford proposed runway extension issue is resolved the sooner Yorkshire and Humberside can look forward to the future confident that our region will be adequately served by one of the TOP 5 second tier international airports in the country.[880]

One of the major objectors to these proposals would be YAHADA, who would continue to make the case for major Yorkshire Airport at Thorne Waste, despite communications from MPs and other interested parties asking them to cease, as 'exhaustive research' had led to the point where there was now no other feasible option.[881] In September 1983, with the runway extension granted for the Leeds/Bradford site, the remaining members of YAHADA agreed to wind the association up, having 'failed to achieve their aims' due to 'the politics of air transport'.[882]

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[878] Cmnd. 7084, *Airports Policy* (1978), 2.
[879] Ibid., 34.
[880] 'Airports Policy', *Development Digest,* February 1978.
[881] WYAS C779 Shaw to YAHADA, 11 December 1979.
[882] WYAS C779 YAHADA AGM Minutes, September 1983.

II

The experience of Yorkshire and Humberside in relation to regional airports from post-war to the end of the 1970s as briefly documented in this core sample highlights a number of themes and issues evident with regards to both regionalism and contemporary British history. Again, as in other areas of public life there could be seen to be a genuine fostering of regional action amongst local authorities and other bodies towards a true region-wide solution to regional issues. It also highlighted the distinct consciousness towards the regional geography and regional transport infrastructure for Yorkshire and Humberside that authorities and industrialists demonstrated elsewhere. In the attitudes taken by local authorities there could be seen also to be the broad Yorkshire tradition of restraint in the provision of services and resources, determining that air transport should primarily be for commerce and industry rather than for leisure purposes.

The central import of a regional airport in the 1960s and early 1970s again highlights the adoption of high-modern, technocratic led planning assumptions by various interests in Yorkshire and Humberside, and the premium placed on objective and scientific expertise. This was demonstrated by the commissioning of three consultants reports into regional airport needs and the heed paid to these by various regional interests. The spur to action provided by private individuals also again emphasises the importance of regional identity in spurring regional action in Yorkshire and Humberside demonstrates mobilisation of regional politics and lobbying through means similar to those observed elsewhere in twentieth-century politics by new political historians.

Finally this chapter highlights the inherent constraints placed upon regional action by national and institutional constraints. The ambiguous separation between national and

local responsibilities for provincial airports provided no easy means through which regional action could be mobilised. The inherent centralism, and the increasing aversion to planned modernity in the 1970s, all added to these constraints. More any other aspect of transport, and arguably any other public policy, air transport presented to the British government what Habermas has termed 'the field of crisscrossing organised interests'.[883] The global nature of the air transport industry, the volatility generated by its economic sensitivity and rate of technological advancement, all created constraints and contingencies that hindered the British government's ability to forecast the future pattern of airports.

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[883] Jurgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere* (Cambridge MA, 1989), 197.

Chapter 5: Cultural Regionalism: Regional Arts Associations in Yorkshire, Lincolnshire and Humberside, *c.1963-c.1994*

5.1 Introduction

I

This chapter explores the work of the Regional Arts Associations (RAAs) formed in Yorkshire and Lincolnshire in the 1960s. Associated to the Arts Council of Great Britain (ACGB; Arts Council England (ACE) from 1994) at a national level, and to the areas' local authorities, the RAAs have played a significant role in the patronage of the arts and cultural policy regionally. Though this chapter is titled 'Cultural Regionalism', it is important to make clear the context in which 'culture' is being used here. The literary turn within history and the social sciences has reinforced the idea that culture, as representing the expression of constructed individual or collective forms of beliefs informing behaviours, is intrinsic to all forms of investigation.[884] This examination of regional arts administration thus provides a potentially rich seam for exploring the dynamics of both regionalism and regional identity. Like the EPCs and other planning bodies discussed in previous chapters, RAAs were encouraged by the centre and were quasi-representative, while their key actors and membership were drawn mainly from their constituent local authorities. Unlike the bodies previously discussed, however, the RAAs' geographical boundaries and intended purpose were less centrally dictated, and

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[884] Manuel Castells, Joao Caraca and Gustavo Cardoso, 'The Cultures of the Economic Crisis: An Introduction' in Castells, Caraca and Cardoso (eds.), *Aftermath: The Cultures of the Economic Crisis* (Oxford, 2012), 4.

instituted more from within the regions themselves.[885] The North Eastern Association for the Arts (later Northern Arts), formed through the initiative of local authorities in 1961, may have become what Vall calls 'the blueprint for regional cultural policy',[886] but this did not preclude significant regional variation beyond the basic form, as will be discussed below. Furthermore, as bodies with significant influence and agency in promotion of cultural activities, the RAAs had great potential for setting the agenda for the content of both internal and external regional identity. Though (in some cases) far from truly popular organisations, the Regional Arts Associations are interesting bodies through which to explore the two interrelated themes at the heart of this study.

Examining the narrative of arts administration is also significant to the study of historical discourses of change in national culture in post-war Britain. The politics of the arts, and in particular the politics of the Arts Council, has been a fertile source of discussion. The expansion of funding for ACGB from the early 1960s onwards was heavily linked to debates surrounding modernisation, national decline, and an increasingly affluent society. The arts establishment in the 1970s has been cast as either presiding over 'cultural closure' and retrenchment, or – in hindsight – participating in expanding and innovating forms of cultural expression (much as recent reassessments of the decade have argued it precipitated a 'marketplace for ideas' in popular and political culture).[887]

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[885] This was a situation that produced longstanding issues as to the precise functions and responsibilities of the RAA in relation to the Arts Council until the creation of the Regional Arts Boards (RABs) in 1990.

[886] Vall, 'Regionalism and Cultural History', 202.

[887] For example, Richard Eyre and Nicholas Wright described the ACGB in the 1970s as 'a haplessly well-meaning organisation, thickly infiltrated with liberal well-wishers, all of whom wanted nothing more than to shower money on interesting young people and take it away from clapped out old ones', quoted in Kate Dorney, 'Touring and the regional repertoire: Cheek by Jowel, Complicité, Kneehigh and Eastern Angles', in Kate Dorney and Ros Merkin (eds.), *The Glory of the Garden: English Regional Theatre and the Arts Council 1984-2009* (Newcastle, 2010), 104. For the 'marketplace of ideas', see Black, Pemberton and Thane (eds.), *Reassessing the 1970s* (Manchester, 2013). A similar sentiment is expressed in Stuart Laing, 'The politics of culture: institutional change in the 1970s', in Bart Moore-Gilbert (ed.), *The Arts in the 1970s: Cultural Closure?* (London, 1994), 29-56.

Similarly, the uses of art and culture in the 1980s, and the demand for the arts to show accountability and 'value for money', has underpinned discourse on the cultural politics of Thatcherism and New Labour.[888]

Though regional cultural policy has seen some general discussion in the context of these broader debates, with the exception of the North East and Merseyside there have been few concerted studies of the politics and organisation of the RAAs.[889] A specific focus on Yorkshire and Humberside appears to offer a particularly interesting case study. In contrast to other more northerly RAAs, whose boundaries were similar to that of their Standard Planning Region, two bodies existed in this region until the implementation of a more uniform structure for art administration in the early 1990s. The Lincolnshire Arts Association (LAA), covering the entirety of the historic county, was established between 1963 and 1964; and Yorkshire Arts (covering the West Riding, East Riding and southern parts of the North Riding) was eventually established in 1969. As discussed here, both RAAs would pursue considerably different models for artistic patronage – a situation in part due to their particular geographical context. The formal creation of Humberside as a local authority in 1974 brought with it upheaval in these two regional institutions, and the eventual creation of a Lincolnshire and Humberside Arts Association the following year.

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[888] Robert Hewison, *Culture and Consensus: England, art and politics since 1940* (London, 1995), 251-294; Ken Worpole, 'Cartels and Lotteries: Heritage and Cultural Policy in Britain', in David Morley and Kevin Robins (eds.), *British cultural studies: geography, nationality and identity* (Oxford, 2001), 235-248.
[889] For example, Vall, *Cultural Region*; Colls and Lancaster (eds.), *Geordies*; John Belchem and Bryan Biggs (eds.), *Liverpool: City of Radicals* (Liverpool, 2011).

II

In examining the work of the two RAAs, this chapter primarily focuses on the nature of the institutions themselves, rather than on the specific content produced by those artists as supported by the associations. Discussions of the political and/or geographical nature of such content have been developed in other works, though there is a significant amount still to be done on this subject.[890] The cultural and contextual reflexivity of this art has been well noted: 'art was subject to external and historical forces – it *reflected* society but it also *reflected upon* society and influenced people's ideas and behaviour, consequently, it was a minor social force in its own right'.[891]

This chapter will first consider the origins of the two RAAs serving the region of Yorkshire and Humberside, and how the distinctive shapes of each organization formed in their first years of operation to the early 1970s. It will argue that the differences in the two associations were reflective of distinct regional identities linked to broader cultural concerns and perceived inheritances. It will then consider the debates surrounding the eventual decision in 1975 of the newly formed Humberside County Council to disassociate itself from Yorkshire Arts, and instead become associated in its entirety with the Lincolnshire Association. It will then finally document how each Association developed under the new arrangements into the 1980s, in the context of increasing national interference and changing policy concerns (particularly the greater emphasis on community arts and private sponsorship); a context in which Yorkshire Arts would broadly thrive in comparison to its Lincolnshire and Humberside counterpart.

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[890] Hélène Hamayon-Alfaro, 'Empowerment through the Arts: Community Arts in Belfast in the 1980s and 1990s', in Cécile Coquet-Mokok and Trevor A. Le V. Harris (eds.), *Crafting Identities, remapping nationalities: the English-speaking world in the age of globalization* (Newcastle, 2012), 41-56.
[891] Walker, *Left Shift*, 3.

Though Lincolnshire has been previously discussed in passing, mainly in the context of its northerly and north-easterly parts that would become part of Humberside's administrative county in 1974, it features more prominently in this chapter due to the nature of the RAA that administered the area. Largely geographically rural, and predominantly politically Conservative (both at national and local authority level, save its few urban enclaves), Lincolnshire provides a useful comparison for examining questions related to national and regional identity. As argued here, political regional incompatibility was more complex than the simple reactionary historical enmity and retrenchment that some suggest informed British cultural politics.[892]

5.2 Lincolnshire Arts Association, c.1963-71

I

The creation of what would become the Lincolnshire Association for the Arts (LAA) has not received any significant academic attention, unlike the three regional associations that preceded its formation. The foundations of the Association share some similarities with its predecessors, but also some marked ideological contrasts. Most distinct is the context of the LAA. In discussing its north eastern counterpart, Vall has noted that 'the urban dynamics of the north east and the dominance of these cities by northern Labourism undoubtedly played a part in facilitating support for a project that became anchored in the language of economic modernisation'.[893] This led to an organisation that sought to reshape external impressions of a region mainly consisting of 'slag heaps and

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[892] E.g. Wright, *On Living in an Old Country;* Hewison, *The Heritage Industry.*
[893] Vall, *Cultural Region,* 102.

grime'.[894] The physical, economic and political geography of Lincolnshire provided the obverse context, the county being largely rural, agricultural and sparsely populated – the major conurbations being the cathedral city of Lincoln, and the industrial towns of Grimsby and Scunthorpe. As a result, the cultural impetus for founding an arts association in the county had less to do with cultivating a 'modern' image, and was more conservative in emphasis.

The driving force behind seeking action on a 'county region' basis was a conservationist one, with the importance of 'heritage' stressed above all else. In December 1963, a conference entitled 'Lincolnshire Past, Present and Future' was convened in Lincoln, and was attended by around 350 delegates representing the county's local authorities and other interests. The chief instigator for this endeavour was Captain Jeremy Elwes, a local councillor in Brigg and resident in the seventeenth-century country house Elsham Hall. The Elwes family were notable landowners in Northamptonshire and Lincolnshire, and had a strong history of patronage within the arts. Jeremy's grandfather, Gervase Elwes had, against his family's wishes and status, become a professional baritone in the early twentieth century.[895] He had established in Brigg an annual music festival, with one of its primary aims being the preservation of local folk song.[896] The family had also unsuccessfully tried to use Billing Hall in Northamptonshire as a home for 'indigent musicians'.[897]

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[894] Ibid., 102-104.

[895] Sophie Fuller, 'Elwes, Gervase Henry (1866-1921)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*; Jeremy's uncle Simon Elwes was also a prominent society painter: Peter Greenham, 'Elwes, Simon Vincent Edmund Paul (1902-1975)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography.*

[896] Fuller, 'Elwes, Gervase'.

[897] 'Elwes (Great Billing) – National Archives description of record held at Northampton Record Office (E(GB))', http://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/details/rd/eaf1511b-c40b-425b-bb39-073155b8a597.

Elwes' own transcript of his speech given at the conference demonstrates the importance of (Catholic) religious convictions, but also his desire to increase the available sources of patronage in heritage in addition to the arts:

> Obviously our first priorities as citizens and Councillors, should be the "Christian approach, our families, freedom from hunger, housing the aged and sick, education and maintenance of services. BUT, we must not forget our heritage and with it the arts. We look up to God. We look up to Her Majesty the Queen and I believe we look up to the arts and all things beautiful. (Throughout the ages beauty and Christianity have gone hand in hand). We suggest that our heritage and the arts should be maintained and enriched by a partnership – first the citizens, industry, big farming enterprises, and the trade unions, with the other partner the local Government and the National Government. We think that at the moment, a few private citizens have too heavy a burden, and the other partners are not pulling their weight.[898]

Though the paucity of patronage toward cultural provision by local authorities and other county stakeholders were undoubtedly an important factor in Elwes' invocation to action, the strongest theme of his speech was an anxiety over the loss of traditional identity amidst economic modernisation. Central to this concern was the physical environment, evident by the conference's keynote speaker, John Betjeman. His own speech focused on the building of supermarkets within towns, the widening of roads, and the deleterious effects of such decisions made by civil servants.[899] The supposed threat to the physical beauty of Lincolnshire was an aspect of Elwes' speech, as he warned, 'All of our unspoilt Villages will change their character, unless foresight and good taste is applied':

> To the men of the WOLDS, the character of your Villages is at stake, seek that good advice from Architects with a feeling for the County and its history. Watch out for piecemeal demolition; ONE GLARING PEPPERPOT BUNGALOW can ruin an unspoilt village.[900]

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[898] ACGB 111/10/1 'Lincolnshire Past, Present and Future Conference, Paper by Captain J. Elwes', 2 December 1963.
[899] 'Supermarkets ruin our towns', *The Times,* 3 December 1963.
[900] ACGB 111/10/1 'Paper by Elwes'.

The perceived threat to Lincolnshire's heritage was not constrained to the built environment. Its cultural inheritance, the county's identity and history were also apparently at stake. Elwes commented that '… it's essential that every school should teach local history,' and further indicated that the creation of an arts association would worthwhile

> if it encourages Lincolnshire inhabitants to stop calling each other "strangers" and to work for our heritage as a team; YOU WILL not go home after "SO MUCH HOT AIR" but with a feeling of something definite achieved for the greatness of our home County.[901]

As such, though much was taken structurally from the north eastern example – Arthur Blenkinsop, crucial in the founding of Northern Arts, was involved in these early discussions – the content of the Lincolnshire Association reflected a very different cultural regionalism.[902] The constitution of the North Eastern Association for the Arts that was initially put forward as a model was not adopted on the grounds that it did not give proper allowance to the work of voluntary organisations within the county.[903] This distinct emphasis was highlighted in a subsequent draft constitution produced by the steering committee formed at the 1963 conference, 'the Lincolnshire Association to Protect the Heritage of the County and promote the arts'.[904] The twelve objects proposed in the initial constitution reflected many of the desires to maintain and promote formal cultural

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[901] Ibid.

[902] ACGB 111/10/1 K. Gardner to J. Hodgkinson, 4 November 1964. The difference between the North Eastern Association (Northern Arts) and Lincolnshire was reported as being remarked upon by Sandy Dunbar when addressing the inaugural meeting: 'In this Association there would also be the question of preservation of the past'.

[903] *The Times,* 3 December 1963; ACGB 111/10/1 E.A. Knight to Eric White, 3 June 1964: The Midlands Arts Association noted that under these proposals the existing Lincoln Civic Trust had felt themselves treated 'high-handedly' by Elwes.

[904] ACGB 111/10/1 'Constitution for the Lincolnshire Association to Protect the Heritage of the County and promote the Arts', 16 June 1964.

tastes,[905] as was the case in the North East and for the Arts Council as a whole;[906] the concern for the county's 'beauty' and 'preservation of the County heritage' were also included.[907]

The formation of the Lincolnshire Association was relatively swift. A constitution was approved by the steering committee by August 1964, and an inaugural meeting scheduled for 3 November, with the Lord Lieutenant Lord Ancaster agreeing to serve as chairman. In writing to the thirty-nine local authorities in the county, Elwes gave an indication of the likely future work the association would take. This again demonstrated the idea that the association was to have a role beyond the general promotion of the arts, and would seek to either preserve or promote a particular rural Lincolnshire identity; Elwes stated that assistance would be given to the Campaign for the Preservation of Rural England to promote 'good design, good planning and the preservation of our heritage', and that occasions would be promoted to mark particular anniversaries within the county.[908] In the end, some 120 people were reported to have attended the meeting, and to have done so with 'a good deal of enthusiasm for the project'.[909] And despite some minor tensions, the councils themselves were generally cordial towards the establishment of the Association: 'after sundry skirmishes by Skegness asserting their individuality, Scunthorpe being their usual truculent selves and Grimsby asserting their

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[905] Ibid. For example (i) To foster and promote the maintenance, improvement and development of artistic taste and knowledge, understanding and appreciation for the arts; (iii) To improve standards of execution in the arts.

[906] Lawrence Black, ''Making Britain a Gayer and More Cultivated Country': Wilson, Lee and the Creative Industries in the 1960s,' *Contemporary British History* 20:3 (2006), 332.

[907] ACGB 111/10/1 'Constitution', 16 June 1964. Objects (vii) To foster the beauty of the Lincolnshire towns and countryside; (viii) To promote the preservation of the County heritage & (x) To encourage good design.

[908] ACGB 111/10/1 J. Elwes, 'Notes on future work of the 'Lincolnshire Association'', 6 August 1964. Elwes, a local councillor himself, also indicated that the work of the Association might serve to 'encourage more interest in local government', something that could be done '…with the heritage of the County as a whole. The spotlight is on Lincolnshire and not just part of it.'

[909] ACGB 111/10/1 E.A. Knight to E. White, 9 November 1964.

special size and status in the County, the Constitution was duly adopted', with Elwes as the first Chairman and Ancaster as the honorary President.[910]

By mid-1965, the LAA had twenty-seven contributing authorities, whose subscriptions totalled a fairly respectable £14,000; a figure comparable to that raised by Northern Arts in its initial year.[911] The Executive Committee consisted of a single representative from each County Council; a single representative for the two county boroughs and Scunthorpe Borough Council; a representative of the remaining borough councils; and two representatives each for all the remaining UDCs and RDCs.

Despite the ostensibly positive attitude displayed by the White Paper towards the establishment of Regional Arts Associations, the Arts Council's approach towards the newly formed Lincolnshire Association remained highly cautious and conditional. The Arts Council declared themselves unable to attend the inaugural meeting of the new association, and were clear to Elwes that no funds would be available in advance, a decision that seemed conscious. When it became clear that the association had sufficient support to be viable, Nigel Abercrombie reported to the Arts Council's AGM that 'the speed and efficiency with which the Lincolnshire Association has come into being affords good evidence that it fully deserves our support', but at the same time made clear the limits of this support:

> At present the Arts Council will be co-operating by giving subsidies of over £10,000 a year for professional work in Lincolnshire, and by a grant of £2,000 for 1965/66 to the Association itself. The scale and pattern of our assistance in the future will depend (so far as our funds allow) on the development and quality of the Association's own work, not upon any doctrinaire theory or upon any rigid precedents.[912]

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[910] ACGB 111/10/1 K. Gardner to J. Hodgkinson, 4 November 1964.

[911] John S. Harris, *Government Patronage of the Arts in Great Britain* (Chicago, 1970). The amount raised from local government in the first sixteen months of Northern Arts was £24,100 (1961-63).

[912] ACGB 111/10/1, Nigel J. Abercrombie to the AGM of the Lincolnshire Association, 3 June 1965.

The issues of geography and of professional quality were the two major concerns of the Arts Council. Concerns regarding the former were made explicit in a letter to the Department of Education and Science in December 1965, where it admitted that '…[the Arts Council] were doubtful whether it was desirable for Arts Associations to be set up on a county rather than a regional basis'; the exception was made, as the county in question was 'a large area that is served by three county councils, and a comparatively isolated one at that'.[913] In the early stages of the Lincolnshire proposals, the Council had liaised with the secretary of the Midlands Arts Association, whose prognosis of the venture had been less than positive, calling an initial draft of the constitution 'a rather vague and wordy document'.[914] Despite the more modest means and objectives of the Midlands Arts Association, it appeared that the Arts Council had ideally envisaged a more comprehensive body covering this geographical area.[915]

The LAA's initial work was impressive, demonstrating the enthusiasm of the committee members and a clear sense of regional space. The structure of the Association, alongside the executive committee, involved the creation of six panels; Communications (including television, radio and public relations), Drama, Music, Visual Arts, Written and Spoken Word, and Heritage (including architecture). The members of the panels were appointed on recommendation by the executive committee, and by March 1965 had already undertaken 'a vast amount of work'.[916] The Drama panel sought to arrange its

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[913] ACGB 111/10/1 White to Summers, 29 December 1965.
[914] ACGB 111/10/1 Knight to White, 19 June 1964.
[915] Harris, *Government Patronage*. The Midlands Association, after being formed in 1958 covered a ten-county area from Hertfordshire and Shropshire in the west to Northampton and Lincolnshire in the east. The Association served predominantly as a coordinating body within the arts. The size of grant offered from the ACGB in 1967-68 to the member societies was £4,000, and 95 per cent of its funds came from this source.
[916] ACGB 111/10/2 Lincolnshire Association Provisional Council Meeting Minutes, 23 March 1965. It is worth noting that though the direct appointment of the panels, highly specialist in their knowledge, initially led to a great deal of productive and creative energy it left no procedure for the election of officers at the end of the two year terms agreed in the constitution. ACGB 111/10/2 LAA Council Minutes, 23 November 1966.

own festivals and form a theatre company for the county that would give performances in the larger towns.

Three particular aspects of the LAA's work focused on an active role in curating arts projects, and in attempting to be genuinely 'regional' in scope. The result of these measures would appear to enforce the idea that, rather than facilitating forms of artistic expression in the county, the Association would paternalistically provide these services. The first policy enacted was the creation of a transport subsidy scheme, established in 1964, which took its cue from a similar scheme already operated by the Midlands Arts Association. Providing subsidised travel to groups of eight people or more was seen as a major strategy in increasing quality of life in the county, with assent given to subsidise events further afield, such as to theatres in Nottingham, Leicester or Sheffield.[917] Though only a modest amount of the Association's expenditure,[918] it was held up by the LAA as a key aspect of their work for the whole region.

The second action was to systemise the informal local liaison committees that had been established by the Association. The LAA had been working with an unspecified number of these bodies, but from 1968, most likely in light of promotional issues regarding the Association's work (see below), it insisted that these committees 'must be (a) representative of the arts and heritage in the area, and (b) able to provide the local services required by the Arts Officer'.[919] The formalising measure was seen as necessary to maintain the cooperation of local authorities, and eventually it was decided that a £10 grant be given to cover the running costs of these voluntary committees. Many of the larger towns had committees by 1970, although no such committees had been established in more remote areas.

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[917] ACGB 111/10/2 Executive Committee Minutes, 22 October 1965.
[918] The £350 budgeted for 1969/70 represented little more than 1 per cent of the total expected expenditure.
[919] ACGB 111/10/2 Executive Committee Minutes, 26 March 1968.

The most interesting innovation made by the LAA – and one that elicited great enthusiasm from ACGB and other arts organisations, such as the Gulbenkian Foundation – was the establishment of a mobile arts exhibition unit. Again originating from an awareness of the rural nature of the county, and consequently the lack of facilities for visual arts exhibitions, (taking inspiration from the United States)[920] in late 1965 the Association sought funding for a vehicle that would allow for specially designed exhibitions to be displayed around the county. In October 1966, the Arts Council agreed to fund the purchase of a Land Rover and caravan as a special project 'on the basis that it was a pilot for the whole country'.[921] The caravan purchased had previously been used to display and demonstrate electrical products. By the end of the first year of its operation the ACGB's Regional Arts Officer had declared 'the project is worthwhile and worth doing properly', noting interest in the project from other rural parts of the country such as East Anglia. It was also made plain to the LAA that high priority should be given to the project in their budget allocations. The result of this endeavour was the assent for the LAA to commission their own purpose-built unit – which would become known as the 'Art Mobile' – which, at a cost of £15,000, began touring Lincolnshire in 1969 (see figure 5.1).

The particular utility of the mobile art projects pursued by the LAA was both in the outreach it provided to the youth of the county, and in offering a relatively cheap solution to a lack of galleries and other arts resources. It was reported that 153 schools had requested visits in 1968, and to which Association gave priority to 'the small schools in the country villages, where there are not facilities for static exhibitions'.[922] Ambitions for the mobile gallery were considerable. A paper presented to the Museums Association

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[920] ACGB 111/10/2 Executive Committee Minutes, 3 May 1966. It was alluded that the inspection of 'American Vans' had been authorised by the Arts Council, with the instruction of gaining details regarding the construction and cost.
[921] ACGB 111/10/2 Executive Committee Minutes, 4 October 1966.
[922] ACGB 111/10/2 The Lincolnshire Association, Art Caravan 1968/69.

Conference declared that 'the Lincolnshire Association say that they hope that the Art Caravan will become as familiar to Lincolnshire people as the mobile library service'.[923] Despite these ambitions, and the enthusiasm of national stakeholders, the service was not an unmitigated success (see below). The Art Mobile would also exacerbate existing tensions around the overheads of the LAA. The Assistant Art Director post, filled in early 1970s, became little more than a glorified driver.

The social attitudes underpinning the objectives of the LAA were broadly in keeping with those of the ACGB in general, which since its institution under the control of Keynes had equated culture with 'high' Western culture.[924] The LAA took an active role in curating and organising artistic endeavour, rather than merely channelling funds, thus acting to arbitrate cultural tastes. The Association's commitment to increase accessibility to the arts for the young held in it a moral dimension. The proper use of leisure time, and the utility of art in dissuading the 'younger generation' from crime, were themes consistently present in Elwes' communication with other bodies. When attempting to garner interest from private sources to sponsor artistic events, deterring the young from 'breaking up the seaside' featured among the 'principles' of the Association:

> We are particularly concerned with the younger generation and this question of boredom as a result of increased leisure time. We try and encourage them to have a continuity of interest in the arts and heritage of the county when they leave school.

Though ostensibly expressing an interest in unlocking the creative energy of young people, the LAA remained largely prescriptive in the types of art it promoted. The composition of the panels continue to draw on established figures in the arts, from

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[923] ACGB 111/10/2 Extract from paper written by Mr Robin Campbell for Museums Association Conference at Leicester, 16 July 1969.
[924] Black, 'Gayer and more cultivated', p. 332.

traditional backgrounds. The services provided by the Association were deemed 'For Young People' rather than in collaboration with them.[925]

From the initial wariness that was exhibited towards a 'county' association, the ACGB's position towards the Lincolnshire body softened somewhat following its establishment. The formation of a North West Arts Association, taking the boundaries of the Standard Planning region as its own, matched by Northern Arts in their region, raised the question of whether Lincolnshire Arts should either be amalgamated or divided between the East Midlands and Yorkshire and Humberside. In their correspondence, the Council re-emphasised what they saw as the value of indigenous initiative, but also the merit that an attachment to the historical county had for Lincolnshire Arts:

> We have always recognised that regional associations will tend to coincide with the regions defined for economic and other governmental processes: but we have never been persuaded that this is necessarily in all cases very sensible. Arts associations are concerned with aspects of community life which have nothing to do with economics. In the case of Lincolnshire, where I have always understood that the factor of county loyalty is very powerful the result of following the boundaries of the New Standard Regions would be to amalgamate Lindsey with the East and West Ridings of Yorkshire, while allocating Holland, Kesteven, and Lincoln itself, to the East Midlands.[926]

Despite the fairly impressive advances of the LAA in their early stages, the Association faced problems in its relationship with the Arts Council and the local authorities. On a national level, the Arts Council's own national rules and responsibilities produced tensions with the encouragement of local initiative. The issue of heritage, and the extent to which this fell under the ambit of the Arts Council, was a particular point of contention from the beginning of the LAA. Almost all explicit mention of 'heritage' was removed from the constitution prior to the inaugural meeting of the Association, as the Charity Commission had indicated they were 'not aware of any grounds on which the promotion

[925] See *Lincolnshire Association for the Arts: Eighth Annual Report, 1972-73* (1973), p. 10.
[926] ACGB 111/10/1 Abercrombie to Elwes, 26 January 1968.

of the preservation of a heritage can be regarded as charitable'.[927] The eventual constitution subtly changed to instead promote, for example, 'study of customs and traditions in Lincolnshire'.[928] Despite this, the Association was defiant of its mission in its own administration, still referring to itself as an association 'for the Arts and Heritage of Lincolnshire'.[929]

II

Such a situation led to arguments with the Arts Council about the proposal to create a Museum of Lincolnshire Life. In the mid-1960s, public funding for museums – rather than being the responsibility of the ACGB – was channelled through both the Treasury and the Ministry of Public Buildings and Works. The Arts Council's charter instead defined its role as support for the 'living arts'.[930] Proposals to establish a museum showcasing traditional, mostly agricultural life in the county (and crucially to practical craft demonstrations) had been one of the central impetuses for Elwes in creating the LAA, and was a prominent feature of his first speech in 1963. As part of this, the Old Barracks situated close to Lincoln Castle were acquired, seen as perfect for 'a Lincolnshire Life Museum'.[931]

The Museum took up most of the heritage panel's time over its first year, with the panel deciding that the LAA itself would act as the promoter and appoint a museum curator to bring in 'objects of historical value'.[932] The main exhibition was ambitiously planned to

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[927] ACGB 111/10/1 D. Forrest to ACGB, 'Lincolnshire Association for the Arts', 8 September 1964.

[928] ACGB 111/10/2 'The Inaugural Meeting – 3 November 1964, Agenda', n.d.

[929] ACGB 111/10/2 The Lincolnshire Association advertisement for the post of Secretary-General, February 1965.

[930] Cmnd. 2601, *A Policy for the Arts – The First Steps* (1965), 6-8.

[931] ACGB 111/10/2 LAA Executive Committee Minutes, 13 April 1965.

[932] ACGB 111/10/2 LAA Executive Committee Minutes, 26 October 1965.

represent life in the county from the reign of Elizabeth I to Elizabeth II. The types of objects sought by the Association for the museum indicate how the organisation perceived and constructed the county's identity. Amongst the most desired items were traditional agricultural tools, material related to animal husbandry, dyking and drainage, and poaching.[933] The first craftsman to begin work in the Old Barracks was a silversmith whose work was featured in the Association's Art Caravan exhibition, and who produced brooches for the LAA's women members and to present to visitors of the Association.

On the appointment of a curator, however, the scale of the challenges facing this venture became apparent. In the midst of heightened funding constraints in the summer of 1966, the heritage panel were informed by the curator that a much greater financial commitment would be required than envisaged to bring about the proposals they had in mind; with the capital costs alone estimated to be between £150,000 and £200,000.[934] Central to the strategy adopted by the Association was an appeal to the Arts Council, who were entirely resistant to any diversion of funds to this venture. No part of the grant to the LAA was to be used 'directly or indirectly to subsidise this museum and its activities'. This was clearly and forcefully expressed:

> I think this ought to be clearly understood because I understand that your exhibition touring unit [Art Mobile] may be used to transport exhibition objects from the museum; and this might fall outside the scope of the original purpose for which the unit was acquired with the help of Arts Council money.[935]

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[933] *Lincolnshire Association: Diary of Events, July-August 1967* (1967). The list of objects of 'special interest' published included: '1. Agricultural implements, especially a sail reaper and wooden plough, but not a wagon, moff or binder; 2. A horse drawn steam engine for driving threshing tackle; 3. Any material or information related to horse gins; 4. Fencing, ditching, dyking and drainage tools; 5. A punt gun and other items related to wild-fowling and poaching; 6. Street furniture, notices, advertisements, lamps, and shop signs; 7. Early packaged goods from grocers, chemists, iron-mongers etc.; 8. All kinds of domestic furnishings, especially examples of wallpaper, seaside souvenirs and toys; and also items from the wash house, including a wooden dolly tub from the dairy and the brewhouse; 9. Tools for different trades and items illustrating early industrial development in the County.

[934] ACGB 111/10/2 Secretary-General's Report for Executive Committee, 6 September 1966.

[935] ACGB 111/10/1 White to Aitchison, 16 March 1967. It is however also clear that this directive was ignored by the LAA – 'Although the museum's permanent exhibition is not yet open

That the museum endeavour was seen to fall outside the terms of the Arts Council's work was a point of apparent frustration for Elwes, who complained about the rigid definition of what constituted 'living art' in a direct appeal to Jennie Lee after a visit in April 1967: 'We want to show many artistic crafts being practiced in a historical background as well as exhibitions and a film centre. This is why we feel it is impossible to separate the arts completely from the historical background as regards to capital and finance'.[936]

The LAA also found themselves at odds with the Arts Council over amateur pursuits. The ACGB's position was to give explicit support for professional artists and the upholding of professional standards. From an early stage, the LAA was reminded that 'the [Arts] Council's funds are not to be used for amateur productions'. The distinction was one that was treated cautiously by the LAA, and the difficulties inherent within the ACGB's charter were emphasised in a 1969 policy document:

> In London the distinction is no doubt a clear one, but in a region like Lincolnshire the division between amateur and professional is by no means simple: in many instances it is impossible to make such a distinction.[937]

The tensions over allocation of funds belied the larger problem facing the Association in its assumed task of curating artistic output and heritage in the county. Though all but three of the local authorities were contributors to the LAA by 1968, its financial and other resources fell well short of what had been hoped for. The initial £2,000 that was offered in direct grant to the LAA by the Arts Council was disappointing, and Elwes was quick to inform the Council that 'a very large mental note' had been made of the purported

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some of the collection has been on view in a travelling exhibition mounted in the Association's Art Caravan...': *Lincolnshire Association: Diary of Events, July-August 1967.*

[936] ACGB 111/10/1 Elwes to Lee, 18 April 1967. Eric White clearly wrote 'nothing to do with us' in the margin of the ACGB copy of the letter.

[937] ACGB 111/10/2 'The Lincolnshire Association: The next five years,' June 1969.

£50,000 in grant given to the North East.[938] By the end of the first year of operations, the LAA informed the Arts Council that £20,000 would be required to produce what was considered to be 'not a particularly ambitious' programme of events; only half this amount was ultimately granted. When the Association had been founded in 1964, it expected that the available budget would be around £50,000. But even though the value of the ACGB's grant had increased to £20,000 by the early 1970s, the LAA's budgets had to be very quickly revised downward.

As with the proposals for the Lincolnshire Life Museum and support for amateur arts, these financial constraints were compounded by controls on how money could be spent. Despite the Association's enthusiasm, by March 1966 the Secretary General admitted that 'the stage has been reached when it cannot be handled by the present staff'.[939] This was by no means an issue that was unique to the LAA; in 1970, the Directors of all the RAAs were informing the new Conservative Minister for Art Lord Eccles that

> the main difficulty in increasing staff was that the local authorities objected to more than a small percentage of the RAA's budgets being spent on administration. They wanted their grant to be spent on activities, not staff – not accepting that staff were necessary to promote and support activities.[940]

The extensive work of the LAA left a toll on the active members of the panels and stretched their administrative resources. The Chairman of the Communications Panel stood down from his position in April 1970, as he felt that it could only be satisfactorily undertaken by a full-time paid officer.[941] A heated exchange took place earlier that year when the ACGB demanded updated accounts from the Association, to be told that 'the only assistance is given by an accountant who works one half day per week, most of his

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[938] ACGB 111/10/1 Elwes to White, 'Lincolnshire Association', 2 March 1965.
[939] ACGB 111/10/2 'Notes from Secretary General to be read with Agenda at Meeting', 1 March 1966.
[940] ACGB 111/10/2 'Note of a meeting with the Directors of Regional Arts Associations,' 29 October 1970.
[941] ACGB 111/10/2 Communication Panel Minutes, 9 April 1970.

work is to some extent retrospective and it is consequently quite difficult to provide an immediate accounting picture'.[942]

From its inception, the Arts Council held the view that the majority of provincial artistic and cultural endeavour should be the responsibility of the local authorities, a position reinforced by the efforts to establish the NEAA in the early 1960s.[943] As has been noted above, the initial misgivings of the ACGB regarding the size and scope of the LAA were cautiously mitigated by the endorsement given by the vast majority of the councils in the county. By the 1970s, the Association had managed to gain subscriptions from the more hesitant southerly district councils around the Wash.[944] Such developments, however, did not mask increasing tensions with and amongst the larger urban associate authorities, and what they themselves received on their contributions from the LAA. When the Association was formed, the suggested subscriptions were a farthing rate from the county boroughs and 1/8 d. rate from the county councils and district councils; the intention being to generate £25,000 from the local authorities alone.[945] By 1967/68 only £18,354 of this total was being contributed – the largest amounts coming from Lincoln and Grimsby – and this amount would decline as the councils came under pressure in an adverse economic climate. There was also an increased conditionality to continued support from the larger authorities: in early 1969, Cleethorpes and Scunthorpe agreed to maintain their current level subscription for the forthcoming financial year but, as Scunthorpe declared, 'they required a statement at the end of the season to show the extent to which Scunthorpe had benefited by its subscription'.[946] Grimsby CB's representative also made plain that their continued contribution would be

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[942] ACGB 111/10/2 MacDonald to Abercrombie, 12 January 1970.
[943] Robert Hutchison, *The Politics of the Arts Council* (London, 1982), 121-123.
[944] ACGB 111/10/2 Executive Committee Minutes, 20 January 1970: At this time Horncastle UDC and both East Elloe and Spilsby RDCs would make financial contributions to the Association.
[945] 'Association Hopes for £25,000 from Rates', *Lincolnshire Echo,* 5 December 1964.
[946] ACGB 111/10 Executive Committee Minutes, 14 January 1969; Executive Committee Minutes, 11 March 1969.

considered alongside their own claim for additional representation on the Association's Executive Committee: in 1971/72 Grimsby decreased its subscription by £1,000, and instead used the grant for the Grimsby Community Centre.[947]

Though issues with the content of promoted events (see below) were a factor in such wrangling, at the heart of these tensions lay the issue of the perceived centralism of the LAA's activities around Lincoln. Such contentions were by no means unique within the RAAs; Northern Arts, Vall notes, had a strong concentration of its artistic resources around the Tyne at the expense of the Tees.[948] Though Lincoln was indeed favoured to an inevitable degree by the LAA (on account of it having a cathedral, the Association's 'headquarters' in the Old Barracks, and the county's only repertory theatre), the work undertaken showed reasonable sensitivity to regional needs. The Association's abandonment of the film theatre for the Museum of Lincolnshire Life was ultimately decided as it could not be justified within the regional remit. When facing entrenched local authorities, Elwes as Chairman emphasised that facilities dictated that 'some imbalance in the geographical spread of expenditure was inevitable. The transport subsidy scheme was designed to assist in the problem'.[949]

Though despite some (not unique) issues faced by the LAA within Lincolnshire, the LAA's ambiguous remit and relationship to other regional bodies generated significant ambiguities. The LAA showed both an enthusiasm towards broader regional co-operation, but also a wariness to it. Prior to the formation of the Standing Conference of Regional Arts Associations, Elwes had pressed Patrick Abercrombie for a broadly similar body, but in doing so clearly indicated that he aimed to 'entice artistic occasions of national or international importance to their respective regions'. In this conception, artistic

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[947] ACGB 111/10 Finance and General Purposes Committee Minutes, 17 November 1969.
[948] Vall, *Cultural Region,* 110.
[949] ACGB 111/10 Executive Committee Minutes, 29 July 1969.

production was to be firmly indigenous to each region, with co-operation existing as a means to increase available finance and exposure.[950] The Director Clive Fox would echo a similar arms-length sentiment in the LAA's five year policy document in 1969:

> Lincolnshire people by tradition place emphasis on qualities of self-sufficiency and independence, qualities that are often reflected in attitudes to art. While these in themselves are a source of strength, carried to an extreme they can be detrimental to artistic development.[951]

Despite such declarations of independence, the limitations imposed by the cultural infrastructure of the county led to certain actions that seem to go against this sentiment. Not having a university in the county in the 1960s led the LAA instead to invite representation on its Council from the universities of Nottingham and Sheffield. The LAA also paid a subscription to the Eastern Authorities Orchestral Association, in addition to that of the local authorities in Lincolnshire, for the promotion of orchestral concerts in the county. Eric White wrote with bemusement to the LAA in May 1967 on noticing in the Midlands Association for the Arts annual report that 'the Lincoln Association [sic] has been welcomed as one of their new members and included in the list of member organisations'.[952]

III

The distinctive cultural policies the LAA pursued and supported in its formative years demonstrated a particular regional imagining that speaks to larger historical discourse. Though the heart of the LAA's work was to increase the financial and practical artistic resources of the county, the type of art they sought to increase access to was significant.

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[950] ACGB 111/10/1 'Jeremy Elwes: Inter-regional Co-operation' JGGPE/M/34/25, 12 June 1968.
[951] ACGB 111/5/3 'The Lincolnshire Association – The Next Five Years: A Policy'.
[952] ACGB 111/10/1 White to Aitchison, 24 May 1967.

Though the members of the Association bemoaned what they saw as 'partisan considerations' from local authorities towards a Lincolnshire-wide organisation, the society's focus had distinct political dimensions.[953] The LAA bore some striking similarities in its motivations to Mary Whitehouse's National Viewers' and Listeners' Association (NVALA), which in their 1970 campaign to raise standards in broadcasting was declaring that, 'as our national institutions are founded on... Christian concepts, so NVALA reflects... the values in our national heritage'.[954] Within the LAA's objective to increase access and investment in the arts lay a distinct moral dimension, likely linked to the Christianity of Elwes[955] and other prominent members such as the Subdean of Lincoln, Canon Binnall. The LAA's preoccupation with the potential deviance of modern youth, and concerns over the use of leisure, mirrored those of the NVALA.[956] Beyond merely upholding traditional professional artistic standards, the LAA went further in what it sought to influence: when proposals for local commercial radio were put forward by the Heath government, the Communications Panel made clear their desire to uphold high artistic standards against popular tastes:

> The panel would like to underline the fact that it thinks it is essential that there should be a commercial radio authority set which would have defined standards providing limits for mass programmes and specific times for minority programmes.[957]

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[953] ACGB 111/10 Finance and General Purposes Committee Minutes, 14 August 1969.

[954] Lawrence Black, 'There Was Something About Mary: The National Viewers' and Listeners' Association and Social Movement History', in Crowson, Hilton and McKay (eds.), *NGOs in Contemporary Britain*, 189.

[955] That Jeremy Elwes' Catholicism was an intrinsic feature of his politics is demonstrated by his taking 'great exception' to proposals put to Brigg RDC in 1966 to establish family planning clinics – adding 'we might as well issue [contraceptives] to teenagers through the post every week', taken from 'Heated debate on free family planning advice', *Scunthorpe Telegraph,* 10 January 2013, http://www.hulldailymail.co.uk/Heated-debate-free-family-planning-advice/story-17816624-detail/story.html (accessed 19 July 2015).

[956] Black, 'There Was Something About Mary', 195.

[957] ACGB 111/10/2 Communications Panel Minutes, 27 July 1970. In addition to this the panel resolved that generally '...there should be much less weight of opinion derived from pure statistics in all fields of radio and television'.

Accusations of anything less than complete moral rectitude in any of the LAA's work was taken seriously. The Drama Panel declared 'very strongly that every care should be taken to ensure that the type of production toured in the county was not likely to cause offence or invoke adverse criticism'.[958] Accusations towards the *Lincolnshire Writers* magazine that 'the contents of some of the issues were either of a low moral standard of were meaningless' were strongly rebutted by the shocked Chairman of the Literature Panel: 'he did not feel the Association had published anything offensive'.[959]

Due to its status as an actively commissioning and promoting body,[960] the LAA's art and heritage activity gives a perspective on local constructions of the identity of the county. In contrast to contemporary tensions within Northern Arts as to whether the 'importing' of metropolitan culture or the promotion of local vernacular production was more pressing,[961] the LAA's work was unequivocally in favour of the latter. A preference for local artists ran throughout their work in 1960s and into the 1970s; the Literature Panel in particular – whose *Lincolnshire Writers* publication accepted only 'strictly residential contributors' – focused primarily on publishing volumes such as *21 Lincolnshire Folk Songs,* and self-producing records of these songs and Tennyson poem readings.[962] The first three exhibitions created for the Art Mobile included 'Painting in Lincolnshire Today' and 'Embroidery in Lincolnshire Today', demonstrating a similar emphasis.[963]

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[958] ACGB 111/10/1 Drama Panel Minutes, 17 March 1970; it is worth noting however that in 1971 Lord Eccles as Minister for Art, though having no official say in what clients were supported by the Arts Council, echoed such sentiments disquieted by public money being used to fund 'works which affront the religious beliefs or outrage the sense of decency of a large body of tax-payers', as quoted in Robert Hewison, *Too Much: Art and Society in the Sixties 1960-75* (London, 1986), 227.

[959] ACGB 111/10/1 Lincolnshire Association AGM Minutes, 1 November 1969.

[960] Which is not to say that other Regional Arts Associations did not see themselves as assuming the role of 'cultural correctors', e.g. Northern Arts; Vall, *Cultural Region*, 104.

[961] Ibid., 103-105.

[962] ACGB 111/10/1 Literature Panel Minutes, 19 February 1969.

[963] ACGB 111/10/2 The Lincolnshire Association, *A Mobile Exhibition Service – The First Year* (1971), 3.

The exhibits that were planned and displayed at the Museum of Lincolnshire Life also clearly demonstrate the LAA's specific conception of the county. The museum's pastoral and rural themes were further emphasised by the choice to exhibit the work of Boston-born early-twentieth century painter William Bartol Thomas, whose work evoked the low-lying estuarine fenland around the Welland estuary, and market-town scenes from his native Boston.[964] Of particular interest in the Museum were two exhibitions held shortly after its opening, one dedicated to 'Lincolnshire Links with North America', and another entitled 'Links to Australia' (assisted and visited by the Deputy High Commissioner for Australia).[965] The projection of a region within an international context appears to locate Lincolnshire within a particular conception of national identity, one with colonial connotations, aligned with particular national declinist strands, similar to the traditional identity of the Conservative Party in the 1960s.[966] This particular impulse was seemingly promoted by the Sir John Dudding, who succeeded Elwes as Chairman in late 1970, and who stated that 'Lincolnshire's historical contacts with overseas countries provide a theme that we should continue to develop, and thereby boost tourism in this County'.[967]

The interpretation of such measures within the literature on heritage and the uses of history, as well as discussions on the politics of art, is complex. In some respects, the activities of the LAA indicate a commodification of heritage as a means to promote establishment values.[968] These developments also significantly prefigured the 'heritage panics' in the two decades that would follow. Crucially, within broader national cultural politics, the LAA's work aligns with the national self-image of 'southernness' – what Russell describes as the 'Southern metaphor', where:

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[964] ACGB 111/10/1 Heritage Panel Minutes, 8 December 1969.
[965] ACGB 111/10/1 Executive Committee Minutes, 21 April 1970.
[966] John Seed, 'Hegemony postponed: the unravelling of the culture of consensus in Britain in the 1960s', in Bart Moore-Gilbert and John Seed (eds.), *Cultural Revolution? The challenges of the arts in the 1960s* (London, 1992), 17.
[967] ACGB 111/10/1 Press Release, November 1970.
[968] Robert Hewison, *Heritage Industry*; Wright, *On Living in an Old Country*.

> ... Britain is romantic, illogical, muddled, divinely lucky, Anglican, aristocratic, traditional, frivolous, and believes in order and tradition. Its sinful excess is ruthless pride, rationalized in the belief that men are born to serve.[969]

To simply see these activities – and the Association itself – as deeply reactive to modern cultural developments would be overly negative. As Black has indicated with regards to the NVALA, rather than being entirely reactive to modern cultural trends towards post-materialism, their actions can be seen as of agents of post-materialism.[970] Though television and the proliferation of mass media were somewhat problematic for the LAA, the Association attempted – with little direct success – to engage the BBC, Anglia and Yorkshire Television in the Association's work. In pushing unsuccessfully for the Association to construct a film theatre at its headquarters, Elwes indicated his own amenability to the idea that the facility could 'be used for films of a wider taste, particularly foreign films not seen in the County'. The LAA's interest in emphasising Lincolnshire's internationalism could also be interpreted as portraying the county and/or region's global links, and as an effort to foster the kind of cultural tourism that would form the basis for later post-industrial regional regeneration: the Curator of the Museum was supported by the Heritage Panel to attend a course on folk museums in Northern Sweden. It is also worth noting that, despite the dominance of the pastoral image in the Association's work, subjects such as nuclear power were considered as possible topics for museum exhibitions. This supports the argument that heritage serves to provide a sequence, as a means to validate the present; the work of the LAA was a more contested use of culture and heritage.[971]

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[969] Russell, *Looking North*, 26.
[970] Black, 'There Was Something About Mary', 197.
[971] Brian Graham, G.J. Ashworth and J.E. Tunbridge, *A Geography of Heritage: Power, Culture and Economy* (London, 2000), 18-22.

In its active curation of the county's artistic output, the LAA set out an imagined cultural region based on the cultural proclivities of a rather narrow set of local actors. To some extent this was a source of a particular strength for the Association, but this arrangement limited its ability to respond to changing artistic and cultural priorities. The cultural representation of the Lincolnshire region they produced was complex, but on the whole conservative; rural; distrustful of technocratic practices; and if not wholly backward-looking, demonstrative of a reverence for the past over more progressive artistic trends (modernism, avant-gardism, or counter-culturalism, for example). In its work, though, the LAA challenged conventional distinctions between art, culture and history, a comparatively radical position demonstrated in the difficulties faced in obtaining funding for its marquee projects. The LAA as it existed in the early 1970s consciously attempted to be truly 'regional' in its actions, consistently invoking the 'imagined community' of the historic county.

The LAA's work had limited popular purchase with county audiences. Projects such as the Museum for Lincolnshire Life and the Art Mobile more often than not failed to gain hoped-for interest. Museum revenue in the first year of its operations was little more than half what had been predicted in the LAA's budgets; it received a rather modest 2,330 visitors within the first six months of opening.[972] The report on the first year of the Art Mobile showed that where a ready-made audience, such as a school or local history society, did not exist, even '...conventional advance publicity was evidently a waste of time. In the large village of Ancaster for example, the day's visitors were a policeman, a villager, and his dog'.[973] Though the rather marginal status of the RAAs was not uncommon, the problems of publicity and visibility seemed acute in Lincolnshire, with

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[972] ACGB 111/10/1 Museum Sub-Committee Minutes, 8 January 1970.
[973] ACGB 111/10/1 'Arts Officer's Report: The Lincolnshire Art Caravan – the first Art Caravan of its kind in Britain (1967).

promotion and membership drives being a constant preoccupation. The strength of the

LAA's identity was therefore of particular importance to its continued functioning.
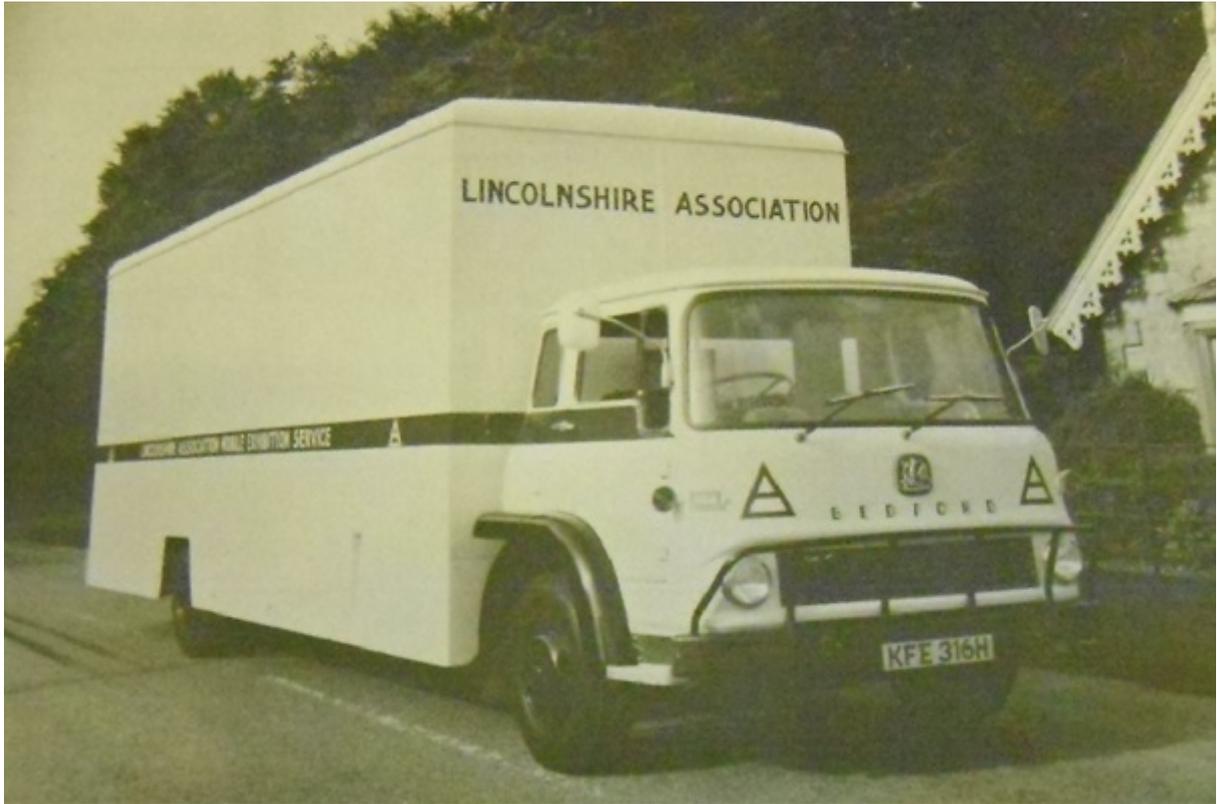
Figure 5.1   Image of new LAA 'Art Mobile', taken from The Lincolnshire Association, *A Mobile Exhibition Service – The First Year* (1971).

5.3 Yorkshire Arts Association, 1966-71

I

In contrast to the relative ease of establishing a centralised regional arts body in Lincolnshire, the creation of a Yorkshire arts association had a far more complex and difficult birth. But, crucially, the distinct Yorkshire approach to creating a new form of regional arts administration further emphasises the cultural and ideological trends in Yorkshire regionalism noted elsewhere in this study. Whereas the founders of the LAA – particularly Jeremy Elwes – appealed to sentiment and the need to preserve a shared cultural heritage, the founders of the Yorkshire arts body approached the issue of arts provision as a practical, rational and semi-scientific process. This further emphasises Guy Ortolano's point that the 'two cultures' controversy of the 1960s was about the relationship between art and science, and not a disciplinary dispute.[974] If the LAA was in part more indicative of the 'radical liberalism' embodied by F.R. Leavis,[975] the approach to arts in Yorkshire was certainly more akin to C.P. Snow's 'technocratic liberalism'.[976] That art in Yorkshire at this time was imbued ideologically with such technocratic modernism was embodied by the establishment of the 'Harrogate Festival of Arts and Sciences' in 1966.[977] In a similar manner to the Greater London Arts Association, the initial energy for a regional arts body in Yorkshire came from the Council of Social Service.[978] The Yorkshire Council for Social Services (YCSS) was the archetypal product of the technocratic, scientific approach to social work and campaigning that emerged in

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[974] Ortolano, *The Two Cultures Controversy*, 5.
[975] Ibid., 85-86.
[976] Ibid., 64.
[977] 'Harrogate Festival of Arts and Sciences', *The Financial Times,* 27 October 1965. This is reflective of the supposed social realist content of 'northern art'; e.g. Cockin (ed.) *The Literary North;* Cooke, *A Sense of Place*.
[978] ACGB/111/5/1 YCSS, 'A Policy for the Arts in Yorkshire, working paper no. 3', March 1964. Hutchison, *Politics of the Arts Council,* 124.

the late 1950s and early 1960s. Established in the region in 1963 and composed of a large variety of official, voluntary and professional interests, its purpose was to act as 'an advisory, research and development body for the social services in the County of Yorkshire'.[979] Having identified the development of creative and artistic activities as a key feature of their work, and in light of national cultural policy encouraging the creation of RAAs encapsulated in *A Policy for the Arts,* the first action the YCSS undertook was to produce a thorough survey of arts provision in Yorkshire. When the report was published in 1966, *Arts in Yorkshire* was admitted by the working party's chairman – Hull councillor and future mayor Lionel Rosen – to be

> ...a preliminary enquiry rather than a definitive study. For reasons set out in this report it was impossible adequately to cover the whole of this vast field and the conclusions we have arrived at and recommendations we have made must obviously be tentative.[980]

Despite these admitted technical shortcomings, the approach adopted by the working party during the eighteen months taken to compile the report was one that viewed art as an objective commodity, seeking to demonstrate its value (or lack thereof). *Art for Yorkshire* included an evaluation of the average attendances of the county's largest civic theatre, and the potential barriers people saw as preventing them from attending traditional artistic production.[981] A dispassionate discussion was included under the heading 'Is Art Necessary?' that inferred that

> from a strictly utilitarian point of view, Art is necessary for our industry and commerce. Standards of design can only be maintained through the Fine Arts... In Yorkshire good design is essential for the cloth and fabrics industry. The Arts are

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[979] Yorkshire Council of Social Services, *The Arts in Yorkshire – Report of a Working Party* (1966), 5. The membership was composed of 'representatives of local authorities, voluntary organisations, universities, the churches, professional and trade associations, local councils of social services, government departments, trade unions, and certain industrial organisation'.
[980] Ibid., 3.
[981] Ibid., 10-12.

necessary for the embellishment of homes, offices and work places and the design of the utensils we use.[982]

The conclusions reached by the report were less emotive than those motivating the beginnings of the LAA. An arts policy for Yorkshire was advocated, but with an acknowledgement that 'at the time of writing… we are in the throes of a credit squeeze and a halt in capital expenditure' which might prove unpropitious for 'ambitious schemes'.[983] The main recommendation of Council was for the formation of a Yorkshire Association for the Arts, based upon the model instituted in the North East. Eight objects were suggested which, in contrast to those that underpinned the work of the LAA, spoke of 'the Arts' in a universal manner rather than advocating a particular brand; the title of the report – *Art for Yorkshire* – emphasising this in itself. Amongst broadly similar objects to the LAA (of increasing awareness and funding sources, for instance), it was suggested that a prospective association would 'sponsor research on subjects such as audience attendance and the transition from art education in the schools to artistic activity in adult life'.[984] A marked difference from the proposals leading to the creation of the LAA was a much more modest suggested amount of local authority funding. One-thirtieth of the product of a penny rate – an amount projected to produce a sum of £20,000 – was proposed, significantly less than that requested by the Lincolnshire authorities. Rather than ideal, this was an amount deemed 'realistic… bearing in mind the varying financial demands being made upon local authorities'.[985]

During these initial discussions, the YCSS maintained close communication with the ACGB, whose enthusiasm for a Yorkshire association was much greater than had been the case in Lincolnshire two years previously. The Arts Council looked favourably on the

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[982] Ibid., 12.
[983] Ibid., 16.
[984] Ibid. 34.
[985] Ibid. 34.

report, and agreed to fund its publication. Their only major concern at this stage were the funding arrangements, Assistant Secretary Eric White stressing to the YCSS that

> I realise that such an income [£20,000 p.a.] would probably be sufficient to enable the newly formed Association to get off the ground; but, in view of the inevitable difficulty in persuading all local authorities to become contributors in the first year or two, do you think it is wise to fix the proportion of a penny rate so low?[986]

Nevertheless in early 1966 the initial portents were good. The West Riding of Yorkshire County Council (WRCC) convened its own working party meeting in April, attended by the major local authorities of West Yorkshire, the East Riding and Hull, which approved the YCSS's draft constitution and recommendations, subject to approval from the local authorities. Crucially, however, the initial contributions suggested were lower than even the YCSS indications; £3 per 1,000 population for an estimated £12,790. It was envisaged at this stage an association would be operative at some point in early 1967.[987] The momentum was maintained in August at a meeting convened by the YCSS's working party to discuss their report at the inaugural Harrogate Festival. In attendance were various members of Yorkshire's artistic establishment; representatives from the three county councils and major cities; and Sandy Dunbar and Ronald Aitchison, secretaries of Northern Arts and the LAA respectively.

But it was not long before the inherent difficulties in agreeing a consensus across the region surfaced. On 1 November 1966, the working party updated the ACGB on its present position. Though both the WRCC and ERCC, seven of the county boroughs,[988] and the majority of the district councils had declared themselves favourably disposed to

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[986] ACGB 111/5/1 White to Clarke, 'The Arts in Yorkshire', 4 February 1966.
[987] ACGB 111/5/1 Clarke, 'Yorkshire Association for the Arts', 19 April 1966.
[988] Bradford, Dewsbury, Doncaster, Hull, Rotherham, Wakefield, and York.

the proposals, Sheffield and Leeds had still not made a formal decision.[989] The support

received was also conditional, with concerns raised particularly over the management

and financing of the association. The ERCC were particularly adamant that greater

accountability should be built into an association: it was suggested that 'contributing

Authorities should have some means of ensuring that the funds freely disposable by the

Association are reasonably employed', and that the contribution rate should be set as a

maximum.[990]

The reluctance of the key county boroughs of Leeds and Sheffield to participate in

negotiations would essentially lead to an impasse that would persist over the next year.

Several issues contributed to this. The financial contribution being demanded, though

relatively modest, was a stumbling block for Sheffield, who gained some support for the

proposal to employ a voluntary rather than a professional Director.[991] Leeds' Alderman

Watson indicated that the reluctance to increase public-funded support was based on

the fact that 'numerically, culture and the arts generally were a minority interest'.

Additionally, the authorities in Sheffield would find themselves seeking reassurances

over the next two years that grant aid for the city would not be reduced by the ACGB as a

result of joining a regional institution.[992]

This continued lack of resolution became an increasing issue for the ACGB, who were

receiving growing queries from across the region, and from other Associations such as

Northern Arts. In October 1967, Sandy Dunbar voiced frustration at the lack of any

information about a Yorkshire association with which to negotiate the possibility of

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[989] ACGB 111/5/1 Yorkshire Association for the Arts to ACGB Secretary General, 'Yorkshire Association for the Arts', 1 November 1966. In addition to this Huddersfield, Barnsley and Halifax County Boroughs were all declared to be unfavourable towards the association.
[990] Ibid.
[991] ACGB 111/5/1 Clarke to Dunbar, 20 October 1967.
[992] For example, see ACGB 111/5/1 Abercrombie to Harrison (Town Clerk, Sheffield CBC), 8 November 1968.

including the North Riding within the boundaries of his own Association.[993] The YCSS for their part continued to try and revive the idea, proposing to hold 'a Forum entitled "Patronage of the Arts in Yorkshire"' which it was hoped would bring together individuals and authorities concerned with arts production, who would 'be able to give impetus, both to the establishment of an association and eventually to its policy-making, since they would be represented in the management of the association'.[994] The ACGB strongly backed the idea, but it took almost a year to be arranged. The forum took place on 22 June 1968 at the University of York, and was promoted as 'a unique occasion, at which patrons, artists and others concerned for the Arts will be meeting together for the first time to discuss their common interest in an open forum'. The chairman for the occasion was Lord Feversham, at the time only twenty-three years old. Speakers included ACGB Chairman Lord Goodman, and both Sandy Dunbar and Jeremy Elwes. Almost all the major local authorities, and other cultural organisations such as the county's five universities, the *Yorkshire Post*, and the newly-formed Yorkshire TV were present.

In a later summary of the forum's discussions, Dunbar would remark to Feversham that

> though I must confess that there were moments where I felt the Forum was going to be vitiated by the prevarications and in-fighting of the local authorities, my general impression was that the Forum was a great success.[995]

From the summaries of the discussions that took place, rather than increasingly cultural activity and resources for their own sake, an appeal to the potential economic and social benefits of arts patronage and a regional association had the most resonance. Dunbar himself had made plain that the 40 per cent of the £3-4 million raised and spent by Northern Arts during its lifetime would not have come to the region unless they had taken

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[993] ACGB 111/5/1 Dunbar to Clarke, 17 October 1967.
[994] ACGB 111/5/1 Clarke to Lord Feversham, 'The Arts in Yorkshire', 1 August 1967.
[995] ACGB 111/5/1 Dunbar to Feversham, 24 June 1968.

action themselves, noting that, 'unless you are prepared to help yourselves, you will not get help from the nation in the form of money or advice'.[996] Similarly the economic imperative underpinned Feversham's concluding remarks, emphasising

> how much Yorkshire needed to catch up with the other areas of the country to maintain its growth. The growth of the arts had to be considered within such larger considerations, not least because of the importance of encouraging young people to stay or come to live and work in Yorkshire.[997]

Indeed, the recommendations that emerged from the Forum were that the ACGB, local authorities and sponsors should meet informally in September at the offices of the YHEPC. This meeting was agreed as a prelude to a further meeting in Bradford, when the proposal 'to establish a Yorkshire Association for the Arts' would finally be considered.[998] It was unanimously agreed by the fourteen major authorities to establish a steering committee to bring forth proposals.[999] After some continued debate around the terms of its establishment, and one year on from the Forum, the Yorkshire Arts Association (YAA) would finally hold its inaugural meeting in the Guildhall in York on 21 June 1969. Its 'Area of benefit' would cover the whole of the West and East Ridings, York, and the southern parts of the North Riding not covered by Northern Arts.[1000] The annual financial contributions requested were set at £3 per 1,000 population for the county councils and boroughs, and only three guineas from the district councils.[1001]

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[996] ACGB 111/5/1 A Yorkshire Forum on Patronage in the Arts, University of York, 22 June 1968.
[997] Ibid.
[998] ACGB 111/5/1 Feversham and Clarke, 'Proposed Yorkshire Association for the Arts', July 1968.
[999] ACGB 111/5/1 'Yorkshire Association for the Arts' Minutes, 25 September 1968. The local authorities present were the three county councils and eleven county boroughs (Barnsley, Bradford, Dewsbury, Doncaster, Halifax, Huddersfield, Leeds, Rotherham, Sheffield, Wakefield, York). Hull was not represented but sent apologies and would be represented on the Steering Committee.
[1000] ACGB 111/5/1 'Yorkshire Arts Association – Constitution', n.d.
[1001] ACGB 111/5/1 'Yorkshire Association for the Arts – Steering Committee Report', 12 December 1968.

II

Though the protracted and difficult birth of the YAA was in itself significantly different to the LAA, the approach taken to the arts by the new association – both structurally and ideologically – was even more so. Constitutionally, the YAA was much more of a facilitating body than its Lincolnshire counterpart; its crucial objects, beyond the general aims to maintain standards and increase accessibility, were to 'co-operate' with and 'co-ordinate' the efforts of its member authorities and artistic bodies.[1002] This was a conception that crucially pointed to a fundamental feature of the YAA and the particular expression of regional identity it reflected, one that acknowledged the heterogeneity of its region. Despite the suggestion in the 1966 YCSS report, and protestations by artistic elites such as Quentin Bell, that Yorkshire was 'a cultural backwater with no taste', this appears to have been overstated. Though the YCSS had suggested that it was 'deplorable that there are no Arts Centres in Yorkshire worthy of the name',[1003] a study commissioned by the YAA in 1971 indicated there were at that point six arts centres.[1004] The YAA was able to co-opt several national names into its four artistic panels (Visual Arts, Music, Drama, and Literature), including provincial 'New Wave' author Stan Barstow,[1005] playwright and television scriptwriter Alan Plater, and prolific playwright and director Alan Ayckbourn.[1006]

The vitality of local activity in Yorkshire, in comparison to the more sparsely populated Lincolnshire – where, as noted above, considerable local effort was needed to establish centralised local liaison committees – was demonstrated by the existence of numerous

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[1002] ACGB 111/5/1 Yorkshire Arts Association, Constitution.
[1003] ACGB 111/5/1 The Arts in Yorkshire: Report of a Working Party sponsored by the Yorkshire Council of Social Service, March 1966.
[1004] ACGB 111/5/2 Sandra Browne, 'Feasibility study for a projected tour of a season of arts events in the eastern half of Yorkshire' (1971).
[1005] Cooke, *A Sense of Place*, 14, quoting Stuart Laing, *Representations of Working-Class Life* (Basingstoke, 1986).
[1006] ACGB 111/5/2 Executive Committee Minutes, 3 March 1970.

local organisations, such as the local arts councils in Brighouse, Rotherham and Halifax. Indeed the extent of enthusiasm for artistic patronage set the YAA on a 'collision course' with the ACGB. Lord Feversham noted that the YAA were receiving 'worthwhile applications… much more numerous than even I had anticipated' within months of their inauguration, which stretched their initially meagre financial resources.[1007]

Following the Arts Forum in September 1968, Feversham and Clarke held an amicable but enlightening discussion with Rotherham CBC, in which the local authority provided a thorough analysis of why the negotiations had broken down over the previous two years. Of particular note was the observation that:

> It was taken for granted that a highly centralised setup – completely contrary to Yorkshire social and cultural proclivities – was the best, simply because this had been adopted in areas such as the North-East and Lincolnshire where conditions are completely different, in that they include no existing cultural centres of the importance of Leeds and Sheffield and no major arts festivals of the importance of Harrogate and York.[1008]

Such a stance did not mean that Rotherham were opposed to a Yorkshire-wide association – on the contrary, they declared themselves 'enthusiastically in favour' – but they preferred a decentralised structure.[1009] This was certainly something that the YAA sought to promote in its approach early on. A meeting was held in June 1970 with representatives of nine such associations and councils to discuss their relationship with the Association, and how they could be used in the planning of events.[1010] From this meeting, the YAA would agree that 'strong and effective local arts councils could play an

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[1007] ACGB 111/5/1 Feversham to Abercrombie, 5 October 1969. The initial value of the ACGB support for 1969/79 to the YAA was £3,000 in grants and guarantees.
[1008] ACGB 111/5/1 Clarke to Abercrombie, 'Yorkshire', 19 September 1968.
[1009] Ibid.
[1010] ACGB 111/5/2 'Yorkshire Arts Association - Notes of a meeting of local arts councils and associations', 13 June 1970.

increasingly important role in the Association's plans and that efforts should be made to assist them'.[1011]

The desire to support a more locally-based structure of arts policy in Yorkshire went hand in hand with a much greater emphasis on amateur forms of regional art than was the case in other regions, particularly Lincolnshire. To some extent this reflected the traditions of the region. Lord Feversham as Chairman acknowledged the YAA's indebtedness to this tradition in an article written for the programme of the Leeds Triennial Music Festival in April 1970, about an 'artistic renaissance' in Yorkshire:

> In this exciting atmosphere the Yorkshire Arts Association has an important role to play in servicing established activities and encouraging new ones. Primarily it will be concerned with professional work but in this it must build on the foundations of Yorkshire traditions in the Arts. A great love of Yorkshireman for music, expressed most powerfully through the tradition of choral societies and brass bands. The miner, with hands roughened from cutting the coal at the pit face, was not equipped to play the violin so he sang and blew brass. He made what music he could and what a creative force he has proved with it music, music which has been described as a 'muscle music with hair on its chest'.[1012]

Though this invocation of a particular community and a particular form of artistic production was rather romanticised, it hit on a discernible trend in Yorkshire for community based arts production. Community theatre in Leeds was noted as particularly vibrant.[1013] But local initiatives within the urban areas of the West Riding were not culturally homogenous; an article in the *Guardian* noted that St. George's Hall in Bradford played host to 'concerts from our own century's newcomers, the people from Pakistan and Eastern Europe,' alongside more traditional brass band fare.[1014] Support for smaller, community based, non-professional endeavours was a key feature of the

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[1011] ACGB 111/5/2 Executive Committee Minutes, 9 July 1970.
[1012] ACGB 111/5/2 Lord Feversham, 'The Yorkshire Arts Association', *Leeds Triennial Music Festival 1970 - Programme* (1970), 134.
[1013] Roger Hill, 'The Revolution Will Not be Dramatised', in Belchem and Riggs (eds.), *Liverpool*, 88.
[1014] 'Halls of Fame', *Guardian,* 1 November 1971.

YAA's work. Alongside grants to the region's repertory theatres and bodies such as the Northern Sinfonia Orchestra, numerous modest grants and guarantees were given to choral and concert societies, local festivals, music clubs and welfare organisations.[1015] The type of artistic content sponsored was generally broad in scope.

This diverse policy was testament to the lack of an overarching artistic regional vision in the forming of the YAA – unlike that provided in their respective regions by the innovators of the RAAs such as Arthur Blenkinsopp[1016] or Jeremy Elwes – but also to the approach of the Association's first 'Administrator' Michael Dawson (the title of Director was opposed, due to fears over its inferred centralisation). In the YAA's own retrospective, Dawson was described by Feversham as having 'a wide knowledge of the arts and... a born animateur. Very much against paperwork, he believed the more you were out of the office the better. He was ideal for the earliest stages of development'.[1017] The role had received over 70 applications, and longlisted candidates came from a variety of arts organisations including the Gulbenkian Foundation, British Film Institute, the BBC and the RSC.[1018] Dawson himself was the Chief Officer of the Greater London Arts Association, and was eventually chosen over four shortlisted candidates including the Assistant Education Officer for Leeds.[1019] He provided the Association with a metropolitan perspective, one that was general rather than indigenous to the region itself.

Dawson's initial experiences in Greater London undoubtedly informed his less traditional approach to arts administration. According to Sam Wetherell, the self-professed 'community arts' movement had emerged in Central London in the late 1960s, with

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[1015] For example, see ACGB 111/5/2 Executive Committee Minutes, 4 September 1970.
[1016] For example, Hewison, *Culture and Consensus*, 172-173.
[1017] Rachel Van Riel, *'There's a Lot More Where That Came From': The Arts in Yorkshire 1969-1990* (1991), 77.
[1018] ACGB 111/5/1 Memo: 'Long List for YAA Director', n.d.
[1019] ACGB 111/5/1 Executive Committee Minutes, 4 July 1969.

several projects becoming 'experimental sites for non-professional artists trained in different media'.[1020] The official acceptance of aspects of avant-gardism by the ACGB was slow in materialising, but by the early 1970s the Council was beginning to route very small amounts of money to such projects, through the New Activities Committee, then the Experimental Projects Committee, foreshadowing developments to come.[1021] One of Dawson's first actions was to bring about 'the establishment of an Experimental Arts Fund 'to encourage new and unclassified activities', for which initially £500 was set aside, and it was agreed that approval for expenditure should be given directly by the Executive of the YAA rather than the individual panels.[1022]

Dawson's attitude to the arts, and that of other members of the YAA, would go beyond the embrace of the non-traditional artistic forms, leading the organisation to have a distinctly different approach to morality. In stark contrast to conservative nature of the LAA's output, the Administrator made his opinion clear that 'advanced and even controversial material should be encouraged if the Arts to be seen in Yorkshire were to be comprehensive', an opinion that was not subject to any recorded dissent from the YAA's members.[1023] As a validation of the progressive nature of this aim, this position brought the Association into active conflict with other members of the political and arts establishment, most notably the Arts Minister Lord Eccles, whose own sensibilities and desire for censorship have been noted previously. In 1970, the literature panel made the decision to provide a grant of £450 to Seaview Publications of Barnsley. Two resulting publications – the 'alternative' magazines *Styng* and *Sad Traffic* – would lead the area's Labour MP Roy Mason to complain both directly to Dawson and to Education Secretary

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[1020] Sam Wetherell, 'Painting the Crisis: Community Arts and the Search for the 'Ordinary' in 1970s and '80s London', *History Workshop Journal,* 76 (2013), 238.
[1021] Ibid., 238; Laing, 'The politics of culture', 40-41; Walker, *Left Shift,* 23.
[1022] ACGB 111/5/2 Executive Committee Minutes, 21 January 1970.
[1023] ACGB 111/5/2 'Notes on a meeting of members of the [Yorkshire Arts] Association', 18 October 1969.

Margaret Thatcher about their content. With the work resolutely defended by Dawson, Eccles attempted to take it above the Administrator, and appeal to Lord Feversham and the YAA's Council in the hope of a climb-down. Though veering away from explicit censorship, he remarked that 'having looked at these magazines, my personal opinion is that Mr Mason's complaint is justified; I find no artistic merit in them'. He also noted that

> I am trying to obtain increases in public funds for Regional Arts Associations and in this endeavour I have to consider the opinion of a great many people... no one expects an Arts Association to vet in advance the productions of its clients; all that Mr Mason or anyone else can ask is that the continuance of a subsidy shall be judged in light of past performance.[1024]

The reply received from Feversham was a defiant one, which noted that in respect of *Sad Traffic*

> The Executive first took note of the fact that its Literature Panel had unequivocally recommended continuing support at the time of the publisher's second application for grant-in-aid, indicating that in the Panel's view at least the magazine has been, to date, worthy of public support; that it has literary merit.

Though it appears *Styng* did not continue to be funded, the YAA – through their Chairman – demonstrated their autonomy and defence of creative expression against any potential infringement by moral sensibilities.

III

This was part of the YAA's broader perspective and ideology noted in the initial Report of the YCSS – the 'technocratic liberalism' that sought to apply a cultural of professionalism, modernism and an embrace of the social sciences to the arts.[1025] From

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[1024] ACGB 111/5/2 Eccles to Feversham, 19 August 1971.
[1025] Ortolano, *The Two Cultures Controversy.*

very early in its existence, the Association engaged in economic planning, preparing five year budgets for aspects of its work in contrast to annual proposals of the LAA's panels. Although the expansion and professionalization of the social sciences in the 1960s increasingly sought an empirical base to be an 'objective and rational study of everyday issues', Savage argues that the field shows a prevailing interest in 'culture' in burgeoning publications such as *New Society.*[1026] As evidenced by the 1966 Report, such an approach was demanded within Yorkshire; this is also seen in responses to the abortive attempts to form an association before 1969. The approach to art within Yorkshire accorded with the wider discourse of economic and social planning in the minds of local officials. The Chairman of the Doncaster Arts & Museum Society wrote to the ACGB, drawing an association between economic regional policy and increased regional spend on the arts, and appealing that Doncaster would serve as 'an ideal "arts development area"' for the Council to consider.[1027] Rotherham also tellingly suggested that 'the establishment of an operational structure should await empirical and unprejudiced review of needs, possibly undertaken by a firm of management consultants…'.[1028]

The YAA immediately adopted a professional and objective approach. In light of ACGB enthusiasm for the Art Mobile project run by the LAA, and other initiatives such the South Western Arts Association's work with Beaford Arts Centre, the YAA encouraged the incumbent Administrator to institute similar schemes in Yorkshire. In response, Dawson replied:

> My own feeling is that before rushing to set up a touring theatre company, a mobile art gallery or whatever, a great deal of investigation is necessary to discover whether such ventures would be viable both from an economic and sociological point of view. Ideally, I would like to sponsor a research project to examine all the problems presenting the arts outside the main centres, in the hope that this would

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[1026] Savage, *Identities and Social Change*, 115-116.
[1027] ACGB 111/5/1 Scowcroft to Chairman ACGB, 'Doncaster and the Arts', 4 December 1968.
[1028] ACGB 111/5/1 Clarke to Abercrombie, 'Yorkshire', 19 September 1968.

produce a series of recommendations to guide the Association over the next five years.[1029]

The preference for carrying out feasibility studies, and the use of professional consultants to do so, was visible across the Association's business, such as in devising an approach to organised fund-raising, and in the strategy towards publicity.[1030]

In taking this approach, the YAA's officials showed an understanding and embrace of the increasing consumerist culture and politics of 'affluence' that NGOs and political parties alike had been coming to terms with in the 1960s and 1970s.[1031] The appointment of an 'Administrator' rather than a 'Director' was not only symbol of this; explicit within the job specification was the requirement for 'proved administrative ability or business acumen'. Dawson's comprehensive memorandum, 'Publicising the Arts', began:

> During the last 50 years enormous strides have been made in the promotion of consumer goods, and today there can be very few manufacturers that do not rely on professional advertising to sell their products. Agencies now use extremely sophisticated techniques to market commodities of even the most trivial nature and it is against competition of this sort that the arts have suffered.[1032]

The range of measures put forward by Dawson included the potential use of a dedicated design studio, a Marketing and Public Relations Officer, and local campaigns to stimulate potential audiences for artistic activities. A fundraising drive aimed at raising £60,000 from the private sector annually by 1978/79 was central to efforts to grow the overall budget and influence of the YAA.[1033] Again, this systematic pursuit was in stark contrast

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[1029] ACGB 111/5/1 Dawson to Abercrombie, 22 April 1970.

[1030] ACGB 111/5/2 Appeal Sub-Committee Minutes, 22 December 1969. 'the sub-committee agreed that a professionally prepared Feasibility Study would eventually be desirable. Such a report would assess the Association's capabilities as a fund-raising body, define the targets, and propose a properly phased course of action'.

[1031] Black, *Redefining British Politics,* 188-197; Hilton, McKay, Crowson and Mouhot, *The Politics of* Expertise, 88-95.

[1032] ACGB 111/5/2 'Publicising the Arts – Administrator's Memorandum No.3', April 1970.

[1033] YHEPC, *Yorkshire and Humberside Environmental Progress Report, 1966-1973*, 52.

to that of the LAA, where the members of the Communications Panel bemoaned a lack of visibility without a strategy to combat this problem.

However, the professional, modernist impulses of the YAA do not necessarily speak to the success of the Association as a regional institution, or to a thriving public patronage for the arts. The commercial approach taken by Dawson was largely dictated by the strictures of the local authorities, whose aversion to spending on what was perceived as a sectional interest is noted above. The subscriptions received from the major authorities were miserly in comparison to those paid elsewhere; in 1972/73, the subscription contributions of Leeds and Sheffield to the LAA totalled £2,264 and £2,367 respectively, as part of an overall £20,092 contribution for all local authorities.[1034] This compared to the £3,000 contribution made by Grimsby CBC to the LAA in the same year.[1035] The YAA initially only had three paid members including Dawson and a secretary, and both the Association and the ACGB came up against local authority obstinacy over their commitment to professional artists. The region's repertory theatres were particularly starved of funds in light of the economic squeeze, which the authorities claimed as reason for their reluctance to offer support; the YAA became a convenient scapegoat in such matters. One such example was the WRCC's refusal in mid-1970 to provide financial assistance to the Harrogate Theatre 'on the grounds that the County Council makes a contribution annually to the Yorkshire Association'.[1036]

[1034] ACGB 111/5/2 'YAA – Income and Expenditure Account for year ended 31 March 1973', July 1973.

[1035] *Lincolnshire and South Humberside Arts Association – Eighth Annual Report 1972/73* (1973), 36.

[1036] ACGB 111/5/2 Abercrombie to Dawson, 21 August 1970. Abercrombie made clear the ACGB's anger at this state of affairs: 'It is particularly reprehensible in the case of the West Riding because they really made the running for setting up the YAA as a development in support of the arts in Yorkshire – the reverse of a standstill or alibi'.

5.4 Humberside and the Regional Arts Associations, 1972-1976

I

The autonomy afforded to regional actors to set up their own structures and policies for establishing RAAs meant that by the early 1970s, the Standard Planning Region for Yorkshire and Humberside was served by two arts associations with significantly different approaches, expertise, and ideological and cultural underpinnings. A highly centralized body had emerged in Lincolnshire over a number of years, with an active role in promoting a distinct, particular brand of pastoral and conservationist regional culture. Its Yorkshire counterpart, covering a much more diverse area, was less of a promoting body in itself, more progressive in the type of artistic output it was willing to support, and – although by no means only a clearing house for funds – a decentralized body, employing a more technical support approach to the arts. Both had distinctly different partnerships with their local authorities, with the LAA much more dependent on its constituent authorities. For a population of 800,000 across the County, the Lincolnshire authorities in 1972/73 contributed £21,250 of a total budget of £60,000 to the LAA. This contrasted with only £20,450 in local government contributions towards the YAA's budget of £106,000 for the same year.[1037] But this integral relationship between the RAAs and the local authorities inevitably necessitated a re-evaluation of their boundaries following proposals to reform local government in England. The impending creation of Humberside after the Local Government Act of 1972 brought about a county council split between the two regions.

[1037] YHEPC, *Yorkshire and Humberside Environmental Progress Report, 1966-1973,* 52.

The implications of local government reorganisation were of concern for the LAA since the publication of the Redcliffe-Maud White Paper in 1969. Proposals to bring about the formal institution of provincial councils, with Lincolnshire being divided across three different provinces, prompted an impassioned and robust statement by the Association, emphasising many of the core features of the Association:

> These proposals seem to ignore the fact that Lincolnshire possesses a long and strong historical tradition of being one county… The Lincolnshire tradition may well be strong enough to live on, however much the map may be changed by central government, but nevertheless it can only live on in a weakened condition. The Association believes that the retention of Lincolnshire as one county with one heritage is a worthwhile aim for which to put up a vigorous fight.[1038]

As Chief Regional Officer for the ACGB, Patrick Abercrombie was quick to quell these fears, remarking to the LAA that '…he felt sure that it would be necessary to organise [provincial arts administration] on the basis of the status quo'.[1039] It was clear however that if the proposals were to lead to any upheaval, Elwes and others in the LAA's hierarchy wished the expand its boundaries to take in areas similar to the region as currently conceived, both geographically and culturally. His preferred course of action was to open discussions with Fenland and Huntingdonshire to the south of the region.[1040]

Prior to the eventual local government reorganization from November 1971 (see Chapter 3), the Corporation in Hull had a rather complex relationship with the arts. In his 1967 book *North Country*, Graham Turner had been particularly damning about the city, claiming that in stark contrast to Liverpool, 'culturally, Hull does seem to be something of a dead end. The intellectuals certainly complain that they are asked to exist on very thin

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[1038] ACGB 111/10 'The Lincolnshire Association: Draft Statement on Report of Royal Commission on Local Government in England', 11 March 1976.
[1039] ACGB 111/10/1 Executive Committee Minutes, 14 August 1969.
[1040] ACGB 111/10/2 Coordinating Committee Minutes, 6 May 1970.

gruel'.[1041] Some thirty amateur societies were also engaged in various forms of music, and literary and film clubs. Shortly after the publication of the report, professional artistic life was increasingly bolstered. When completed in 1970, Hull Arts Centre played host to Alan Plater and Barry Hanson, the future script editor for BBC English Regions Drama.[1042] Hull Truck Theatre, formed from humble beginnings in 1971, would later rise to national prominence under the artistic direction of John Godber.[1043]

The rather uneven pattern of artistic provision within the city was matched by the rather reticent attitude toward public patronage by the Corporation, an attitude that was subject to political tensions. Despite several people affiliated with the city being integral in the establishing the YAA – and despite the Labour Group voting to join – a change in control saw the Conservative-led City Council choose to defer joining the Association on financial grounds.[1044] The council was also reluctant to contribute to the capital costs of the Hull Arts Centre, despite £10,000 bring raised privately and £5,000 given in grant by the ACGB. The lack of local cooperation (despite national support) drew the ire of the ACGB, who pleaded that 'the centre will not only be a most valuable institution for Hull and the neighbourhood but a milestone in the development of theatre and the arts in Yorkshire, with important repercussions in the rest of the country'. In the end, the 'the princely sum of £250' was donated by the Corporation to the establishing of the Arts Centre,[1045] and it was not until mid-1970 that they joined the YAA.

[1041] Turner, *The North Country*, 186.
[1042] Cooke, *A Sense of Place,* 16.
[1043] Russell, *Looking North,* 148, 154-155.
[1044] ACGB 111/10/2 Letter to Glen, 1 August 1969.
[1045] *The Times,* 21 January 1970.

II

The LAA had strongly resisted suggestions about broadening their size and scope. When it became clear in November 1971 that Humberside would become a political reality, the Association immediately sought assurances from the Arts Minister that no changes of the size of the LAA would result, making its operations now in a 'mini-Lincolnshire' seemingly unviable.[1046] Both the Minister and the ACGB were quick to assure both Clive Fox and John Dudding that administrative changes would not dictate changes to the regional structure. Nigel Abercrombie was clear that he did not think the changes would cause immediate problems, noting

> I do not see how the new county can have any real corporate individuality until the Humber Bridge is built, and during the interim period I fail to see any reason why Yorkshire and Lincolnshire should not contrive to divide Humberside into two parts...[1047]

With these promises, and both RAAs keen to maintain their existing arrangements and infrastructure, the issue brought discussion but little investment of time into possible changes. In 1973, when the issue of how the new administrative county would fund two separate associations was raised, the LAA agreed with Neil Duncan (by then ACGB Regional Development Director) that 'in the short term, a formula acceptable to both Associations should be worked out... with regard to their financial and operational differences, and different stages of development'.[1048] In response to this, both RAAs prepared a joint statement released to the press in May, emphasising both their commitment to the existing structure, and that this would not be detrimental to provision in Humberside:

[1046] ACGB 111/10/2 Dudding to Eccles, 16 November 1971.

[1047] ACGB 111/10/2 Abercrombie to Fox, 'New County of Humberside', 10 November 1971; Eccles to Dudding, 30 November 1971.

[1048] ACGB 111/10/2 Note of meeting between LAA and Neil Duncan (ACGB) 'Lincolnshire Association and Humberside', 19 April 1973.

> The Lincolnshire Association and Yorkshire Arts Association are agreed that in the short term, and until the Humber Bridge is completed, the two Associations should continue to service [Humberside] on the basis of existing boundaries, with close contact and co-operation to ensure the best possible provision for the people of Humberside. Both Associations are also agreed that when the Humber Bridge is built, the situation should be reassessed.[1049]

The only immediate change made by either association was a name change. In the Chairman's message in his association's annual report, John Dudding noted that there was 'no doubt that much of our strength has been derived from the fact that the area which we serve is one geographic county with common ideas and traditions', but acknowledged that ultimately – as a body in close cooperation with local government – the change in status must be recognised:

> The Council has therefore recommended that the name of the Association, in full shall be: The Lincolnshire and South Humberside Association for the Arts and Heritage. This is a bit of mouthful, and in practice the shortened form will be used: LINCOLNSHIRE & SOUTH HUMBERSIDE ARTS.[1050]

Though it looked like this issue had been resolved, when the new Humberside County Council came into existence in 1974 it was immediately apparent this was not the case. The potential crisis did not emerge from any major issues with the content of the cultural and artistic support of either association; it was a political and financial issue. When negotiations were opened to determine the relative size of Humberside's contribution to each RAA, the £10,200 set aside by the county's leisure committee (intended as £7,500 to the LAA, and £2,700 to the YAA respectively) was well below the estimates of both bodies (the LAA due to their funding structure were also demanding an additional £6,000 from the District Councils). Ultimately £3,240 in additional funding was found for the YAA, but Clive Fox informed the ACGB 'through unofficial lines of communication' that

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[1049] ACGB 111/10/2 'Joint Statement by Lincolnshire and Yorkshire Arts Association on the Provision of Arts Services for County Humberside', 25 May 1973.
[1050] *The Lincolnshire Association for the Arts: Eighth Annual Report April 1972 – March 1973* (1973), 4-5.

this was not an arrangement Humberside were prepared to continue beyond the financial year. The matter was set to be resolved in October 1974.[1051] This turn of events was an alarming one for the ACGB, with Neil Duncan adamant that the 'danger' of Humberside 'trying to go it alone… should be avoided at all costs'.[1052]

This concern appears to have distinctly influenced the guidance of the regional officials of the ACGB. In contrast to a previous policy of remaining remote in regional matters, Duncan wrote a detailed summary of the Arts Council's views to Humberside. The two alternatives advocated were either that 'Humberside County should join with Lincolnshire in an expanded Lincolnshire and Humberside Arts Association', or 'the present division should remain for the time being'. Other alternatives such as joining the YAA *in toto*, or becoming an 'Areas Arts Association' affiliated to either RAA, were actively discouraged.[1053] This pressure for a rapid resolution from the centre was likely influenced by the need to maintain the support of larger local authorities, as across the country arts contributions were decreasing as shares of the RAAs' budgets.

The move by Humberside towards the LAA had important consequences in light of the Association's core foundational conception of a particularly strong historical identity and tradition within the county. It appeared that the LAA itself was rather unconscious of the potential changes. The centrality of political concerns to the thinking of the Humberside officials was demonstrated by Chris Cooper of ACGB, who wrote to Neil Duncan on the decisive meeting:

> The move towards Lincolnshire was being put with considerable emphasis without
> my contribution so I found it embarrassing, but found it politically right to continue
> to "sit on the fence". YAA attracted a great deal of criticism and LAA were regarded

[1051] ACGB 111/10/2 Fox to Duncan, 'L & SHA/YAA – Humberside', 2 August 1974. One of the 'unofficial sources' was most likely Clixby Fitzwilliam, who was both a member of the LAA and a Humberside County Councillor for South Humberside.
[1052] ACGB 111/5/3 Handwritten note on unrelated memo, 23 July 1974.
[1053] ACGB 111/10/2 Duncan to Roberts, 'Regional Arts Associations', 19 November 1974.

with [sic], although I suspected Humberside intend to <u>dominate </u>them, not just join it. The realities of <u>this </u>had not, I felt, been appreciated by Clive Fox. For instance, there was talk of a majority of Humberside Councillors on L&SHA and moving offices to Grimsby or Scunthorpe. They threw me out before they made a final decision but I hoped they might ask LAA for more exact details as to what changes LAA would make before commitment was fully made.[1054]

In December 1974, the county council's decision that it would join the LAA as a whole was greeted by the ACGB as most welcome news.[1055] But this was not the successful resolution they had hoped for. Not only had the YAA protested the speed with which Humberside County Council had acted, but the decision reached was sharply at odds with its most important district councils, most notably Hull. Angered by a complete lack of consultation, the officials in Hull were determined they should remain in Yorkshire, due to not only an excellent record of past assistance, but 'also a feeling of shared identity with other parts of the region which is unlikely to be engendered in the proposed Humberside/Lincolnshire link-up and there appears to be no justification for this to be disturbed'.[1056] Rather than being the straightforward transfer the ACGB wished, in early 1975 three district councils (Hull, Beverley and North Wold) stood in defiance of Humberside County Council in seeking to maintain their affiliation with the YAA, who backed their claim.[1057] Confronted with such a dilemma, Duncan wrote to the ACGB Secretary-General asking simply, 'where do we go from here?':

> In the past the Arts Council has always taken the line that determination of regional arts association boundaries is a matter to be decided by the appropriate local authorities and regional arts associations. However, we have never before had a situation where the local authorities in the same area are determined to contribute to different regional arts associations.[1058]

[1054] ACGB 111/10/2 Cooper to Duncan, 'Meeting with Humberside County', 4 October 1974.
[1055] ACGB 111/10/2 Duncan to Fox, 'Humberside', 20 December 1974.
[1056] ACGB 111/10/2 Wood to Willat, 'Regional Arts Association – Membership', 18 March 1975.
[1057] ACGB 111/5/3 Executive Committee Minutes, 27 January 1975.
[1058] ACGB 111/10/2 Director for Regional Development to Secretary-General, 'Humberside Situation', 11 March 1975.

Attempts to bring the different authorities together, as well as the various arts organisations supported by the RAAs, were unsuccessful. With the threat of the withdrawal of the County Council's financial support for the arts, it was eventually agreed that their decision would be upheld. In forming the new Lincolnshire and Humberside Arts (LHA) in April 1975, the constitutional arrangements as initially drafted provided an equal balance between Humberside and Lincolnshire county councils, each having four members and one member on the Council and Management Committee respectively.[1059] However, it was ultimately agreed that an additional member should be appointed to the Management Committee from Humberside.[1060]

The decision by Humberside to join the LAA was considered highly detrimental to the arts in the sub-region, as evidenced by the response of the Yorkshire body. A request by Hull's District Council to remain an affiliate member was reluctantly denied by the YAA's finance committee on the technical grounds that it would be 'improper'. The minutes of the Executive Committee recorded that

> Several of the members of the Executive regretted the consequences of this decision which would effectively sever our connection with the North Humberside area, but it was generally agreed "that in the circumstances" nothing more could be done.[1061]

The YAA, given the resources at its disposal, deemed it necessary to make the break absolute, sending letters to all the organisations it had supported in North Humberside that future requests would need to be run through the enlarged Lincolnshire Arts.[1062]

[1059] ACGB 111/10/2 'Lincolnshire and Humberside Arts – Constitution and Articles', 14 April 1975. The reality of the situation was that the four members of the Management Committee elected from the Council members tipped the balance in favour of Lincolnshire, which had well established ties to the various member organizations.
[1060] ACGB 111/10/2 Management Committee Minutes, 28 July 1975.
[1061] ACGB 111/5/3 Executive Committee Minutes, 24 March 1975.
[1062] Ibid.

III

The divergent approach of the two RAAs persisted beyond this change in boundaries. The upheaval within the LHA meant that its process of expansion, and the ruptures and animosities this laid bare, had significant consequences for its forward development. Even with the addition of North Humberside to Lincolnshire, the LHA was still the smallest of any RAA by population, catering for some 1,350,000 people.[1063] The animosity between the LHA and Hull City Council, following their frustrated attempt to remain in the YAA, was immediately palpable. In June 1975, the authority forced the cancellation of a reception planned with Yorkshire TV as they were not willing to hire the Guildhall to the Association, and it was noted that no city council members would attend a reception held elsewhere.[1064] The LHA remained as centralised and prescriptive in its practices as it had been from its institution, though its committee structure was streamlined in 1974.[1065] It concentrated its efforts primarily on the direct promotion of professional activities, such as touring activities and cultural events centred on Lincoln. A degree of the initial energy and impetus fuelled by the Museum for Lincolnshire Life was removed when the endeavour was passed over to the new Lincolnshire County Council as part of its statutory museum service. The venture was finally admitted to have outgrown the LAA's financial resources. What had been the panel with the largest budget in the LAA was by 1975/76 only allocated an estimated spend of £5,000 in a budget of £165,500.[1066]

Other ventures had breathed new life into the conservationist and heritage activities of the Association, and this cultural output was implicitly imbued with these notions of

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[1063] *LHA Annual Report 1974/75,* 5.
[1064] ACGB 111/10/2 Management Committee Minutes, 9 June 1975.
[1065] *Lincolnshire and South Humberside Arts: Ninth Annual Report April 1973 – March 1974* (1974), 31.
[1066] ACGB 111/10/2 'Lincolnshire and South Humberside Arts – Estimates for 1975/6' n.d.

regional culture. This was most notably the case with the Matthew Flinders Festival celebrating the bi-centenary of 'the man who named Australia'. The Festival included – amongst other things – a biography of Flinders published by the Association; exhibitions on Flinders and of Australian artists, including one for the Art Mobile; a specially commissioned ballet toured through Lincolnshire by Northern Dance Theatre; and music events including a performance by the Sydney Symphony Orchestra. Though the Lincolnshire Association had handed over control of the museum, its focus was instead shifted to the living arts, as a Regional Crafts Centre was opened in September 1974 close to the Lincoln Cathedral. Fellowships in glassmaking, weaving and bookbinding had been established to support this venture, and in addition to selling their wares the LHA used the premises to promote their own books and records.[1067]

Clive Fox as Director remained ebullient about the utility of this continued approach, remarking of the Association's policy in the evidence supplied to the Redcliffe-Maud Enquiry into the Arts that:

> the academic objection to this promotional policy by the theoreticians outside the region used to be that it would stifle local initiative and lead to undesirable bureaucratic decisions on the selection of events people could receive. Over ten years of practice, there has been no evidence to support this objection.

This attitude was a telling one. Given the tensions with the North Humberside authorities and organisations, the approach taken to arts administration by the LHA was remarkably un-conciliatory. Rather than seeking to learn from the best practice that had already been developed in their sub-region by cultural producers on the north bank, the LHA sought quickly to transplant its own regional culture wholesale onto the new region. The Arts Development Officer and the Director quickly moved to try and find suitable premises in either Beverley or Hull to establish a Craft Centre in North Humberside; it

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[1067] *LHA Annual Report 1974/75*, 12.

also moved to establish local liaison committees in a similar form to those already in place in Lincolnshire; and a second mobile exhibition was quickly commissioned to serve the wider area. Very little, if any, consultation appears to have taken place about either the forms of cultural production or changes in regional cultural administration that should take place in light of the restructuring.

In contrast to the structure operated by the LHA, in the mid-1970s the YAA continued to develop along the lines established in its first four years of operation. With its emphasis primarily on support, rather than on direct promotion of artistic output, the YAA increasingly sought to fight pressures to change their model. This stirred up particular tensions between the centre and the regional organisation. Lord Feversham, who in 1974 was chairman of the RAA's Standing Conference, was particularly vocal about not being treated as a colleague by the ACGB, more 'that one is some kind of orange three-headed Martian with antennae sprouting from the forehead who has just landed by flying saucer in Green Park'.[1068] Against these frustrations and the perceived elitism of the ACGB, the YAA began to try and assert its credentials to both regional and national stakeholders. The YAA's Drama Panel would draw the ire of the ACGB Drama Director over the suggestion that elected representatives should form part of the Arts Council's panel structure, who robustly responded that

> none of the people at that meeting has ever served on the [ACGB] Drama Panel, so cannot know either its strength or indeed its weaknesses, and seem unaware of the pros and cons of the non-representative system... I would never expect the Arts Council's Drama Panel to discuss the composition of a RAA's Panel or the way in which it was appointed.[1069]

Indeed, the YAA would claim itself to be more democratic not only through its local authority representation, but also through the local forms of art it supported.

[1068] Hutchison, *Politics of the Arts Council,* 125.
[1069] ACGB 111/5/3 Drama Director to Deputy Secretary-General, 21 June 1974.

Organisations such as the Leeds Arts Forums became places of 'high... lively and sometimes very emotional' debates about '"fine arts" and "community arts"'.[1070]

The major metropolitan areas's low subscription rates to the YAA was generally a point of contention for the ACGB. The local authorities however sought to defend themselves against any claim of impropriety, deeming comparisons to other RAA areas unjust. The unofficial rule employed by the ACGB towards the RAAs had been to roughly match the subscriptions of the authorities once an association had shown its viability. In the 1970s, the proportion of the RAAs' budgets that was made up of the ACGB's contribution increased as local authorities fought with their own severe economic problems. Even by these standards, though, Neil Duncan complained in October 1974 that the ACGB grant to YAA of £97,467 was only supported by £22,990 from the local authorities, and that budgeting 20% of the Association's income from local government moving forward was 'not satisfactory in the context of the theoretically equal partnership'.[1071] In late 1976 the ACGB again expressed 'grave concern' to the YAA in a letter from the Finance Director. It was noted that £117,000 was contributed to Northern Arts from Tyne and Wear County Council, in addition to a further £55,742 from the district authorities in 1975/76. With members of the YAA taking exception to this criticism, in response the Yorkshire authorities produced figures showing that the direct spend from local authorities for the forthcoming financial year would amount to around £4 million.[1072] The structures employed by the YAA meant that, more than any other RAA, they were able to open up private sources of finance '...because the work of the Association is rooted firmly in the local needs it can appeal to local pride and enterprise, attracting industrial and commercial support that it would be inappropriate for a government or local government

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[1070] Cynth Hopkin, quoted in van Riel (ed.), *The Arts in Yorkshire,* 106.
[1071] ACGB 111/5/3 Duncan to Mackintosh, 'West Yorkshire Metropolitan County – Yorkshire Arts Association', 18 October 1974.
[1072] ACGB 111/5/3 Executive Committee Minutes, 22 November 1976.

agency to seek'.[1073] Privately, the ACGB hierarchy had to acknowledge that the 'YAA are certainly the most alive of all the Associations as far as fund raising is concerned at the moment'.[1074] Though the metropolitan counties, especially in West Yorkshire, had their disagreements with YAA over its work and the financial commitment it sought, all major authorities continued to subscribe and be actively involved in its running.

As a regional body, the YAA continued its initial motivations, seeking to commodify culture and bring in support from private means as much as possible. In 1974, the Yorkshire and Humberside Development Association acknowledged that art and other cultural forms were integral to broader economic and social aims by offering membership to the Association. Looking to expand their resources in this period, the Association also looked into the potentialities of creating its own commercial radio programmes as 'saleable commodities'.[1075] Richard Phillips, as the YAA's Music Officer, demonstrated a keen sense of the promotional and commercial potentialities of the region's endeavour; when businessmen in the York area showed interest in promoting a stringed instrument competition in early 1976, his suggestion instead was that they hold 'a great jamboree of mediaeval and baroque music geared for the tourist industry to use York and district's outstanding architectural heritage with some masterclasses and concerts using top international string players'.[1076] The Association continued to support research in potential audiences and feasibility studies for various types of projects, including using students from Trinity and All Saints College of Education in Leeds to conduct a survey of the readership of the YAA's monthly magazine *The Month in Yorkshire*.

[1073] ACGB 111/5/3 The Arts in Yorkshire: The next five years, 1.
[1074] ACGB 111/5/2 Secretary-General to Director for Regional Development, 25 February 1974.
[1075] ACGB 111/5/2 Yorkshire Arts Association Working Party on Local Commercial Radio, n.d. c. 1973.
[1076] ACGB 111/5/3 Phillips to Dawson, 10 March 1976.

In this vein, the YAA also continued its established trend of diversifying and expanding the breadth of artistic endeavours it supported. A 'Film and Television Panel' was added to the existing panel structure in March 1973, with ambitious plans, including a script-writing fellowship backed by Yorkshire Television (YTV).[1077] Though (unlike the LAA) not having heritage projects at its core, the Association employed an architectural research worker – describing herself obdurately in *The Times* as 'not a preservationist' – on a two year project to catalogue and draw public attention to industrial buildings.[1078] The experimental art fund continued to be a feature of the YAA's provision, and it remained at this time the only RAA to make available such funds.

In attempting to assert some independence from the ACGB, pursuing experimental forms and an active policy of dispersing funds to local and community groups, the YAA does not appear to have been the subject of the same tensions as existed with other northern RAAs. Northern Arts as a body concentrated on its 'safe havens' of culture, such as the Northern Sinfonia and its literary magazine *Stand.*[1079] The YAA of the mid-1970s, though smaller as a region, had fostered an inclusive, diverse range of interests and activities. The Association not only sought to promote local initiatives and support the work of the local authorities, but also – for the most part – continued to cultivate a professional and commercially minded approach; both for artists and arts organisations within the region.

[1077] ACGB 111/5/3 The Arts in Yorkshire: The next five years, 6.
[1078] 'A small renaissance in architectural richness of Yorkshire's industry', *The Times,* 20 November 1972.
[1079] Vall, *Cultural Region,* 109.

5.5 Changing Regional Arts Policy, 1976-1994

I

From the late 1970s onwards, significant changes took place in both national and regional arts administration, and in the priorities and attitudes adopted towards public cultural policy. These developments firstly emerged from what Hewison called the 'devolutionary spirit' of the late 1970s.[1080] They were also part of a move to greater democratise access to artistic funds, and to create greater accountability from arts bodies and artists themselves. What is apparent however is that policy trends from the centre towards greater devolution to the regions paradoxically lessened the scope for cultural autonomy for the RAAs, whose activities were not in line with these national trends. Clive Gray has argued that despite the implied support for much of decentralisation, the processes concerning the relationship between the ACGB and the RAAs since the late 1970s instead brought an increasing integration into central control.[1081] In examining the two RAAs covered by this chapter, this process had different implications for the different associations, rather than being uniform in its effects. The new geographical boundaries of the Lincolnshire Association, with the addition of North Humberside, also brought with them issues related to functional compatibility and administration.

In the 1980s, Thatcherism brought an increasing drive by central government for instilling an 'enterprise culture' in the arts, as was consistent with the broader libertarian critique of the post-war British state and civil society. Despite a supposed substantial increase in funding for the arts and museums during the 1980s, Hewison has argued the decade saw only a one per cent increase in the Arts Council's budget in real terms,

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[1080] Hewison, *Culture and Consensus,* 174.
[1081] Clive Gray, *The Politics of the Arts in Great Britain* (Basingstoke, 2000), 135-139.

including a cut of £1 million in 1980 that saw the Council withdraw all funding from forty-one nationally supported companies.[1082] Alongside these cuts, *The Glory of the Garden* (1984) report saw responsibility for regional theatre devolved to the RAAs; precipitating almost 'perpetual crisis' due to the 'tightening grip of market forces'.[1083] As with other areas of the public sector, the RAAs were increasingly subject to accountability procedures in this period, with the requirement to show value for money due to a backlash from professionals in private and commercial enterprises.[1084] The Association of Business Sponsorship for the Arts was founded in 1976, and central policy from the late 1970s was increasingly oriented towards greater private patronage in the arts.[1085]

Similar to this formalising processes brought about by political changes in this period, artistic output itself was subject to increased commercial pressures. In artistic terms, increasing globalisation resulting from increased ease of communication served to make art less bound by place, more 'deconstructed' and universal.[1086] In television, Cooke argues that by 1981-82 the 'golden age' of English regional drama had been eclipsed a shift towards a 'global broadcasting culture', with the commercial stations especially producing more content with overseas markets in mind.[1087] Both trends served to make art more global, and less place dependent. Though Snell has argued that the 1970s and 1980s saw a significantly expanded output of what could be considered British 'regional

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[1082] Hewison, *Culture and Consensus,* 246-247.

[1083] Kate Dorney and Ros Merkin, 'Introduction', in Dorney and Merkin (eds.), *The Glory of the Garden*, 1-2; Anthony Jackson, 'From Rep to Regional: Some Reflections on the State of Regional Theatre in the 1980s', in Dorney and Merkin (eds.), *The Glory of the Garden*, 18.

[1084] Hilton *et al., Politics of Expertise,* 19; Perkin, *The Rise of Professional Society*, 472-275; Merkin, 'Devolve and/or die', 80-84.

[1085] Hutchison, *Politics of the Arts Council,* 22; Moore-Gilbert, 'Cultural closure?', 14.

[1086] Hewison, *Culture and Consensus,* 223-224.

[1087] Cooke, *Sense of Place,* 99, 183-184.

novels', he notes the predominantly 'urban' nature of this work, and a growing concentration on London.[1088]

II

The LAA's founding principles, deeply rooted in the cultivation of a particular formal and pastoral identity, had already been tested in the early 1970s. The changes to the boundary of the Association in 1975, and with it the creation of the LHA, were not the only challenges to its particular identity. The broadly prescriptive, moral and elitist tendencies of the LHA sat problematically with the economic and social changes of the late 1970s and early 1980s. These changes brought new strong social movements, which Walker argues the more radical strands of artistic production sought to both promote and critique.[1089] But though the 1970s have been argued to represent 'a marketplace for ideas' amidst a constant sense of crisis, the LHA maintained the involvement of many of the same members from its earliest years until the RAA's dissolution in 1991, with Clive Fox remaining the Director throughout, and past chairmen such as Ian Fraser, Clixby Fitzwilliam, Jeremy Elwes and Sir John Dudding remaining on the management committee.

At the national level, a desire to more clearly define the ambiguous relationships of the RAAs grew in earnest in 1976, with the publication of Lord Redcliffe-Maud's report *Support for the Arts in England and Wales.* The main findings and recommendations were that the primary providers of arts should be local authorities, with a diminished role

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[1088] K.D.M. Snell, 'The regional novel: themes for interdisciplinary research', in Snell (ed.), *The Regional Novel*, 27, 31. Snell also points out that as artistic output regional novels themselves were much more products of the drive towards greater commercialism, with funding for authors coming from councils and private sources as a means of 'place promotion', Ibid., 40-41.
[1089] Walker, *Left Shift,* 1-20.

for the RAAs.[1090] Though praising the moves towards greater devolution from the ACGB to the regional level, the report was critical of the 'conservative' nature of some of the RAAs, and their lack of 'high calibre' staff.[1091] The central principle underpinning *Support for the Arts'* reasoning was the requirement for art institutions, such as ACGB and RAA, to operate at 'arm's length' to provide artists with creative freedom.[1092] Such recommendations were particularly at odds with the LHA model, where 'most energy' was spent on direct promotion, with only 'a minor part of their budgets [given] as grants to others to do such work'.[1093]

In addition to growing issues related to national political and cultural change, the broadening of the LAA's boundaries to include Humberside created organisational problems that proved difficult to solve, and would combine with these other concerns to play a significant role in the restructuring of the administrative machinery of the LHA. The implied desire of Humberside County Council to gain control over the Association played out in a number of ways almost immediately after the amalgamation. As early as January 1976, the Association received a letter from Humberside intimating that the county represented something of an 'afterthought' in their creation of a 'Lincoln' Theatre Company.[1094] The LHA's efforts to bring about liaison committees, later referred to as Area Arts Associations, were generally unsuccessful in North Humberside. In July 1980, of the twelve affiliated local organisations, only two were located in the newer areas of Association (South Holderness and Goole) and neither was in the major centres.[1095]

[1090] Gray, *Politics of the Arts,* 139; Lord Redcliffe-Maud, *Support for the Arts in England and Wales* (London, 1976), 40-41.
[1091] Maud, *Support for the Arts*, 94.
[1092] Ibid., 63.
[1093] Ibid., 93. While the LHA is not named explicitly, the reference to 'questions of 'heritage'' and other points make the reference apparent.
[1094] ACGB 111/10/3, 16 January 1976.
[1095] *Lincolnshire and Humberside Arts, Fifteenth Annual Report April 1979 – March 1980* (1980), 24.

This rather tense relationship would simmer over the early 1980s, and bring about radical and profound change to the institutional framework of the LHA, if not necessarily to its personnel. With Humberside County Council becoming Labour controlled in 1981, the Leisure Services Department opted to withdraw the grant to the Association in full. Though the County Council's stance was a combative one, the response of the LHA and its Director was equally so. Clive Fox was blunt in informing the ACGB's Regional Director David Pratley that 'this latest fit of Welsh pique is sad, but largely irrelevant', and was also rather pointed in referring to Humberside's Labour majority as 'their Party'.[1096] Much to the consternation of the ACGB, the LHA were more than prepared to treat these ruptures as an irritating distraction, reducing Humberside's representation on the Council and suspending its representatives from the management committee.[1097] The ACGB was forced to act on what it saw as a 'profoundly worrying' course of events, with Pratley making clear to the Chairman that '…the Arts Council would simply not be prepared to fund an RAA which was willing to pursue such an isolationist role from its local authorities', and demanding a resolution.[1098]

Ultimately, what ensured that the LHA was able to retain the support of Humberside were the constitutional changes introduced in 1982.[1099] The increasing incompatibility of the association's structure and activities within the context of shifting national focus and constrained public finances for cultural pursuits had seen a forced change in policy. In 1979 the LHA introduced annual block grants to the region's arts centres and area committees. With the need for a significant reduction in the RAA's budget in the early 1980s, the LHA handed the exhibition, gallery and craft services it ran to both 'independent agencies' and the local authorities as part of a transition '…from a

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[1096] ACGB 103/211 Fox to Pratley, 'Humberside', 20 August 1982.
[1097] ACGB 103/211 Management Committee Minutes, 24 May 1982.
[1098] ACGB 103/211 Pratley to Fraser, 25 October 1982.
[1099] ACGB 103/211 LHA, 'Presentation of Estimates 1983/84', 9 November 1982.

promoting role to one of funding backed up by advisory, marketing and information services'.[1100] The panel structure was also altered from being committee-based to 'a system of Consultants' – whereby these specialists would discuss all areas of arts policy – justified as a means of improving 'productivity, quality and depth of advice' to supported bodies.[1101] Very quickly, the language of the LHA's work, and the focus on financial concerns, became more aligned with national discourse. In September 1982 the Assistant Director emphasised the need for both greater marketing and an increase in the professionalism of local arts provision as a means to expand capacity:

> It is [LHA's] policy to encourage and support the development of the arts either by helping suitable organisations to appoint professional staff, or by helping the local authorities to strengthen their own establishment. Experience has shown that local commitment in either of these ways can release considerable additional funds for arts activity...[1102]

III

A key feature of the Lincolnshire Arts Association had been the 'regionality' of its artistic content, and how a distinct regional identity had been aligned with a particular conservative strain of artistic culture. Broader national policy changes would continue to have an effect on the work of the LHA, most notably the increasing interest in heritage and conservation. Though springing from a decade's preparation, the European Architectural Heritage Year in 1975 saw a significant upswing in the funds allocated at a national level to heritage projects, but also a broadening of the definition of what was encompassed by heritage.[1103] The supposed 'heritage panic' of the late-1970s and

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[1100] ACGB 103/211 LHA 'Exhibition Services – Devolution', June 1982.
[1101] ACGB 103/211 *Annual Report 1982/83,* 2; 'Presentation of Estimates 1983/84', 9 November 1982.
[1102] ACGB 103/211 Chris Buckingham, 'Local Arts Development', September 1982.
[1103] John Delafons, *Politics and Preservation: A Policy History of the Built Heritage, 1882-1996* (London, 1997), 108-109.

1980s was driven, Mandler argues, not only by aristocratic concerns over the nation's stately homes but a broader 'crisis of confidence' brought about by the economic and political instability of the time. The greatest increase in the membership of conservation organisations like the National Trust came at this time in the 1970s, and these lobbies drastically increased the professionalization of their operations.[1104] As heritage activities became an increasingly mainstream concern, and as the greater devolution of funding continued, the importance placed by the LHA on this particular sphere of action continued to dwindle. Though continuing to run fellowships subjects such as church art research, and support small conservation activities such as the erection of road signs in the village of Donington to commemorate the birthplace of Matthew Flinders, the LHA's expenditure on heritage represented barely two per cent of the Association's overall budget by the late 1970s.[1105]

The reorganisation of the Association's structure saw it decide in 1981 that 'pure' heritage should no longer be pursued by a regional arts association.[1106] The same process saw the LHA relinquish the sites through which it could promote its own heritage activities, such as the Regional Craft Centre in Lincoln. By 1983, the annual report noted that with only seven small grants given by the LHA, and after the completion of a fellowship in clock restoration, 'heritage activities' would no longer be treated separately.[1107] The panel ceased to exist, and the direct provision of craft fellowships

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[1104] Mandler, 'The heritage panic', 62-63; Hilton *et al., Politics of Expertise,* 112.
[1105] ACGB 103/211 *Lincolnshire and Humberside Arts Fourteenth Annual Report 1978-79* (1979), 21.
[1106] ACGB 103/211 Management Committee Minutes, 5 October 1981.
[1107] *Lincolnshire and Humberside Arts Eighteenth Annual Report 1982/3* (1983), 11.

was by September 1986 described as a feature of the Association's work from 'the now distant past'.[1108]

A clearly defined sense of a regional culture, rooted in the rural landscape, had been at the heart of the LAA's identity since its inception. The erosion of this sense of place was by no means a process that was complete: the LHA's two mobile exhibition vehicles and the subsidy offered for transport to events continued, but were relatively diminished as elements of the Association's work. The perceptible cultural tensions introduced by the inclusion of the urban setting of Hull into the LHA's work was demonstrated in a written collection – mostly verse – entitled *Look North: A Collection of writing from and about North Humberside*, published by the Association in 1978. The collection was in many aspects synonymous with the Association's work up until that point, most notably in the invocation of a strong heritage for the area; including extracts describing parts of the East Riding and Beverley from Michael Drayton, John Taylor, Andrew Marvell, Daniel Defoe and Anthony Trollope amongst others. More contemporary contributions evoked market towns, agriculture, dykes and fenland, images common to the identity fostered by the founders of the LAA. However, the need to provide geographical authenticity to this collection meant the inclusion of poems inspired by Hull or by Hull based writers. Against the pastoral images of 'the speckling of the grass by wind/The waterlights of leaves, an old grey horse'[1109] were juxtaposed the social realities of 'Tattoo-shops, consulates, grim head-scarfed wives';[1110] 'The city of disuse, a sink, a place';[1111] and a poem explicit in its location and imagery:

[1108] The Regional Development Plan for the Arts in Lincolnshire and Humberside (1987), Appendix III. Quoted from a note of meeting between the LHA and the Crafts Council, 1 September 1987.
[1109] Taken from C.J. Driver, 'Fenland', in Lincolnshire and Humberside Arts, *Look North: A Collection of writing from and about North Humberside* (Lincoln, 1978), 26.
[1110] Taken from Philip Larkin, 'Here', in *Look North*, 25.

> 'This is an ugly town,
>   Perched on the land uneasily,
>   Spewed up from the muddy estuary,
>   Festooned by cobweb cranes'.[1112]

The introduction of aspects of more urban, 'northern' realities, though perhaps as argued by Sean O'Brien a more idiosyncratic inspiration in Hull,[1113] meshed uneasily with the imagery and the sensibilities the LHA had been founded on. The opening up of the Association to artists linked to Hull University and broader cultural perspectives had immediate effects on an Association that had long sought to be indigenous in its production. For example, *Proof* – the LHA's new writer's magazine – was transferred to Norman Jackson of Hull in 1977, 'thus giving the Northern part of the region its say in the shaping of future issues of the magazine'.[1114] As editor, Jackson would broaden the guest contributions to writers such as Saul Bellow, introducing more cosmopolitan cultural sensibilities.[1115] Also tellingly, besides Bellow and one other guest contributor, Ted Hughes, only one contributor was not from Hull and the surrounding area in the 1978 issue.[1116]

The national trends and economic realities that led the LHA away from its promoting activities would also see a gradual reduction in cultural activity with a particular regional focus, and a move towards a more globalised artistic output with less sense of place. Exhibitions such as 'Toil – An exhibition of labour on the land', prepared for the art mobile in 1977, gradually ceased to be organised. A progressive change of emphasis

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[1111] Taken from Douglas Dunn, 'Sunday Morning Among the Houses of Terry Street', in *Look North*, 39.

[1112] Taken from Vera Wyse, 'Hull', in *Look North*, 32. It is worth noting in a collection of poems and prose relating to 'North Humberside', 'Humberside' is only referred to once, Cathie Harman's 'Autumn on Humberside' and in terms not particularly endearing.

[1113] O'Brien, 'The Unknown City', 146.

[1114] *Proof: A Magazine of New Writing,* No. 9 (1977), quoted from editorial by retiring editor Gerry Wells.

[1115] *Proof: A Magazine of New Writing,* No. 12. (1978).

[1116] Ibid.

was even evident in the publications of the Association. The annual reports of the early years of the LAA had included images of items from the Museum of Lincolnshire Life, alongside photographs of the coastal and pastoral landscapes from across Lincolnshire (and also the North Wolds following the creation of the LHA). By the mid-1980s, the images featured in the annual reports – with some occasional exceptions – made no reference to the geography of the region, focusing instead on artists and participants in productions, including more modern elements than previously, such as electronic musicians. The loss of the complexity of locality in the imagery and activities promoted by LHA mirrored in some ways the trends shown in the economic promotional activities of the YHDA. In this instance however, it was a marginalization and peripheralization of the rural within the regional body in favour of more urban cultural imagery and production centred around Hull.

IV

A further policy change was a general shift in focus from concentration solely on formal, professional activities, towards the sphere of 'community arts'. Though this began to come into focus in the 1960s,[1117] increased interest in this area of artistic expression was in part a product of the economic, social and cultural issues of the 1970s, and in many respects was predominantly an urban problem. In 1974 the report *Community Arts* was issued by the ACGB in response to the number of grant applications the Council was

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[1117] Olivia Turnbull suggested that *A Policy for the Arts* (1965) had the main agendas of 'participation, access and community provision' despite the tensions this caused with the ACGB's founding principles: Quoted in Ian Brown, '"Guarding Against the Guardians": Cultural Democracy and ACGB/RAA Relations in the *Glory* Years', in Dorney and Merkin (eds.), *The Glory of the Garden*, 31; John Willet's study of arts provision in Liverpool, *Art in a City* (1967), had also argued of the need to set art 'in a new framework: that of a modern community's interests, plans and needs' despite being largely ignored by the corporation: Bryan Riggs, 'Radical Art City?' in Belchem and Riggs (eds.), *Liverpool,* 74-75; also see Wetherell, 'Painting the Crisis', 238-240; Walker, *Left Shift,* 40-43.

receiving for community based projects, and was given increasing further impetus by Naseem Kahn's *The Arts Britain Ignores* (1976) which highlighted the lack of funding for the artistic and cultural endeavours of ethnic minorities.[1118] In 1975 the Community Arts Committee was established by the ACGB and, following the devolutionary impetus given by the Redcliffe-Maud report, some forty per cent of funding for these activities had been devolved to the RAAs.[1119] The precise definition of community arts was a point of contention, though it broadened the considerations of what should be funded away from judgements of artistic standards towards community engagement. Generally leftist in perspective, the content of such projects was contentious in being inherently political,[1120] but also drew criticisms such as being 'poor art for poor people'; being more seen as welfare art or 'teenagers painting walls' due to the increasing involvement in the late 1970s of the Manpower Services Commission (MSC).[1121]

This shift in national focus in the priorities of the ACGB had implications for both of the RAAs in Yorkshire and Humberside. As noted previously, the YAA had from its creation embraced more experimental and controversial forms of artistic expression. Even in the early 1970s it had provided support for projects such as the community theatre group Welfare State, and for the early establishment of Hull Truck Theatre. Through its particular structure, the Association had already developed the means through which to effectively encourage, administer and oversee the proliferation of community projects in the 1980s, requiring application forms for grant aid to be submitted that required evidence of an organisation's financial planning and competence, as well as detailed

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[1118] Walker, *Left Shift*, 130-136.

[1119] Bart Moore-Gilbert, 'Introduction: Cultural closure or post-avantgardism?', in Moore-Gilbert (ed.), *The Arts in the 1970s,* 15; Laing, 'Politics of culture', 44.

[1120] Hutchison, *Politics of the Arts Council,* 52; Hélène Hamayon-Alfaro, 'Empowerment through the Arts: Community Arts in Belfast in the 1980s and 1990s', in Cécile Coquet-Mokok and Trevor A. Le V. Harris (eds.), *Crafting Identities, remapping nationalities: the English-speaking world in the age of globalization* (Newcastle, 2012), 42.

[1121] Walker, *Left Shift,* 132; Vall, *Cultural Region,* 112-116.

justifications for spending and clear outcomes.[1122] A demand for a degree of self-sufficiency, and the continued distance maintained by YAA in relation to the projects it supported, was demonstrated by the Association Director Roger Lancaster's assertion in 1987 when discussing if the RAA should become more involved in fund-raising for clients: '...the only organisations responsible for the survival of projects must been the projects themselves, that the association would do what it could do to assist'.[1123]

As noted previously, the strength of the YAA in part came from the adoption of a metropolitan sensibility. The policies adopted by the Association remained similar to practice in the Capital, demonstrated in this support of community arts. In the 1970s and early 1980s the GLC and Greater London Arts Association were the most active agencies in stimulating community arts engagement.[1124] In 1984 the Association brought forward the proposal to run open Community Arts Panel meetings to open up accessibility and bring about true public engagement; it was noted that 'the [Greater London Arts Association] was the only other RAA holding "open" community arts panel meetings'. That the YAA looked to be assertively politically progressive alongside its business-minded practices was also reflected in its attempts to provide for 'ethnic arts'. In March 1981, an open meeting was held by the community arts panel, with the resolution that an advisory group should be formed with representation from all the panels 'because many of the ethnic arts activities reflected the broader multi-cultural nature of our society and were not the sole responsibility of the Community Arts Panel'.[1125] The acknowledgement of the cultural diversity of the region also reflected a

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[1122] See, for example, ACGB 103/209/3 'Application for Financial Assistance for Community Arts', 1985 version. Questions on the application included: 'If there is a management group how is it made up and what is its relationship to workers and users?'; 'Does the organisation have a separate bank account and treasurer?'; 'What are you aiming to achieve as a result of this activity?'.
[1123] ACGB 103/195 Combined Arts Policy Group Minutes, 18 November 1987.
[1124] Hewison, *Culture and Consensus,* 238-242; Wetherell, 'Painting the crisis', 248.
[1125] ACGB 103/209/1 Community Arts Panel Minutes, 17 March 1981.

general drive from the local authorities to embrace multiculturalism in West and South Yorkshire. The YAA's published retrospective highlighted many examples of the support given by local government to such endeavours, such as Leeds City Council to the city's West Indian Carnival, or Rotherham's support to Indian storytelling and writing workshops.[1126]

In stark contrast to the work in Yorkshire, the highly centralised structure to arts provision and conservative attitudes to acceptable forms of artistic promotion exhibited by the LHA, despite their protestations to the contrary in the mid-1970s, had a significantly detrimental effect on community action. An internal paper in 1982 made clear the situation:

> LHA first became involved with community arts activity in 1978. At the time the Arts Council of Great Britain had a community arts sub-committee and directly funded most of the community arts groups in the country, although it was beginning the process of handing this responsibility to the Regional Arts Associations our region was unique in having no clients funded by the Arts Council – not that any had been turned down, none had applied.[1127]

In some respects this can be seen as a product of the region's dispersed population, or the broad ideology that had underpinned the LAA's formation in the 1960s; but it was also a product of the particular form regional arts administration had taken in the area. The response of the LHA to this problem was emblematic of the Association's culture;

> Although we were aware of that community arts activity should stem from a demand being articulated by a particular community, we felt that this region was in a vicious circle [sic]: until the people of the region could see examples of community arts in practice, a demand would not arise or at least would be slow in coming.[1128]

[1126] For example, Ian Charles in Van Riel (ed.), *The Arts in Yorkshire,* 102; Nita Basu Chaudhuri in Ibid., p. 42.

[1127] ACGB 103/211 'Community Arts in Lincolnshire and Humberside', October 1982.

[1128] Ibid.

Community arts projects were established with the local authorities in Hull and Spilsby, and the LHA offered a fellowship for a community arts worker before employing a Community Arts Advisor in 1981.[1129] The issue of 'quality' with regards to community arts was also an issue for the LHA, with the implication that the management advisers of the Association had issues with this; quality was discussed 'at some length' at a meeting in May 1984, with the point acknowledged that 'one cannot simply apply the standards used for other work'.[1130]

Despite the work of the Community Arts Advisor to stimulate growth in field, including forming a 'Community Arts Forum' with its own newsletter trying to promote local arts projects, an ACGB representative reported in late 1985 that there was some interest in community schemes 'but no large local groundswell' and intimated a distinct lack of enthusiasm for the subject among the advisers.[1131] There was, however, some evidence of eventual success in this field; the LHA by its final year in 1990 was providing direct grant aid of almost £100,000 to five community projects in Hull (Artlink) and Lincolnshire (Boston, Stamford, Gainsborough and Lincoln Arts Centres), as part of a total spend on community projects of around £250,000, equating to twenty per cent or so of the LHA's annual budget.[1132]

In a practical sense as well, the lack of the cultural and ethnic diversity in comparison to the older industrial areas that had seen substantial Commonwealth immigration prior to the 1971 Immigration Act may have also contributed to spontaneous community arts projects being less forthcoming within the Lincolnshire and Humberside. Ready-made

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[1129] ACGB 103/211 Chris Buckingham 'General Arts in Lincolnshire and Humberside' [dated 1983].
[1130] ACGB 103/211 File record of consultants' discussion, 'General Arts', 10 May 1984.
[1131] ACGB 103/211 Stote, Report of meeting of Management Committee and Management Advisers, 18 November 1985.
[1132] Taken from *Lincolnshire & Humberside Arts, The 25th Annual Report, April 1989 – March 1990* (1990), 23-28.

constituencies for community arts already existed in areas of with large ethnic communities, whether strong networks had formed from the early 1970s in the face of increasing white nationalism.[1133] 'Cultural concern' for these communities, both from the left (as in the case of the GLC),[1134] and from the right (following the Brixton and Toxteth riots that saw money 'pour' into 'ethnic projects…'),[1135] added impetus to activities such as community arts and made them national priorities. Difficulties in reconciling these national priorities with the regional demographic culture of the area encompassed by the LHA again posed problems for the RAA, in comparison to the YAA.

V

The late 1980s would see the culmination of the changes regional arts administration that would see the RAAs reduced in number and renamed RABs. Hewison suggests that this period saw the apogee reached of the efforts of central government to recast arts producers as 'cultural industries', and to demand greater value for money from artists and regional associations through policies such as 'challenge funding', which made arts grants conditional on local authorities matching ACGB grants.[1136] Greater emphasis was demanded on the marketing of arts events, and the national model moved towards seeking increased sponsorship from commercial interests.[1137] On both counts, the YAA found itself well equipped to meet these challenges given that these components had been features of the association since its establishment. As with the industrial promotion

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[1133] Paul Gilroy, *There Aint No Black in the Union Jack* (London, 1987), 119-120.
[1134] Walker, *Left Shift,* 135-136.
[1135] Camilla Schofield, ''A nation or no nation?' Enoch Powell and Thatcherism', in Ben Jackson and Robert Saunders (eds.), *Making Thatcher's Britain* (Cambridge, 2012), 108-109.
[1136] Hewison, *Culture and Consensus,* 255.
[1137] Ibid., 258-259.

of the region, discussed in chapter 2, had leaned heavily on marketing expertise, so had the organisation of the YAA.

Despite some acknowledgement of the potential stifling of innovative artistic endeavours, such as what was termed 'risk' books by one of the coordinators of the community publishers Yorkshire Arts Circus, YAA demonstrated a keen sense of the exigencies of the 'marketplace' for art in the 1980s.[1138] Perhaps reflective of the time in which it was written, one of the longest chapters of contributions to the association's retrospective focused on finance, and was titled 'Even the tea interval was sponsored by somebody'.[1139] It reflected the variety of corporate sponsors the association had attracted and the variety of events it had attracted sponsorship, such as a modernist concert by students at Bretton College in Wakefield 'sponsored by a major bank'.[1140] Much as with the attempts in regional industrial promotion discussed in chapter 2, the YAA worked within the national arts structure to promote their artists and to identifying opportunities for patronage for them, but whilst also demanding a degree of financial rectitude from the artists themselves. A draft policy paper sent to the ACGB in 1986 demonstrated that, beyond the broad objectives to support art for all and wider the scope of artistic production in Yorkshire, the YAA saw its prime roles as 'development agency'; 'planning agency'; and 'service agency'. In terms of the financial criteria employed for grant aid, the association also made clear that 'success in involving other appropriate agencies' and 'the effort to maximise self-generated and earned income' were crucial factors.[1141]

This was taken further the following year, as the association's council prepared a paper for its various policy groups setting out an assertive marketing strategy that prioritised

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[1138] Van Riel, *The Arts in Yorkshire,* 97.
[1139] Ibid., 91-104.
[1140] Ibid., 93.
[1141] ACGB/103/195 'Yorkshire Arts - Policies in Practice, second draft', August 1986.

'the customer led' approach; noted YAA was working with ACGB towards 'systematic use' of 'qualitative market research' with close links to 'consultants and advisors'; and emphasised that future marketing should pay close heed to the 'image' of the association as part of the need 'to be developing new partnerships with industry and commerce'.[1142] All such policy initiatives had followed by the Yorkshire body since the 1970s but were strengthened by the climate of the late 1980s as the more mixed and promotional approach aligned with national priorities. In contrast, again, LHA struggled to adapt to a more market oriented approach to the work of regional arts patronage, one that demanded greater financial accountability and development of additional revenue streams. But in contrast with the tightening management structures elsewhere, ACGB had to press several times to be given either the policy documents, or the meeting minutes from the LHA. When the policy papers were eventually supplied, the deputy director admitted rather noncommittally that 'some were written a little while ago and details would need amending, but in general terms they are accurate'.[1143] Amongst their criteria for eligibility were commitments to 'efficiency' in production but no mention of either revenue generation nor efforts by the artists to secure their own funding.[1144] Despite seeing from the early 1980s there was a need for their function to move towards marketing and financial stimulus, this adjustment was still a difficult one for the LHA.

When the RAAs were compelled to produce development plans in the mid-1980s by the ACGB, the LHA already had a review of its activities underway with a view to presenting 'a more persuasive case for arts investment'.[1145] The plan did nod to the supposed importance of the creative industry, most notably in job creation, economic regeneration, and tourism. But more importantly it stressed that 'the primary case for the arts remains

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[1142] ACGB/103/195 'Questions of Marketing, Image and Advocacy', October 1987.
[1143] ACGB/103/188 Buckingham to Warr, 'Arts Council : Combined Arts', 28 July 1986.
[1144] ACGB/103/188 'Policy' n.d.
[1145] HHC L709 (5) DUP, 'The Regional Development Plan for the Arts in Lincolnshire and Humberside' (1986), 3.

a social one. The arts can give pleasure, offer new experiences and a better understanding of the world in which we live, and help personal development and expression'.[1146] In addition to this, the role of 'the commercial and private sector' was figured less in terms of its marketing potential and and more in terms of the philanthropic considerations, for example, the development of a major retail complex in Hull city centre that led to an extension of the Ferens Art Gallery.[1147] Indeed, LHA found themselves openly critical of national policy; stating of the 'Glory of the Garden' policy that 'its introductory thrust expressed admirable principles for regional development outside London' but that it 'took a predominantly urban view of development opportunities, and sadly omitted many of the key rural issues which are of importance to this region'.[1148] When in its final year the LHA did enter into a more formal corporate partnership with the private sector, this was again an arrangement distinct to the region, as the first RAA in Britain 'to launch a professionally-staffed BiA [Business in the Arts] regional service'. A manager of this service was seconded from British Gas, and Clive Fox in his Director's report saw this as an opportunity 'to make a major impact of the last of the strategic objectives of the 1987 Development Plan'.[1149] Though corporate sponsorship was still only a fraction of the funding provided through all RAAs by the early 1990s, that the accounts for 1989/90 indicated just less than £10,000 had been raised from sponsors – against an budget of over £1.4 million – demonstrated how little the LHA had been able or willing to countenance private finance.

In October 1991, the recommendations of the Wildings Report on the relationship between the RAAs and the ACGB were finally endorsed. The report had argued that significant administrative savings could be gained from a rationalisation of the RAAs and

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[1146] Ibid., 6-8.
[1147] Ibid., 15.
[1148] Ibid., 9.
[1149] *Lincolnshire and Humberside Arts, The 25th Annual Report, April 1989-March 1990* (1990), 3: 'acting as 'marriage broker' between business executives and arts organisations'.

their recasting as Regional Arts Boards (RABs). In such circumstances it was inevitable that the LHA would be abolished, and the area of its jurisdiction absorbed into another board area. As it was, Humberside was subsumed into the Yorkshire and Humberside Regional Arts Board (which encompassed the county and the old borders of the YAA), and Lincolnshire joined with what had been Eastern Arts. It was ultimately a culmination of the standardising and centralising policy directions that had gripped regional arts policy across the 1980s and which had a similar impact on local government during the decade. In the introduction to the final annual report, the chairman of LHA George Cooke summarised not only the external pressures that saw his association subsumed, but also the intra-regional pressures:

> …I recognise that wider national considerations must at times override regional and local preferences. I recognise too that the political and other differences within our region didn't exactly strengthen our case for *either* whole region merger *or* status quo. I just think it is very sad, particularly in the arts, that being very good though – relatively – small is not good enough.[1150]

The new system saw ACGB funding for all regionally based arts schemes and projects devolved to the RABs, with an increased emphasis on regional accountability in both how these funds were allocated and administered. Though the new Yorkshire and Humberside Arts Board saw that they had many strengths in the links they had fostered, merging the interests of Humberside into their existing structure were still problematic; as was the 'confusion of identity as to what YHA is'. Much of the new direction accorded with what had already been ongoing with the YAA: the first principle of the new board stated that the 'YHA will be a policy led development agency for the arts based on a partnership approach within a broad cultural context'.[1151] The consultation exercise carried out in November 1991 noted that the new geographical boundaries posed

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[1150] Ibid., 1.
[1151] ACGB/108/45 'B5.5 Planning for the Arts', December 1991.

challenges to the cosmopolitan order. Two fears identified in consultations in Hull were the 'imposed, centralised, bureaucratic structure... not representative of the range of communities in the region'; and the potential 'marginalisation of Humberside'.[1152]

5.6 Conclusion

This examination of the region's arts associations demonstrates again the interrelatedness of relational and geographical conceptions of region. In contrast to Harvie's contention, we not only see the operation of distinct cultural forms in these regional institutions, but also assertive and distinct regional political action.[1153] Though both the LHA and the YAA were semi-official public bodies, they developed distinctive institutional frameworks representative of their geographical and political cultures. The Yorkshire body was both decentralised and generally cosmopolitan in its outlook and artistic production; whereas the Lincolnshire body was paternalistic and rural, invoking heritage and a distinct form of Lincolnshire culture. The LHA however struggled not only to integrate into a more urban setting with the inclusion of Hull and North Humberside, but also found it difficult to continue to exist within its particular structures within an increasingly centralised, formalised and professionalized context.

In cultural terms – as with the other chapters across this thesis – regional arts action demonstrates the complexities of the relational power structures of the regional, and how they are deeply grounded in traditional social organisations and the physical environment. The diversity of Yorkshire and Humberside makes it exemplary in discussing debates on national identity, which have been characterized by North/South

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[1152] ACGB/108/45 'Listening In... a consultation exercise', November 1991.
[1153] Harvie, 'English regionalism', 105.

divide, and the two cultures controversy of the 1960s. Yorkshire's forging of a cosmopolitan, modern identity has both interacted with and been contested by its more rural, conservative character. These debates are continuing to play out now within an increasingly fractured political climate.

Chapter 6: Conclusion: Which "Yorkshire First"? Regionalism and Regional Identity in Yorkshire and Humberside in perspective

> 'We just thought people in Yorkshire hated everyone else, we didn't realise they hate each other so much…'

Prime Minister David Cameron, 11 September 2015.[1154]

I

Though causing minor news headlines when picked up off-record on a microphone that Cameron was wearing prior to delivering a speech in Leeds, this pronouncement produced virtually no public consternation. In fact the more prevalent response was a concession of the statement's truth from, for example, the leader of the West Yorkshire Combined Authority, and iconic Yorkshiremen in Dickie Bird and Geoffrey Boycott. Journalists from across the political spectrum even sought to add context to Cameron's statement, including an opinion piece from the *Guardian's* North of England Editor proclaiming he 'had a point':

> It's not that surprising. Pit a bunch of Yorkshire folk against outsiders and they'll all chunter on about how chuffing brilliant God's Own County is. Put a Bradfordian, a Sheffielder, a Yorkie and a Leeds lad in the same room, however, and they'll argue about their football teams, the relative quality of their beer, the beauty of their landscape and women, and everything in between. Often all that will unite them is a shared disdain for Hull.[1155]

[1154] 'David Cameron's Yorkshire 'hate' joke caught on mic,' *BBC News*, 11 September 2015 http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-34222801 (accessed 2 August 2017).
[1155] Helen Pidd, 'David Cameron wasn't rude about Yorkshire - he was right,' *The Guardian*, 11 September 2015, https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2015/sep/11/david-cameron-wasnt-rude-about-yorkshire-he-was-right (accessed 2 August 2017).

The contemporary political situation which had led to Cameron's comments provided little counter to these generalisations. In the wake of the Scottish Referendum and the promise of greater devolved powers to the Scottish Government, the Conservative government was seeking to promote greater devolution in England through divesting new powers, budgets and responsibilities to elected mayors. The first of this new wave of 'City Deals' had been signed with political leaders in Greater Manchester in November 2014. Almost a year later, despite Yorkshire being integral to chancellor George Osborne's 'Northern Powerhouse' industrial strategy, no similar deal was forthcoming from the region; a situation that prompted the Prime Minister's tongue-in-cheek frustrations.[1156]

Though the authorities in South Yorkshire did eventually submit a proposal that received ministerial approval and – as of time of writing – remains the only City Deal in the area (pending a legal challenge that has delayed mayoral elections until 2018), a number of competing proposals emerged that carved Yorkshire up in a number of ways. These include proposals advanced by the York, North Yorkshire and East Riding Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) for a mayoral region encompassing these areas;[1157] a Leeds city-region that would also include York, Craven, Harrogate and Selby along with West Yorkshire; more ambitious plans for a 'Greater Yorkshire' that would bring the remaining areas of North, West and East Yorkshire together; and even tentative plans from a Labour MP and former leader of Leeds City Council for one mayor for the whole of Yorkshire and the Humber.[1158]

[1156] Len Tingle, 'Yorkshire's dash for devolution poses problems,' *BBC News*, 4 November 2015, http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-34718574 (accessed 2 August 2017).
[1157] City of York Council, 'A Devolution Proposition for City of York, North Yorkshire and East Riding,' 4 September 2015,
https://www.york.gov.uk/downloads/file/7517/a_devolution_proposition_for_city_of_york_north_yorkshire_and_east_riding (Accessed 2 August 2017).
[1158] Len Tingle, '"One Mayor" devolution call for Yorkshire and the Humber', *BBC News*, 13 January 2017, http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-38614527 (accessed 2 August 2017).

In one sense, the impasse in Yorkshire generated by the lack of consensus would appear to reinforce the notion that – in Yorkshire and Humberside – regionalism has been and continues to be the 'the dog that never barked'. The complexity of these negotiations are as much an expression of (multiple) regional conceptions, not a lack thereof; the exemplar of the power of 'Yorkshire' as an identity, and as a contested regional 'brand'; and of the uneasy interactions between regional institutions across Yorkshire and the Humber and with central government. One of the major barriers to the signing of a devolution deal has been the Conservative government's resistance to countenancing the 'Greater Yorkshire' region; with Jake Berry, the Northern Powerhouse Minister imploring the LEPs and local authorities to focus their efforts instead on cities.[1159]

More fundamentally, the actual constitution and function of the devolutionary proposals has been as much a source of resistance as the exact geography. In an exercise run by the Sheffield University's Crick Centre, thirty-two citizens chosen from across the local authorities recommended – based on evidence placed in front of them by a number of proponents and critics of devolution – an elected regional assembly to serve the whole of the Yorkshire and Humber region, and one that would be elected by proportional representation.[1160] Though admittedly marginal, political lobbying groups have been formed to advance the notion of a 'Yorkshire parliament' that would adopt the ancient historical boundaries advanced by the Yorkshire Ridings Society and other organisations since the 1970s and 1980s, such as the Yorkshire Devolution Movement established in 2012.[1161] Most notable of all in these alternative voices is the Yorkshire Party. Established as Yorkshire First in order to contest the 2014 European Election, the party

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[1159] 'Jake Berry: Forget Yorkshire devolution, cities will lead region's resurgence,' *The Yorkshire Post*, 10 July 2017.

[1160] Citizens' Assembly North Overview Report, 'Revitalising Democracy in South Yorkshire: The Report of Assembly North', January 2016, http://citizensassembly.co.uk/assembly-north-overview-report/ (accessed 2 August 2017).

[1161] Yorkshire Devolution Movement, https://yorkshiredevolution.co.uk/ (accessed 2 August 2017).

has stood candidates in local and national election contests on a platform of campaigning for the eventual establishment of a Yorkshire parliament 'directly elected via a fair voting system'.[1162] In its principles, the Yorkshire Party describes itself as representing 'pragmatic' centrism, and in its most recent manifesto reasserted a commitment to its candidates political independence:

> The Yorkshire Party trusts our elected representatives to act on behalf of their constituents without the need for a party whip or outdated political dogma. Your MP will be free to bring their own perspective to the issues of the day, challenging and scrutinising legislation, spending, and government policy on your behalf.[1163]

The Yorkshire Party only stood 21 candidates and polled 21,000 votes in the 2017 General Election, and currently has no sitting councillors (unlike, for example, Mebyon Kernow in Cornwall, or the North East Party). However, in its three years of existence, at the time of writing it has rapidly increased its share of the vote in the elections it has stood in, and appears established enough that it will, in the short term, be a fixture of regional politics across Yorkshire.

II

These recent debates stand as evidence not of the paucity of political regionalism in the Yorkshire and Humberside area, but instead of the complex and fractured nature of its mobilisation. Rather than an absence of political regionalism, as claimed by Harvie, this thesis has argued that in post-war Yorkshire and Humberside there has been a consistent articulation of plural regional identities and regional purposes, whose

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[1162] Yorkshire Party, 'Speaking up for Yorkshire: 2017 General Election Manifesto', https://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/yorkshirefirst/pages/363/attachments/original/14956 63618/YP-M-05-2017-General_Election-Manifesto.pdf?1495663618 (accessed 2 August 2017).
[1163] Ibid.

formation, construction and mobilisation has been consistent with other trends in contemporary politics related to increasing affluence, consumerism, class dealignment and postmodern constructions of place and identity.

Contrary to the general academic consensus that English regionalism has 'never barked' politically, in the period under consideration – in Yorkshire and Humberside - there has been a range of regional action and expression produced from various bodies (often with a loose conception of regional boundaries), which have taken disparate forms reflecting the broader trends in British politics towards the 'privatisation of politics', post-materialism (to some extent) and complexity in expression.[1164] This is evident when examining non-official and peripheral archival material and organisational histories, and when taking into account other trends that have observed within modern British politics by historians such as Matthew Hilton and Lawrence Black. Constructions and articulations of the region, however, are complex and contingent: as is much the case with single issue groups and non-governmental bodies.

The fractured nature of regionalism in England has been a difficult issue partly due to the historical legacy of centralisation within the state. Regional policy-making and articulation of regional identity has had to contend with distinctively England centre/locality dynamics, which have often been played out through imagined geographies employed by governmental and non-governmental bodies and processes. This thesis demonstrates that regional spaces such as Yorkshire and Humberside provided a prism through which broader ideological debates surrounding national decline, national renewal, and national conservation played out in the post-war years. This significant pluralism is testament to the continued power of regional identities. As such, regionalism and regional identity have been constructed much more in response

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[1164] Hilton *et al.*, *The politics of expertise.*

to, and been influenced by, contemporary economic and social considerations than has previously been suggested by historical studies of spatial identity, that have put much firmer emphasis on tradition and history in these constructions.[1165] The multitude of regional interests articulated in this thesis are reflective of this.

As demonstrated in chapter 2, this approach allows for an exploration of the limits of agency of regional bodies in both producing and reflecting certain regional images. In Yorkshire and Humberside, apparent diversity in landscape, industry and social formation could be both a strength and weakness of regionalism and regional action. Regionalism more broadly, rather than empowering peripheral areas, has tended to replicate and exacerbate existing informal 'geographies of power';[1166] Hull remained peripheral within the context of regional institutions and campaigns, despite attempting to appropriate the discourse. Peripherality is both relational and geographical, based on real space and postmodern constructions of space. Humberside has been less able to tap into more selective regional imagery in an increasingly globalized world.

Regions, as both grounded in the physical environment and also in relational power dynamics, and as negotiated through contingent and complex relationships, are therefore best considered through a multi-dimensional approach as offered by these 'core samples'. This model has been used as 'the sites and hosts of different debates' on that have ranged from general to highly specific;[1167] it proves apt for regions too, not only in capturing their 'slippery' or 'kaleidoscopic' nature in geographical terms, but also in interlaying temporal and political terms.[1168] On Humberside for example, as discussed in chapter 3, regional space and imagery could be employed both as a symbol of unity and

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[1165] For example, Russell, *Looking North*.
[1166] Allen, *Lost Geographies of Power*, 191-197.
[1167] O'Hara, *Governing Post-war Britain,* 8.
[1168] Green and Pollard, 'identifying Regions', 4.

a symbol of spatial and temporal division, with campaigners for the abolition of Humberside seeing the Humber Bridge as both 'unnatural' and an anachronism.

As this thesis has highlighted, the organisational structures through which Yorkshire has processed regional action demonstrate significant continuities and particular regional forms. The stability of the almost federal relationship forged between the regional coordinating body in both the Yorkshire and Humberside Development Association and Yorkshire Arts in chapter 2 and 5 respectively are both indicative of the particular associational culture of Yorkshire. The structures of these organisations have stood in contrast to those of other regions such as the North East and Lincolnshire, where regional formations tended to be much more centralised in form. Where this has been complicated is in the assertiveness and independence occasionally demonstrated by Hull and Humberside. As chapter 3 demonstrates, this is both forged by the physical separation and peripherality of this part of East Yorkshire, but also the psychological effect this has on claiming independence, separatism and dominance in regional institutions; as shown, for example, in the seeking of local solutions to air transport requirements.

Heritage has been instrumentalised and commodified throughout the processes explored in this thesis, not only for the tourist gaze as part of place marketing, but emergent from a self-assertive construction of identity that straddles traditional ideological lines. These forms of production of heritage and tradition could be both complimentary and oppositional to more modernist constructions of space and region. As such, regions have a distinctly temporal, as well as spatial, dimension.

As this thesis has highlighted, the 'region' – and, specifically, that of Yorkshire and Humberside – is conceptually vital for observing the major economic and social changes from the late 1950s until the early 1990s in Britain. It was in this space that the onset of

industrialization was managed and negotiated; it was also in this space that the precepts of statist, modernist technocracy in the 1960s were continually contested from the mid-1970s by a burgeoning 'marketplace for ideas'. These debates were forged not only by the changes witnessed in this period, but also the continuities. Though in some ways this thesis affirms Bulpitt's broad theory of the disintegration of the 'dual polity' between centre and periphery, as highlighted in chapter 4 there were limits to the agency that either centre and periphery possessed to bring about fundamental change. Additionally, from the late 1960s there was a rescaling of the state and the increasing construction of postmodern space based on a handful of images.[1169] On a regional scale established hierarchies were resilient, shaped by relational and spatial power dynamics that were informed by real locational geographies. For example, Humberside's liminal and peripheral status within Yorkshire and Humberside, and within England more broadly, was both a product of real and imagined geographies and their reflexive interaction in historical and contemporary social formations.[1170]

III

This thesis suggests several productive routes for further enquiry. The importance of local geographical particularism and its interactions with both national and regional contexts as a dimension of modern British history is exemplified in Stefan Ramsden's recent monograph *Working Class Community in the Age of Affluence.* Ramsden's chosen community for critiquing the historical and sociological conceptions of 'traditional' working class communities and their supposed decline in the 1950s and 1960s is Beverley. But the focus on class as the dominant dimension of identity in his oral

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[1169] Brenner, *New State Spaces*; Urry, *The Tourist Gaze.*
[1170] Baker and Billinge, 'Cultural constructions'.

historical study appears deeply problematic.[1171] His argument that the 'fact that the town's working-class population was relatively undisturbed by urban reconstruction allows a greater appreciation of the extent to which other changes associated with the age of affluence impacted on community life'[1172] somewhat neglects the fact it was relatively undisturbed by other aspects of change, such as Commonwealth immigration (which Ramsden himself emphasises as a driver of increasing cultural pluralism nationally in this period).[1173] Though Ramsden frequently refers to the East Riding of Yorkshire, practically no substantive mention is made of Humberside and its effect on identity, even in a full chapter devoted to 'identity and place'. In seeking to refute certain space-myths, Ramsden creates his own space-myths through the axis of class. The strong local identities this case study explores speak more to the interactions of the community of the East Riding with regional, national and global changes from the latter half of the twentieth century, explored in part within this thesis. Academic abstraction from place, whether through the 'locationless logic' of modern social research methods, moralistic 'cosmopolitan sensibilities',[1174] or perhaps most likely the undoubted reflexive relationship between both, often means absence of a nuanced interpretation of spatially contingent social structures, what Phythian-Adams terms the 'the environing cultural context' of a locality's 'own specific topographic, historic, demographic and economic circumstances'.[1175] As has been seen in this thesis, these abstracted conceptions of regions have in themselves brought about expressions of local and regional identity in opposition.

Ramsden's study does however tellingly include a chapter on a theme that has been implicit across all the chapters within this thesis, and something that would serve as an

[1171] Ramsden, *Working-Class Community*, 20.
[1172] Ibid., 20.
[1173] Ibid., 5.
[1174] John Tomaney, 'Parochialism - A Defence', *Progress in Human Geography* 37:5 (2013), 663.
[1175] Phythian-Adams, 'introduction: An Agenda for English Local History', 5.

vital dimension of any future research on regionalism and regional identity in Yorkshire and Humberside: associational life. Not only was the variety of associational life notably dense across the area, but the willingness and determination to collaborate, or to be seen to collaborate, on a region-wide (or at least county-wide) basis appears to have been remarkably strong. Yorkshire and the Humber was not alone in this; Colls has stated of the 'bourgeois civic' or middle class that it would be wrong to underestimate the importance of their association in regional identity,[1176] and indeed their vitality in the North East has been touched upon in this thesis. However, Yorkshire is consistently remarked on for its number of associations, and the effectiveness of their region-wide coordination. A fuller exploration of the YCSS, or other associations like it, with a consideration of the social structures of Yorkshire and Humberside would therefore provide an additional dimension to the regionalism and regional identity discussed within this thesis.

Another area that has not been explored in depth in this thesis – as highlighted in the introduction – is the interaction of other forms of identity with the regional; most notably gender and race. The primary actors in the core samples discussed have been almost exclusively male and almost exclusively white. This in itself may point to the normative and white ethno-centrism of regional identity and its mobilisation as regionalism, and in doing so affirms some of the more relational accounts of regional spatial production. Indeed, in places the reproduction of these power relations has been visible in the documentary evidence: the YHEPC coordinating group, when seeking feedback to the regional review, decided that 'women's organisations' need not be specifically approached, since women's interests should be covered by the other organisations [to

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[1176] Robert Colls, 'Save our pits and communities!', *Labour History Review,* 60:2 (1995), 58.

be consulted], most of which had women members'.[1177] Though rather paternalistic in their approach, the YAA did however in the late 1970s and 1980s seek to promote cultural and ethnic diversity of West and South Yorkshire. This research has indicated some contrasts and similarities with other English regions in this regard, but has not done so in anywhere near enough depth to provide authoritative conclusions. Scottish nationalism, in contrast with Englishness and also traditional conceptions of minority nationalism, has consistently been allied with liberal-inclusivity,[1178] but the extent to which this has permeated regional identity has proved less certain, when it has been considered. The intersectional relationship between these different forms of identity deserves fuller exploration.

Additionally, a broader area of future research partially highlighted by chapter 3 is the urgent need for increased historicism of recent political trends in England. Heightened academic interest in the UK Independence Party (UKIP) has emerged from their electoral success in local and European elections in the 2010s, and with it their increasing vote share in Northern England and Wales. Robert Ford and Matthew Goodwin's analysis of the social and political trends in UKIP's rise has persuasively highlighted a general alignment in their supporters with 'assertive nationalism, social conservatism and Euroscepticism', and the socio-economic effects of recent events such as the 2007/8 Financial Crisis. This analysis' central focus on UKIP as a political party however provides little in the way of context or historical antecedent prior to the establishment of the Anti-

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[1177] TNA EW7/388 YHEPC Coordinating Group minutes, 15 December 1966.

[1178] E.g. Will Kymlicka, 'Immigrant Integration and Minority Nationalism', in Michael Keating and John McGarry (eds.), *Minority Nationalism and the Changing International Order* (London, 2001), 71; an assertively liberal policy towards immigration and trade continues to be advanced by the Scottish National Party: see. 'Stronger for Scotland - Scottish National Party Manifesto 2017', https://www.snp.org/manifesto (last accessed 9 July 2017).

Federalist League in 1991.[1179] As this thesis has highlighted, the core agitators in campaigns to abolish the 1974 counties in favour of 'traditional' local government units shared many of the ideological tenets articulated by UKIP. Through a strong appeal to identity politics aligned with conceptions of local 'heritage' and perceived threats to this, these campaigners were able to forge support for their causes across a broad constituency of the traditional political spectrum. Indeed, some direct corollaries can be drawn, such as future UKIP MEP Patrick O'Flynn's involvement in anti-Humberside lobbying as a *Hull Daily Mail* journalist.

Additionally the means of mobilisation of this broader support has reflected wider changes in political organisation towards more privatised, values-based and single issue forms of association propagated by NGOs. Such populism rooted in place, and in historical constructions of place, comes into conflict with what Robinson has seen as the strong 'presentism' and convergence in 'temporal attitudes' of the mainstream political parties; attitudes that prize 'novelty, modernity and timeliness'.[1180] Not only would a fuller exploration of these campaigns, and their construction of the local as it relates to the national, help to inform historical narratives around radical right wing populism, but it would also help to develop a greater understanding of the role of spatially defined identity politics in post-war Britain. Similar recent trends in left wing radicalism would also suggest the validity and utility in this approach.

[1179] R. Ford and M. Goodwin, 'Understanding UKIP: identity, social change and the left behind', *The Political Quarterly* 83:3 (2014), 277-284; Robert Ford and Matthew Goodwin, *Revolt on the right: explaining support for the radical right in Britain* (London, 2014).
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