

# Castle Markets Project - Oral History

## Interview Transcript

### Interviewee Details

**Name:** Nikolas Erodotou

**ID Number:** CM\_035\_Erodotou

**Place of Birth:** Leeds

**Year / Date of Birth:** 10/07/1969

### Interview Details

**Interviewer:** Helen Finnerty

**Date / Time:** 23/03/2013 10:01

**Place:** Happy Feet, 172 Castle Market

**Audio Files:** CM\_035\_Erodotou

### Transcript:

*Helen:* OK so first of all can you just tell me your full name?

*Nikolas:* Nikolas Erodotou

*Helen:* And where are you from?

*Nikolas:* I live in Leeds

*Helen:* And today's date is the 23<sup>rd</sup> of March 2013 and what's your date of birth please?

*Nikolas:* 10<sup>th</sup> of the 7<sup>th</sup>, '69

*Helen:* OK so how long have you been working at this market?

*Nikolas:* I started working Saturdays when I was 14, so we're going what roughly 30 years.

**0.34** *Helen:* So what are your first memories?

*Nikolas:* It was certainly a lot busier than it is now. It was sort of my first experience of work at all, it was really, really, really packed, fantastic sort of sense of community amongst the traders and the staff, like its own little eco system, it was completely separate to anything I'd ever experienced before.

*Helen:* So you're living in Leeds now, were you living in Sheffield at that time?

*Nikolas:* No I've always lived in Leeds, we've travelled so I left school at 17 and started working here full time after that.

*Helen:* After you got your Saturday job?

*Nikolas:* Yes.

*Helen:* And was it in the same trade then?

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*Nikolas:* Oh yeah it was my father's business and now it's been passed on to me. So he was a cobbler and his father before him was a cobbler.

*Helen:* In this market?

*Nikolas:* Not in this market, no, my grandfather was a cobbler in Cyprus.

*Helen:* Okay right, so where was your father working then?

*Nikolas:* Over here, here.

*Helen:* In Castle Market?

*Nikolas:* Yeah in Castle Market

*Helen:* Right, he wasn't working in Rag and Tag or anywhere else before?

*Nikolas:* No, he was in catering before.

*Helen:* Right, so it's obviously a family trade.

*Nikolas:* Yes it is

*Helen:* Okay, so what changes have you seen over the time you've been working here?

*Nikolas:* Well certainly footfall. Footfall has really, really changed. It's nowhere near as busy as it used to be, but you've still got that sense of community amongst the traders and you've sort of noticed generations, you saw children coming with mums maybe 15, 20, 30 years ago and now they're bringing their children in. It seems to be, you know it's passed, market lives have been passed from one generation to the next.

**2.27** *Helen:* Yeah, I mean there must have been some characters as well, do you remember any particular characters?

*Nikolas:* Well lots of characters, I've always found a sort of a home here actually 'cos I mean there's people who are probably a bit less fortunate and people that aren't, you know, how can you say it sort of, there's a politically correct way of saying it, people probably lacking a bit, but they've always been well looked after here, we've always taken them under our wing, looked after them, they've eaten for free, you know, you can see them going home with lots of shopping for free from the traders, people are really, really well looked after. And that's something I experienced 30 years ago, observed it, you know, everybody was welcome.

**3.15** *Helen:* What about any particular traders you remember?

*Nikolas:* Yeah there's been some great traders, yeah there's been some great traders in the past, can't think of any off the top of my head, I've seen lots of people. I mean I remember when Jarvis Cocker used to work here.

*Helen:* Oh yeah?

*Nikolas:* He used to work in the fish market, you know, so he started his working career here in this market.

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*Helen:* What do you remember about him?

*Nikolas:* Looking exactly the same as he does now! Erm he hasn't changed at all, he was very shy at the time I remember sort of having a few words with him. He was a character I suppose.

**3.58** *Helen:* Absolutely, and tell me about nowadays you said it was much quieter, how's business going?

*Nikolas:* It's very quiet, you know, it's a bit worrying, this is why we're all sort of pinning our hopes on the new move. I just hope we can, you know bring a new generation sort of into the markets again because people, you know people, habits have changed haven't they? You know they want Meadowhall and internet shopping now

*Helen:* Will you be going?

*Nikolas:* Hopefully, yeah I've applied so we'll see how it goes

*Helen:* OK well I wish you the best of luck and thank you very much for giving me your time for this interview

*Nikolas:* Is that everything?

*Helen:* Yeah.