TRACES

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TR-ACES

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TRACES Stakeholder Summary

Claiming urban heritage? Citizen campaigns between preservation, protest and regeneration

The Horizon 2020 project "Transmitting Contentious Cultural Heritage with the Arts – from Intervention to Co-Production" (TRACES) focusses creative heritage work on conflict and difference with the aim to strengthen a new European imagination. This document summarises preliminary findings on heritage work in the contentious setting of urban regeneration in the London borough of Lambeth through the lens of citizen campaigns. It is argued that the activities of citizen campaigns for the preservation of existing public facilities constitute heritage work. The research shows that citizens' approaches to regeneration are in several ways more heritage-based than those of the local Council, and that campaigns can galvanise awareness of a dynamic heritage precisely at times when heritage becomes contentious. While a strong attachment to heritage can be exclusive, it can also strengthen community cohesion and a sense of civic pride.

I.   Background of the Research

TRACES: Transmitting Contentious Cultural Heritage with the Arts

The Horizon 2020 project "Transmitting Contentious Cultural Heritage with the Arts – from Intervention to Co-Production" (TRACES) focusses creative heritage work on conflict and difference with the aim to strengthen a new European imagination. Researchers, artists and heritage institutions in ten European countries analyse and experiment with different formats to transmit European heritages.
TRACES' rationale is that conflict over power and difference is deeply engrained in Europe's social fabric and its collective memory. To emphasise cultural forms which bring conflict and difference into public debates, TRACES introduces the concept "contentious heritage". It is argued that public engagement with the politics of heritage brings forward ways to live with its sometimes painful and often controversial qualities. TRACES develops tools for this process by combining artistic skills and knowledge with institutional resources and research (see http://www.tracesproject.eu/).

Horizon 2020: Heritage as a strategic resource in urban regeneration

The Horizon 2020 framework is funding research into harnessing cultural heritage as a 'strategic resource for a sustainable Europe'. The working group on cultural heritage states that in urban regeneration, cultural heritage generates economic, social and cultural benefits by enhancing quality of life and the use of historic buildings for sustainable development. The group acknowledges a change in the definition of heritage. Until the 1990s, built heritage as a source of socio-economic development focussed on physical conservation. Since then, new emphasis has been placed on intangible heritage, which relates to values and practices of people as part of historic urban environments. It was noted that cultural heritage creates a "powerful sense of civic pride and identity" (Scott 2017). However, it is recommended that heritage-led

regeneration to seek collaboration with local communities and businesses to avoid "potential undesirable effects, such as gentrification, which can result in existing residents leaving the area".

TRACES research on Lambeth's regeneration process

The work package "Performing Heritage. Creative Everyday Practices in Popular Culture" conducts ethnographic research in rural areas in the Alps-Adriatic region, and in the urban setting of Brixton in the London Borough of Lambeth. This document summarises preliminary findings from the urban research field. The research asked how contentious heritage is performed through the lens of citizen engagement. This was set against the background of Lambeth's urban regeneration (03/2016, ongoing). Citizen campaigns mobilise residents to critically engage with each other, the authorities, the wider public and the built environment. They reclaim and renew residents' link with the historical built environment. Besides developing and publicising demands, this mobilises emotional and creative capacities and increases citizens' agency. It is argued that citizen campaigns for the dynamic preservation of existing public facilities constitute heritage work in the contentious setting of urban regeneration.

Content of this summary

In line with the Horizon 2020 working group on cultural heritage, the research rests on the premise that heritage must be seen as a dynamic process (Smith 2006), which involves not only the conservation of historical buildings, but also involves the intangible heritage performed by people who use them. The document shows how urban regeneration sets in motion a contentious process, where different understandings of heritage play an important role. In the first part, the historical development of what is celebrated by all stakeholders as "Brixton heritage" is outlined. This is followed by a description of the position of the local council based on public planning documents and a definition of citizen engagement as heritage work. The second part discusses citizens' heritage-related strategies in achieving their goals. The third part provides an outlook on further research into heritage-based approaches to urban regeneration. The research is based on participant observation in the neighbourhood of Brixton, including but not exclusively in the context of citizen campaigns. Additionally, extensive research has been conducted in the digital micro-environment that engages with Brixton heritage. Special acknowledgements are due to the annalists at local online magazine Brixton Buzz. A veritable chronicle of Brixton since 2011, it is an invaluable source.

II. Contentious Heritage in Brixton

Brixton is situated in the Borough of Lambeth. It took a long time until its unique heritage was formally recognised. To understand the intensity of the current social struggles over urban regeneration, it is important to take into consideration how the currently celebrated "vibrant culture" of the neighbourhood evolved. Here are some snippets from ethnographic research, pieced together from the grand opening of the new Black Cultural Archives Heritage Centre, casual conversations with veterans of Brixton's punk and reggae subculture, and involvement with Brixton-based campaigns:

Lee Garrison, a historian born in Jamaica, educated in Britain, worked and died in Brixton, began cataloguing black history materials in the 1970s. This collection was the foundation for the Black Cultural Archives, conceived by a group of black artists, activists

and teachers who met during the Brixton uprisings of 1981. In the following year, The Clash performed 'Guns of Brixton' in a near-derelict 1920 cinema now known as Brixton Academy. The song captures the atmosphere that led to the uprisings to a punk/reggae tune. In 2014, Garrison's materials were moved to the new black heritage centre at Brixton Windrush Square after three decades of organising by the initiators. In 2015, Windrush Square saw the anti-gentrification protest "Reclaim Brixton", staged in true Brixton fashion as a street party with lots of sound systems.

This impression illustrates how Brixton residents negotiated the contentious heritage of the British Empire. They created a version of metropolitan heritage that was both multi-cultural and power-conscious in a largely unnoted process. Today, this achievement is widely acknowledged. Yet the unique Brixton heritage constellation has once again become contentious, as the urban fabric where it thrived is subject to a process of rapid gentrification fuelled by urban regeneration. While heritage as a resource is used to promote the neighbourhood, many residents claim heritage as lived experience and insist that this be taken into consideration.

Shaping Brixton – Historical Overview

Brixton heritage developed from the encounter of different groups of newcomers in a neighbourhood marked by change. When it comes to evaluating Brixton heritage, public opinion is divided. The rich, eclectic and inspiring heritage bears the marks of poverty, institutional racism and popular uprisings. This has led to both celebration and stigmatisation. Looking back, residents of different backgrounds emphasize a strong sense of community where black and white people used to get on, because `we were all poor'. Various local historical societies, the local online magazine Brixtonbuzz and the platform Urban75 offer a rich collection of Brixton history and heritage information. A brief overview outlines the historical development which shaped Brixton heritage as it stands today.

Historical buildings such as the Brixton Library, the Town Hall, the Ritzi cinema (originally Electric Pavillion), the Brixton Academy, and several shopping arcades give testimony of middle-class life in the age of imperialism in a thriving metropolis. Their architectural value is documented by nearly 50 listed buildings in central Brixton. In the interwar period, Brixton was known as the shopping and entertainment capital of South London.

With an influx of artists and workers, the middle-class suburb turned into a working-class area associated with the arts. World War II bombing added to an existing housing crisis. With labour in short supply, the Commonwealth provided a readily available source for cheap labour. Citizens from the West-Indies were invited to come and work predominantly in public transport companies and the newly formed National Health Service. The first large group, known as the 'Windrush generation', arrived in 1948 and settled in Brixton. 50 years later, the central space in Brixton was named Windrush Square to commemorate this event and mark its importance. Mixing with the white English traditions, their markets, entertainment venues, Afro-Caribbean music styles and a distinctive street live shaped the distinctive heritage of the neighbourhood. Eventually, an ambitious post-war social housing program provided decent homes. In the 1980s, squatters and artists added a thriving subculture, and the Black Cultural Archives were founded. 30 years later, the BCA became the first national black heritage centre in Britain, situated on the newly renamed Windrush Square. In

everyday life, friendly relations developed amongst a mixed and predominantly working class population despite a general climate of racism. The iconic 121 Railton Road squatted social centre was first opened by the Brixton branch of the Black Panthers, before it was handed over to an anarchist collective. Today's mixed audiences at music gigs and festivals can be traced back to the 1950s, when "No Colour Bar dances" were held at Lambeth Town Hall. Police repression targeted at black residents led to three uprisings in the 1980s and 1990s. Ensuing public enquiries confirmed that police made disproportionate and indiscriminate use of 'stop and search' powers against black people. Recommendations included a new code for police behaviour. The 1999 Stephen MacPherson report found that institutional racism continued to be a problem. Since the 1990s, residents have been perceiving a process of gentrification, which has visibly accelerated in the last decade with the advent of the Lambeth Regeneration Program.

Lambeth Cultural and Regeneration Programs

Current changes in the urban fabric in the Borough of Lambeth are fuelled by two sets of policies. The austerity policies of the British government following the 2007 financial and banking crisis have led to severe cuts in local council's budgets. This required drastic savings. At the same time, Lambeth council started planning an urban regeneration program in close partnership with businesses and third sector. In 2009, the council published the *Future Brixton Masterplan*, which outlined plans for major urban development including proposals to demolish several social housing estates. In 2010, government funding for local councils was cut by 50%. In 2012, Lambeth council issued a *supplementary planning document* for its masterplan and agreed development of a *Lambeth Estate Regeneration Programme*. In 2015, it released its cultural plan *Culture 2020*, which sets out partial privatisation and major cuts to community assets such as parks and public libraries.

The council's overall regeneration strategy centres on attracting investment, generating income and achieving savings. Public assets are to be transferred to external businesses or community trusts, who raise finance and are expected to provide a degree of service and maintenance without council funding. This strategy relies heavily on unpaid, voluntary work, or on commercial enterprises charging market rates for use of public infrastructure. Several council estates were earmarked for demolition and up-market development in partnership with developers. While this reduces the council's cost, it also reduces the much-needed social housing stock of the borough. Some assets are to be sold to generate additional income. Additionally, large landowners and other investors are encouraged to regenerate Brixton's built environment. This attracts and caters for a wealthier, middle-class population, while existing, largely working class residents find it increasingly difficult to afford living in the neighbourhood.

Lambeth council emphasises Brixton heritage throughout its public communication. The masterplan states that "the culture and heritage of Brixton is its emblem". It asserts that it will be incorporated, protected and enhanced by regeneration, to ensure that "Brixton continues to be as distinctive in the future as it is today." This commitment refers predominantly to the conservation or upgrading of the built environment which adds to Brixton as a marketable scenery. The stated aim is "to create a vibrant and unique urban environment", and ultimately "to attract new investment into the town centre and reestablish Brixton as a major destination." The different treatment of built and intangible heritage can be illustrated by the fate of two neighbouring shopping streets in central Brixton. In 2015, funding was obtained to restore Electric avenue, built in the 1880s, and the first shopping street in Britain to be lit by electricity as part of the *Brixton Townscape Heritage Initiative*. This is the only project in the Future Brixton programme

which is explicitly heritage-related. Meanwhile, the long-standing shopkeepers in neighbouring Atlantic Road received notice to leave due to refurbishment. The traders and their customers have performed and transmitted Brixton's heritage in their daily lives for over 30 years. These practices, however, do not fall into the council's heritage remit. The council granted planning permission, and many of the traders were forced to leave, making space for new establishments.

For all regeneration plans, consultations with stakeholders are legally required. However, as campaigners are well aware, consultations are largely designed to confirm the legitimacy of an existing concept and often conducted in a less than satisfying manner. Nevertheless, consultations could provide a format to invite active citizen participation with the aim of finding innovative solutions not only for attracting investment, but also for a sustainable transmission of intangible heritage.

Citizen campaigns as heritage work

The Lambeth regeneration strategy has led to social protests by different groups of residents. Council tenants and home-owners challenge demolition of their estates and mobilise for national demonstrations against new housing regulations, shop-keepers protest rising rents, library users demand re-instatement of full library services. The planned demolition of existing housing estates, together with the overall gentrification, has led campaigners to label the regeneration as a process of "social cleansing".

We argue that below the social demands lies a claim to cultural heritage. With the council pushing for regeneration, and residents claiming their right to city, heritage has become contentious. Cultural heritage supports social cohesion by providing and reproducing a connection between people, place and time. Urban restructuring risks breaking this link. Citizen campaigns aim to protect the dynamic cultural heritage of their neighbourhood. They refuse to accept that the familiar and much-used built environment is to be demolished, replaced or deprived of its purpose. They also claim a right to the intangible heritage contained in the relationships between people, place and time. The social struggles are also a negotiation over, and a mobilisation for, cultural heritage.

III. Claiming Urban Heritage: Campaigning Strategies

Citizens campaigning for the preservation of buildings and services against a background of austerity and regeneration are also set to protect a dynamic heritage both tangible and intangible. Campaigners have developed strategies to publicly explain their grievances, communicate their demands and achieve their goals. The activities of citizen campaigns could potentially be harnessed for a heritage-led development approach, where urban regeneration is co-produced by citizens and policy makers.

a. Mobilising emotion with creative means

Citizen campaigns are using visual representations to harness the emotive and subjective side of heritage in the current contentious setting. Slogans and banners, scribbled notes and elaborate videos, street-art, photo exhibitions, songs and poignant statements give testimony of an intimate attachment to urban space over time. They also expose the urban restructuring as an imminent threat not only to individual subjectivities, but also to the collective identity of the neighbourhood. These expressive statements are visible in urban space, and audible in everyday communications in shops

and pubs, at bus-stops, on the side of organising meetings, protests, and vigils. They also spread across countless blogs, twitter accounts, campaigning websites and facebook entries. These statements do not necessarily follow the logic of an individual campaign, and they are not organised as a systematic archive. Rather, they convey the feel of an ongoing conversation amongst those with a stake in the heritage of the borough across issues and campaigns. Most of them exist in a micro-public sphere, predominantly in the borough, spreading out to greater London and occasionally into communities of interest in similar situations further afar.
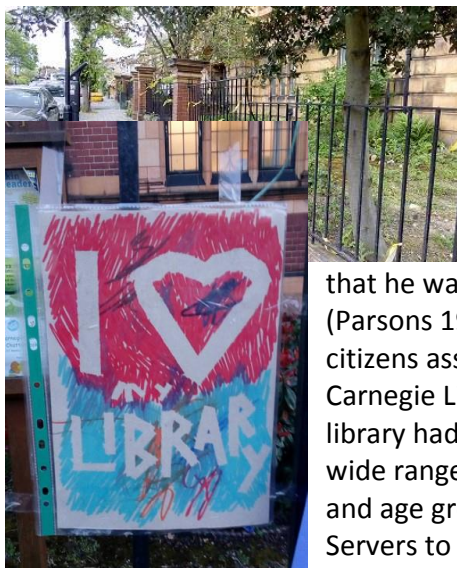
Save Brixton Arches Campaign. In 2015, traders in central Brixton Atlantic road were informed that that their tenancies would be terminated due to redevelopment of the railway arches where they operated from. It became clear that the landlord Network Rail aimed for more up-market shops after refurbishment. This led to an outpour of angry and emotional statements from customers and traders and gave rise to the campaign "Save Brixton Arches". The heart became the main symbol of the campaign, and was reproduced on posters, banners, T-shirts and on social media.

Orchestrated by street artist PINS, street artists created artworks on the shutters of the traders in support of the campaign. At the Portuguese-run "Continental Delicatessen" shop, the heart appears as a heart-shaped mouth. The heart also featured at the "Reclaim Brixton" protest/street party. Shaded, modelled, proactive or broken, it signals the emotional dimension of residents' relationship to the neighbourhood, which has for many grown over decades. It expresses the ensemble of built and intangible heritage in the neighbourhood. The campaign was successful in bringing to attention the price of gentrification, and in mobilising residents. However, many traders will not return after refurbishment, as they will not be able to afford future rents.

Carnegie Library Campaign. Since the closure of Carnegie library in March 2016 and the ensuing 10 day occupation by users, the building and its railings have been adorned with yellow ribbons, accompanied by notes on the value of libraries. The yellow ribbon goes back to a folk practice on loss, hope and loyalty Lovers and families of soldiers would mark a tree to signal to the homecoming soldier that he was still welcome (Parsons 1991). Supported by the citizens association "Friends of Carnegie Library", the public library had offered space for a wide range of self-managed social and age groups from Silver Servers to toddler groups. The

loss of this space significantly reduced the agency of users. 18 months after its closure, the building remains a focal point for its former users for gatherings, meetings and activities. To a degree, it seems to retain its function as a tool for community cohesion. Visually marking the building as a heritage under contention requires regular visits. In the scribbled, painted and printed notices left on the railings, the heart is used as a symbol of the close relationship between people and place. This relationship has built over years of active engagement. Besides pragmatic need for a public library, the emotional practices contribute to mobilise campaigners. Making claims on urban heritage involves the emotional and expressive dimension in combination with petitioning, demonstrating and designing policy.

Cressingham Gardens: Sanctum Ephemeral. Some campaigns have inspired long-term, funded art projects in their own right. This outdoor photo installation by Mark Aitken was shown in Cressingham Gardens Estate in 2017. The 1970s estate is awaiting demolition despite a sustained campaign by its residents. The project was funded by the arts council and part of the London Festival of Architecture. The installation consists of eight large photographic portraits of residents in their homes, installed on the brick walls of the estate. Additional portraits are published in a newspaper format. The artist lives on the estate and spent 18 months to develop the project together with the people who are portrayed. The exhibition addressed the subjective side of everyday life on this estate in a carefully composed visual language. The exhibition was not explicitly promoted as part of the campaign. Nevertheless, the photos added a calm, emotive and life-assuring perspective to residents' claims. By showing the photos on the estate, the connection between people, place and artwork was maintained.

b. Alternative planning initiatives

In some cases, stakeholders linked to campaigns have submitted alternative plans for redevelopment to the council. These plans demonstrate ways to deal with reduced funding for public services and social housing which are different from the Council's approach. They are enforcing, rather than minimising citizens' relationship to urban space. It could be argued that this approach is more heritage-oriented. It aims to preserve existing buildings and protect existing community ties, which are often linked to buildings and their functions. Much expertise, commitment and networking was mobilised to device these plans. The desire to save 'heritage' increased citizens agency. In this way, heritage, understood as a dynamic relationship between people and place, can be seen as contributing to urban development.

Lambeth Libraries Mutual. In its Culture 2020 program, the council announced reduction of its library services from ten to five 'town centre libraries'. Two of the

remaining buildings would be sold, the others were to become 'healthy living centres' and include small 'neighbourhood libraries' with a significantly reduced service. The aim was to make these buildings, some of them listed, financially independent by establishing other offers such as fitness centres through partnerships. The campaign "Defend the ten" responded with a "Lambeth Libraries and Archives Staff and Community Mutual" plan designed by the then head of Lambeth Library services (Barnes, 2015). This budgeted plan offered to ensure professional service in all libraries. It would preserve not only the integrity of the buildings as heritage, but also the intangible heritage of a practice to provide public access to knowledge in dedicated buildings under professional guidance. This was to be achieved by placing the libraries in mutual ownership of staff and community, thereby encouraging citizens agency. The plan was rejected as unaffordable without in-depth discussion.

Carnegie library was closed in March 2016 by the local council as part of the 2020 culture program. Plans are to replace the existing library by a healthy living centre with a

fitness centre as its main, potentially income-generating feature. A small, largely self-organised library will be housed in a side-room. This will be achieved by an asset transfer. Consultations found that the majority of library users is opposed to these changes. The citizen association "Friends of Carnegie Library" (in itself an expression of a heritage of civic self-organisation) is campaigning for preservation of the building as a fully serviced public library which crucially offers space for community-organised activities with some of the most vulnerable groups, thus contributing to community cohesion. They group has set up the Carnegie Library Association (CLA) to bid for asset transfer. In 2016, the CLA published a business plan, which states as an aim to retain Carnegie library as "a heritage building in active use". The set-up of the CLA demonstrates the importance of citizen agency. It is based on large community membership, democratically accountable and headed by elected trustees. The CLA claims to understand local needs based on long-term involvement with the library and its various user-groups. The CLA bid was rejected without in-depth discussion in favour of another trust.

Cressingham Gardens Estate was earmarked for demolition, although a consultation found that the majority of residents strongly opposed the plan. In addition to legal steps

and much campaigning, residents issued a "People's Plan" which proposed renovation and additional homes on the existing estate through a community-owned structure. It was argued that this would preserve the socially and ethnically mixed community which had grown in this architecturally pleasing estate. The plan was devised and supported by an impressive network of experts and stakeholders, including

Save British Heritage, English Heritage and the 20th Century Society. The plan was rejected without in-depth discussion.

c. Applying for listed building status

Historic England (formerly English Heritage) has listed over 1000 buildings in the Borough of Lambeth for special architectural or historic interest. Roughly a fifth of them is situated in Brixton. Additionally, Lambeth council has drawn up its own local heritage list. Heritage listing protects the architectural integrity of the buildings. However, it leaves the intangible heritage as lived by their users unprotected. For instance, three 1920s central Brixton markets (Reliance Arcade, Market Row and Granville Arcade, list entry Number: 1393881) were listed in March 2010, Granville Arcade was added to the English Heritage at Risk register in 2014. After rebranding as "Brixton Village", its architectural integrity remained intact. However, the character of the market shifted from providing cheap everyday goods to a destination providing up-market international food. In some cases, listing has been applied for by citizens, often organised in user groups or friends groups. The 2017 announcement that the temporary shopping venue Pop Brixton would become a world heritage site, however, turned out to be an April fools joke by local online magazine *Brixton Buzz.*

Carnegie Library (List entry Number: 1185521) was first listed in March 1981. It is situated in an exquisit purpose-built Victorian building which retains most of its original features. As the closure of the library approached, the Friends of Carnegie Library successfully applied to have the library registered as an asset of community valued. It appeared on the register on 13 January 2016.

Cressingham Gardens Estate, built in the 1970s, applied for listing on the Historic England list in 2013, when demolition was already on the horizon. The application was turned down in 2014, as the architectural quality did not meet the high standards for post-war buildings. However, inclusion in the neighbouring Brockwell park conservation area was strongly recommended.

Brixton Recreation Centre (List Entry Number: 1436440) was listed in 2016. Reasons were its importance as an example of socialist post-war public architecture and its importance to the Black community in both Brixton and Britain as a whole. The application was made by architects group Docomomo and strongly supported by the Brixton Rec Users Group (BRUG). Ideas to demolish the 1980s modernist building had been mentioned several times, listing was seen as a strategy to protect the building and the service it provides. It was hoped that listing would "ensure that any major changes proposed by the Council are more carefully managed and would have to be explained and justified publicly. Discussions over the application on the local online forum Urban75, raised its symbolic significance for Brixton against a background of regeneration:
-    „In a fast gentrifying area like Brixton the Rec symbolises a public space for all. An alternative way of regenerating an area."
-    „Many relate it to what is happening to the rest of Brixton. For many users the Rec represents a Brixton that is going (diverse and mixed for all) As one said the rest of Brixton will be just for `those with money` (once the arches have gone). Thats why they feel strongy about the Rec."
-    „It was designed as a social space not just for sports. I feel some of this use has been lost over the years."

- „The recreation centre is far far more than a building. It is the past, the present and future of what we want both London and Brixton to become. It's is a beacon of hope for human interaction."
- The original concept of a "Peoples Palace" works in practise. Its a very good example of how architecture can work as a political , not just practical, idea. Its stood the test of time.
- The architecture of the Rec is a democratic architecture. It works. It always surprises me the number of ordinary people who "get it" - of all ages/
- Listing is one part of trying to keep one corner of Brixton as a space for all.

However, members of the user group are aware that having the Recreation Centre listed "would not in itself guarantee its continued use as a community resource" and an affordable community asset.

IV. Towards a Heritage-Based Approach to Regeneration?

The Horizon 2020 working group claims that a heritage-led approach to regeneration generates social, cultural and economic benefits. At the same time, the group evaluates the exodus of existing residents due to gentrification as an "undesirable effect" of regeneration. Can a heritage-led approach pave the way towards a sustainable regeneration that respects and harnesses the lived experience of existing residents, while also attracting investment and increasing prosperity?

In the TRACES research, we found a deep split between citizen campaigns and the local council, which is the key policy maker for urban regeneration. The council uses both built and intangible heritage to promote the neighbourhood. However, its policies focus on conservation and upgrading of the built environment to attract investors and a more prosperous population. In contrast, citizen campaigns are driven by processual notion of heritage, including intangible heritage, which reproduces people's relationship to each other and the built environment. Campaigners proposals to maintain or improve public infrastructure are directed at preserving or rising living standards and wellbeing for both existing residents and newcomers. Further research could investigate more closely how the situated knowledge assembled in citizen campaigns could feed into a heritage-based approach to urban regeneration. The following issues could be highlighted:

Creativity is an important dimension of Brixton heritage. Street artists, musicians, photographers, film makers, sound systems, and theatres have commented on Brixton. Some projects are explicitly or implicitly linked to the current campaigns and the perceived threat to heritage posed by urban regeneration. It would be interesting to explore how they contribute to the transmission of Brixton's contentious heritage.

Community cohesion relies on heritage inscribed in social relations as well as the built environment. It is reproduced in citizen associations such as friends' groups, tenants' groups or user groups, neighbourhood networks, campaigns and workers' initiatives. Public facilities such as council estates, parks, sports centres or libraries provide a focus that attracts people from different social and cultural backgrounds, allowing for cross-fertilisation of heritage. Community cohesion is also reproduced in local street parties, specific entertainment venues or pubs. Free festivals such as the Lambeth country fair provide locations that strengthen community cohesion. These drivers of community cohesion are crucial in times of urban regeneration and cuts to public services. New

procedures need to be put in place to ensure that policy makers understand the complexity and benefits of heritage-based community cohesion and respond adequately.

Citizen Agency. Urban regeneration, combined with cuts to public services, can result in a loss of heritage and a sense of disempowerment. Citizen campaigns can restore agency in the process of campaigning for the protection of heritage, materialised in public infrastructure. These self-organised campaigns are creating new expert networks and generate new solutions for the challenges ahead, as demonstrated in the alternative planning initiatives. The plans also show an appetite for agency, as citizens set out to self-organise services. The level of participation offered in standard consultation exercises does not meet this appetite. Heritage-based urban regeneration projects would benefit from involving citizens as equal partners with specific knowledge.

Civic Pride. Brixton heritage has generated a specific, inclusive version of civic pride against the odds of a long-neglected and stigmatised neighbourhood. It encompasses people from different backgrounds, longstanding residents and newcomers. Urban regeneration can strengthen this, as was the case with the opening of the Black Cultural Archives heritage centre. However, it can also put it at risk, as the connection between people and place is broken. The closed doors of a public library, the eviction of local traders, the closure of familiar pubs and music venues, the demolition of housing estates, the cancelling of local festivals all lead to a sense of disempowerment, rather than heritage-based civil pride. Heritage-based urban regeneration would need to ensure that regeneration itself becomes a source of civic pride.

What can be achieved by looking at contentious cultural heritage through the lens of citizen campaigns in the context of urban regeneration? So far, the research in Brixton has shown that the contentious heritage of the British Empire has been transformed into a version of metropolitan heritage that is both multicultural and power-conscious, certainly not without conflict, but a source of civic pride for many residents. As to its transmission, it has been demonstrated that policy makers and citizens are promoting and transmitting different versions of heritage serving different interests and following different logics. For the question relating to a new European imagination, it has been shown that values, imagination and identity should not be separated from social struggles and policy-making. Especially urban regeneration, while highlighting some aspects of heritage, puts crucial dimensions such as community cohesion and citizen agency at risk. New approaches need to be found to ensure that the process of heritage, both as lived experience and in relation to the built environment, is sustained at times of rapid social change.

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campaign (p 8):
Social Cleansing in Progress. By Brixtonbuzz, 30.9.2015.
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