

**Transformation of spaces and places in  
inner cities: the case of gentrification in  
Brixton since the riot in 1981**

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I, Shuhei Okada, declare that the work contained this thesis is entirely more own.

Signed:

Date:



(Riot Not to Work Collective: 1982)

## Abstract

My concern is how gentrification has transformed the relationship between places and spaces in inner cities. Particularly, I would like to examine how the gentrification has transformed the streets, markets, as well as the public spaces in Brixton since the riot in the 1980s.

Since the riot in 1981, Brixton has become a target of gentrification, particularly due to damages and the departure of the previous Afro-Caribbean communities. However, unlike other inner cities of London, the gentrification of Brixton has gone down a different route, with ‘unsuccessful’ strategies that undermined the social and cultural symbolic places by the local communities throughout the whole of Brixton, while ‘successfully’ restructuring what remained as cultural capital in the centre.

To examine these issues, I would like to present four case studies of gentrification in Brixton, and how their symbolic places, both in the past and present, have been transformed particularly for the white middle class. First of all, I would like to argue with regards to the historical background of gentrification on Railton Road, which had famously been a cultural centre for the Afro-Caribbean communities by the mid-‘80s. However, the damages of the riot triggered its conversion into a residential area since the 1980s; because of its geographical location at the middle of Brixton, this street was easily transformed into a residential area that was more connected to the outer areas. Meanwhile, as I describe in the fifth chapter, Coldharbour Lane, because of its central location, had been sustained as a social

and cultural symbol of Brixton even after the riot; although, the meaning of its symbols were acquired differently through the emptiness of this community, and the cultural heritages in other parts of Brixton were merely collected here. This phenomenon along Coldharbour Lane also became linked to other gentrified areas later, when the emptiness of local spaces also justified their regenerations, as we shall see in the latest case of Brixton Village and its cultural representation for the white middle class in Chapter Seven. Through these processes, socially excluded groups in these symbolic places in the past were finally enclosed in Brixton Central Square, which justified the up-scaling of the whole of Brixton, as discussed in Chapter Eight. By examining the different backgrounds between these four case studies, I would like to conclude how places and spaces in Brixton are now going through the final process of gentrification, not for themselves but ‘without’ themselves.

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# Chapter One

## Introduction

### 1.1. Introduction

Throughout this dissertation, I explore how the social and cultural transformations of places and spaces have occurred in global inner cities, particularly regarding migrant culture in the gentrifications during the modern and postmodern periods. To examine this hypothesis, I've chosen Brixton as a research field, particularly the following four public spaces: Railton Road, Coldharbour Lane, Brixton Village and Brixton Central Square.

Before moving on to these four case studies, in the second chapter, I would like to introduce several relevant theories to explore the definitions of places and spaces through both modernism and postmodernism. The first half of this chapter consists of notable theories about place and space for the restructuring of time, such as those by Heidegger, Simmel, Lefebvre, de Certeau and Deleuze. Through these theories, particularly, I would like to critically analyse against 'place in the space' in modernity as both between and centre. In the other half of this chapter, I would like to examine those theories that are more related to gentrification, particularly theories by those such as Pierre Bourdieu and his argument regarding *field*, *habitus* and *capital*. It will also focus on inner cities for global migrants, by introducing these micro-spaces and their subsequent restructuring, such as of public spaces, through gentrification.

From the fourth chapter, I would like to examine these theories through the four case studies. In the beginning, I would like to argue with regards to the gentrification of Railton Road, which happened much earlier than those in the other parts of Brixton. Already during the period of the Brixton Riot (1981), gentrification began along this street, where the riot encouraged the further restructuring of these places and spaces. Through these processes, Railton Road is currently occupied by a substantial number of the white middle class, rather than the pre-existing Afro-Caribbeans. For the first time, it also triggered the transformation of other places and spaces in Brixton through gentrification, by exchanging their symbols through both micro- and macro-spatiality. I would like to introduce these historical backgrounds through theories, such as those related to the economic aspects of urban space between the outer and inner cities.

Significantly related to this case study, in the fifth chapter, I would like to argue with regards to the gentrification of Coldharbour Lane, particularly through a series of cultural representations by the *Brixton Challenge* in the mid-'90s. Unlike Railton Road, with a location at the periphery, Coldharbour Lane is exactly located at the centre, and it has also been a symbol of Brixton for a long time. The disappearance of the pre-existing Afro-Caribbean community, such as along Railton Road, significantly influenced the transformation of places and spaces on this street; however, rather than through its representation, through the cultural archives from the other parts of Brixton, as well as those related to other urban spaces. In particular, the economic restructuring of this street has occurred through the development of the built environment by the *Brixton Challenge* since the beginning of the '90s, dis-embedding many local venues from their local

communities. The symbolic representation of this street shows the cultural centralization of Brixton, alongside the continuous gentrification in other areas.

The latest case of gentrification in Brixton Village shows another perspective unlike that of the former Coldharbour Lane. Rather than gentrification by those such as the local authorities or government, this gentrification of Brixton Market has been conducted through the initiative of a third party, the *Space Makers Agency*. The emptiness of this indoor market, due to the unpopularity of the east side, provided opportunities for a more typical and much quicker way of gentrification. Through this process, bourgeois culture for the generalization of Brixton became more represented as aesthetic rather than authentic.

After examining these streets and market, at the end of the case studies, I would like to discuss the regeneration of Brixton Central Square from 2009-10. As I would also argue in the early chapters, the centralization of cultural capitals through the dis-embedding of the pre-existing communities consequently forced socially excluded groups to congregate in the public spaces of the Brixton centre, which negatively became a symbol, justifying previous provisional plans for regeneration. Finally, regeneration was launched in the last few years, featuring the connection of three parts of space, as well as the replacement and invention of old and new facilities. Due to the changes, the structure of users and activities was completely reversed, as I demonstrate through their movements and positions with my empirical research in this chapter. The result of this observation shows how the transformations of places and spaces in Brixton are currently going through the final stages of their up-scaling, even with regards to micro-spaces.

Through the four case studies, and their progression from one to another, the transformation of places and spaces in Brixton through gentrification could be concluded both historically and geographically. At the end of this doctoral thesis, I would first like to examine the centralization of the places and spaces of Brixton in relation to the gentrification of micro-spaces in other inner cities. Secondly, I would like to analyse the progress of the gentrification of Brixton in comparison between the early stages and the recent ones. Finally, I also would like to reflect on these case studies in theoretical issues that were introduced at the beginning of this dissertation, in order to explore the transformation of places and spaces through a more general perspective of gentrification.

## **1.2. Key terms and explanations**

Before starting to examine the main contents of this PhD thesis, I would like to introduce some key terms and their definitions.

### ***Place and space***

It has always been controversial to argue the distinction between ‘space’ and ‘place’ and their definitions. Nonetheless, some geographical researchers have already endeavoured to find the distinction, as well as the relationship between them. In particular, Yi-Fu Tuan’s (1977) *Space and place: the perspective of experience*, has made a significant impact on these comparative studies:

*Human beings require both space and place. Human lives are dialectical movements between shelter and venture, attachment and freedom...A healthy being welcomes constraint and freedom, the boundedness of place and exposure*

*of space.* (Tuan, 1977: 54)

However, this relationship between space and place often became reversed through modernity geography. The attachment of place through those constraints has been transformed as its geometry, where micro-space has been made by their boundaries. In this situation, space as borderless is becoming more of a clue for the restructuring of the geometries between places. In this paper, I would particularly like to refer to the concepts of 'place' and 'space' by de Certeau, who found more possibility for space as being 'outside' of place:

**In short, *space is a practical place.* Thus the street geometrically defined by urban planning is transformed into space by walkers. In the same way, an act of reading is the space produced by the practice of particular place: a written text, i.e. a place constituted by a system of signs. (de Certeau, 1988: 117)**

Following this idea, in this dissertation, I would like to further define 'place' as micro-space, as geometric, such as those for scientific knowledge but also economy. Conversely, I would like to define 'space' as more of a macro-space for places, to be restructured for its time-space, consisting of heterogeneities (see the literature review in the following part of this dissertation). Furthermore, the existence of social micro-spaces also depends on other geometric places, which symbolically represent the later place as collectiveness (see the second chapter on literature review).

**It runs clearly against the function that space be thought of as an emergent**

product of relations, including those relationships which establish boundaries, and where 'place' in consequence is necessary to meeting place, whether the 'difference' of a place must be conceptualized more in the ineffable sense of the constant emergent uniqueness out of (and within) the specific constellations of interrelations within which that place is set and of what is made of that constellation. (Massey, 2003: 68)

However, I am also aware that these places represented as geometry are not contained merely by their homogeneity through space as macro-spatiality. Rather, I also understand that many of these places are currently becoming complex, such as through the globalization of urban cities (Massey, 1994). Many micro-spaces similarly play a role as social space, which I am more likely to represent here as space, rather than place (see the relevant sections of the literature review).

Space...has been seen in distinction to place as realm without meaning—as a 'fact of life' which, like time, produces the basic coordinates for human life. When humans invest meaning in a portion of space and then become attached to it in some way (name is one such way) it becomes a place. Although this basic dualism of space and place runs through much of human geography since the 1970s, it is confused somewhat by the idea of social—or socially produced space—which, in many ways, plays the same role as place. (Cresswell, 2004:10; Lefebvre, 1991; Smith, 1984)

In recognition of either case, I'm also intending on the representation of these places as geometric, but also more towards representation as symbols. Conversely,

as described throughout this paper, I present the meaning of space as temporal, as well as practical, for restructuring these symbols through motionless places. Through these spaces, more subjective interaction between individuals can emerge beyond each place as the symbolic representation of their objective positions. I will explain this further using the term, *time-space*.

### ***Heterotopia and sea***

*Heterotopia* is Foucault and Miskowiec's (1986) term from their excellent work, *Others of space*. It is presumably said that micro-spaces for 'others' float in totalitarian spaces as macro. They can be reflected by imaginaries of those others, which however, also become part of their reality (Soja, 1990: 7). Particularly, Foucault referred to those spaces as 'a boat floating in the sea' (Foucault and Miskowiec 1986: 27) during the Western colonization, where those imaginations came to represent new continents through their mobility of space (see also the fourth chapter: the gentrification of Railton Road).

Thus, heterotopia as a boat and its relationship to the sea as the infinity of space can be emphasized. Although, I do not mention in the main contents, Deleuze and Guattari also captured the sea as smooth space against stratified space for modern societies:

The sea is perhaps principal among smooth spaces, the hydraulic model *par excellence*. But the sea is also smooth spaces, the first one attempts were made to striate, to transform into a dependency of the land, with its fixed routes, constant directions relative movements, a whole counterhydraulic of channels

and conduits... [T]he sea became the place of *fleet in being*, where one no longer from one point to another, rather holds space beginning from any point: instead of striating space, one occupies it within a s vector of deterritorialization in perpetual motion. This modern strategy was communicated from the sea to the air, as the new smooth space, but also to the entire Earth considered as desert or sea. (Deleuze, 1986: 61-62)

In the fourth chapter, I will argue with regards to the importance of this infinity of space as sea in the first case study: the gentrification of Railton Road. It can be significantly observed how this street was fixed by imaginary spatiality, losing its fluidity through its connection to areas in other parts of Brixton.

### *Bridge*

I intended to use the term, *bridge*, as 'between space'. This space possibly later became place as both middle and centre in space. The first location of bridge as middle was found by Martin Heidegger (1971: 145-161), as famously seen in his quotation below:

The bridge swings over the stream "with ease and power". It does not just connect banks that are already there. The banks emerge as banks only as the bridge crosses the stream. The bridge designedly causes them to lie across from each other. One side is set off against the other by the bridge. Nor do the banks stretch along the stream as indifferent border strip of the dry land. With the banks, the bridge brings to the stream the one and the other expanse of the landscape around the stream. The bridge gathers the earth as landscape around

**the stream. (Heidegger, 1971: 152)**

Although I do not intend to use this concept in the main contents, there is also another term of bridge by de Certeau. His idea of bridge is also close to that of Heidegger, and rather more radical and alternative. However, I don't use this idea in this paper, in order to avoid confusion over the distinction between these two scholars:

**The bridge is ambiguous everywhere: it alternatively welds together and opposes insularities. It distinguishes them and threatens them. It liberates from enclosure and destroys autonomy...It carries on double life innumerable memories of places and everyday legends, often summed up in proper names, hidden paradoxes, eclipses in stories, riddle to be solved: Bridgehead, Bridgenorth, Bridgetown, Bridgewater, Bridgman, Cambridge, Townbridge, etc. (de Certeau, 1984: 128)**

By contrast, gentrification is the latter case, through the transformation of the bridge, where its location shifts from between to the centre (see the third chapter: a literature review). But this also means that it dis-embeds from time-space. Consequently, bridges separate space into pieces, where they make spatial reality through its limitation, withdrawing from other spaces. This idea was similar to Simmel's (1997: 170-174) work, *Bridges and Door* (Harvey, 1996: 268) (see the fourth chapter of this thesis).

**The objects remained banished in the merciless separation of space: no particle**

of matter can share its space, with another and a real unity of diversity does not exist in spatial terms. And by the virtue of this equal demand on self-excluding concepts, natural existence seems to resist any application of them at all. (Simmel, 1997: 66)

In terms of this dis-embedding of micro-space from other spaces as reality, I would like to introduce the case of the gentrification of Coldharbour Lane.

### *Spatial Emptiness*

I would like to introduce this term *spatial emptiness* as more geographically cultural and social, rather than with regards to quantitative aspects. Since the modern space, the term ‘emptiness’ has been controversially used for space, both positively and negatively. McDonough introduced the two sides of spatial emptiness in the modern geography:

**Emptiness appears to represent a problematic category to pose to the social and cultural analysis of urban space and place, as study which usually focuses on a “fullness” of interactions, structures, and meanings. Indeed, emptiness as I am using it here remains as evocative category, a stimulus to rethinking conception of space rather than a classification from any urban culture. (McDonough, 1993: 3)**

As he described above, although emptiness has been negatively captured with regards to the opposite meaning of fullness as social science, this in turn gave opportunities to those spaces as their counter publics. In particular, the urban

spaces that were unused became the cultural providers for socially excluded groups in the postmodern period, as we can see in the development of hip-hop since the late '70s (see the arguments by Marshall Berman in Chapter Eight, and Conclusion). By referring to Peter Martin's citation, McDonough introduced this spatial emptiness as the power of urban marginality.

**We owe them (homeless), at least, a place to exist, a way to exist...A society needs its margins as much as it needs art and literature. It needs holes and gaps, 'breaching spaces' let us say, in which men and women escape and live, when necessary in ways otherwise denied them. Margins guarantee as society, a flexibility, an elasticity and allow it to accommodate itself to the nature and needs of its members. When margins vanish, society becomes too rigid, too oppressive by far and therefore inimical to life. (Martin, 1987: 49 cited in McDonough, 1993: 14)**

In particular, in the case of Brixton Village, the domination of spatial emptiness by socially excluded groups caused the restructuring of these micro-spaces (see Chapter Seven).

### ***Time-space***

I intend the term, *time-space* (Harvey, 1990: 284-295), to mean the space representing time, but apart from the past and future, rather than duration. Through the spatiality in the latter, time is merely accessed as the temporariness of space without its temporalization. It is presumed, for example, that Massey sought this time-space for her critique against time in modern space, as the

dissemination of 'a-temporal conceptual schema' (Massey, 2005: 44).

**On the one hand, certain kind of time must be classified as space. On the other hand, certain kinds of space (physical space in this instance) must be understood as temporal. In other words, the term 'space' is being mobilized here, not referring to anything we might understand as being positively spatial but rather than lack of (a particular definition of) temporality. (Massey, 2005: 42)**

The distinction of time-space from those of its compression (Harvey, 1990: 284-295) becomes important, as Derrida (1982: 9-15) called *spacing* for both spatial and temporal (Massey, 2005: 51). These spaces should be alternatively categorized as 'interval' space for becoming-time (Derrida, 1982: 8 - 13), separating those time-discourse dynamically from themselves. In this time-space, every present space - including those from the past (the present space in the past), and future (the present space in the future) - can restructure and represent their being as 'now' (Derrida, 1982: 13 - 34).

**[W]e will see, later, how this temporarization is also temporalization and spacing, the becoming-space of time, the ordinary constitution, of time and space, as metaphysics or transcendental phenomenology would say, to use the language that here is criticised and replaced. (Derrida, 1982:8)**

Massey (2005:44) also tried to find this definition of time-space, rather than as an aspect of temporal conceptual schema. It is also important to discuss the transformation of the space of Brixton in the postwar period, as well as other key

terms which are also related to their gentrifications afterwards (see Chapter Eight: the case of Brixton Central Square).

# Chapter Two

## Research Methodology

### 2.1. Research Methodology

My research method consisted of five basic aspects: 1) semi-structured interviews; 2) observations; 3) mapping; 4) photographing; and 5) archives, most of which are also related to ethnographic research. The period of research was conducted from September 2007 to August 2011. In particular, most of the research was done between September 2009 and May 2011. Some empirical photos came from the dissertation for my MA degree at Goldsmiths College, during the spring and summer of 2004. In this section, I will explain these methods and their effects on empirical research in the following four chapters.

#### 2.1.1. Railton Road

In the fourth chapter, Railton Road, I focused on archive photos (from the Department of Town Planning and myself) and documents. Moreover, this chapter specifically depended on articles from newspapers for historical analysis of events during the Brixton Riot in 1981.

In addition there were seven semi-structured interviews (see Appendix); each interview was conducted for between one and two hours. Half of the interviewees were long-term residents and the other half were entrepreneurs whose venues mostly opened after the gentrification of Railton Road. However most interviewees have been associated with Railton Road, as well as the other parts of Brixton, for

a long time; therefore, the equality of information before gentrification between both long-term residents and these entrepreneurs were relatively reliable.

Meanwhile, the limitation of these interviewees was also caused by the investigation into the current situation of Railton Road as a residential area. Although such interviews with people through gentrification were planned at the start of the research, there were difficulties in gaining access. There were no accessible new residents; thus, the research was mostly focused on historical background since the Brixton Riot. Consequently, the results of the research here depend on some nostalgic ideas of a few long-term residents and economic issues discussed by the owners of venues. The research was conducted from the autumn of 2008 to the summer of 2009.

This chapter has been consequently supported by documentary archives. Narrative factors (e.g. articles of newspapers regarding the Brixton Riot in 1981) are significant in this chapter. According to Burgess (1985: 192), who researched the riots and myths in Brixton, 'research concerned with the content and genesis of urban regional imaginary has already begun to consider media representation of place'. Similarly, Cresswell's (2001: 214-217; Cloke et al., 2004: 66-67) research on tramps in the US makes us realize how newspaper reports, magazine articles and photographs far from simply documenting the 'truth', actually play critical roles in constructing knowledge and were instrumental in the making of the tramp as a figure on the social-geographical margin of society. Conversely, examining these narratives gives us feedback as to the reality of the Brixton Riot, as well as other parts of Brixton before gentrification.

## 2.1. 2. Coldharbour Lane

In the chapter about Coldharbour Lane, because this is a business area and the purpose of the research is about gentrification through the *Brixton Challenge*, the research was more focused on statistics as well as procedural documents, such as those of the local authorities (London Borough of Lambeth, the *Brixton Challenge*). There were also semi-structured interviews with both local entrepreneurs and gentrifiers, who have been involved in the economy of this street in the past and recently. As the purpose for this political research, the other interviews were eliminated from these by particular people (such as Robert, who had been involved in the business of this street for more than ten years). However, the interview opportunities with these local entrepreneurs before gentrification had limitations compared to the later case study, Brixton Village. Many were often suspicious about doing interviews regarding their past experience. For instance, Louie (sp), the owner of the former *Atlantic*, was still living next to Robert's shop (see the Coldharbour Lane chapter); however, he had refused to give me an interview. According to Louie, an interview broadcasted by a Dutch TV company without permission made him sustain a silence about the history of the *Atlantic* (this was also caused by the background to its closure).

Although such rejections meant limited information regarding Coldharbour Lane, the rapport between the researcher and the researched was importantly sustained. According to Cloke et al. (2004: 157-158), the achievement of rapport is influenced by 'whether the location of the interview appears to reinforce the power either of the interviewer or the subject', and this can also be reversed if they are 'too much' adapted to the situation to interview due to a knowledge of their power. For

instance, another important informant in Coldharbour Lane, who ran a long-running barber, asked me for money in order to be interviewed, so that he could be interviewed instead of taking a job. He had 25 years' worth of knowledge about Coldharbour Lane, but I couldn't assume that he would willingly sit down and be interviewed by 'an authority figure when talking to subjects who have that kind of expectation about what their interviewer should like' (Cloke et al., 2004: 158; Walford, 1994). This is contrary to the case of Louie, as I mentioned before. Both cases show how, even if I interviewed them, levels of rapport would influence their attitudes in relation to suspicions of academic bias or doubt about an authority figure.

Moreover, as well as the interviews in the other chapters, the semi-structured interviews here were conducted with some questionnaires (about 30-40's) previously prepared. However, this overt way did not work well, and some of the interviews were later forced to change into more flexible way, to sustain the intersubjectivities of the interviews and avoid the researcher's bias.

Because most of the interviews in this chapter as well as Railton Road were done in the early period of the empirical research, the hypotheses suffered from a lack or previous field experience. A typical case is Robert (see Chapter Six), who was practically the first informant throughout the whole field research of this dissertation. A considerable number of the questions in the earlier part of the interview were simply denied by him (eg. the existence of the local communities and gentrification in Coldharbour Lane). His business background in Coldharbour Lane – without any grants from the *Brixton Challenge* – caused his emotional

detachment from the current Coldharbour Lane, and led him to deny any community existence and current (even before) gentrification. This is more clearly seen in the later case study – Brixton Village (see Samah and Burry's interviews in Chapter Seven).

According to Crang and Cook (2007: 69), given that the main aim of interviewing is to get people to recall what they know of events and activities, it is important to take an interview to get at the 'long stories'. It is not a good idea for researchers, when interviews start to go off at an apparent tangent to check-listed questions, to feel the urge to nip them off in the bud, because this is how unexpected perspectives and insights often become part of the conversation (Crang and Cook, 2007: 69; Katz, 2001). By assuming that the subject can make as much sense as the researcher, we can refuse the objective of capturing the other to recognise the power relations between researcher and researched, and the inter-subjective nature of interpretative, interview-based research process (Baxter and Eyles, 1997: 510; Pile, 1991: 467). Consequently, my questions in the interviews were converted into the definition of community in the beginning, and then, the gentrification in Coldharbour Lane itself as a secondary thread to agree with the informants.

Meanwhile, this caused emotional attachment to informants. Also, other interviews were conducted with long-running entrepreneurs; thus, the information pertaining to before gentrification was acceptable. However, those who had left at the peak of gentrification were not available for interviews. Consequently, it's important to note that those who agreed to interviews may have been biased, expressing a degree of nostalgia. Such field research was mostly conducted from

the spring of 2009 to the summer of 2010. As with Railton Road, there were ten interviewees (see Appendix), and the length of each interview was one to two hours. The photos were collected from the London Borough of Lambeth, *Urban 75* and myself.

Consequently, compared to the first empirical chapter on Railton Road, it was closer to general approaches to gentrification in the modern period. Alternatively, this chapter was more concerned with social practices through the change of venues resulting from these particular politics (especially the *Brixton Challenge*). According to Bourdieu (1977; Low, 2000), political endorsement is always reproduced in the reality of an individual life through the social practice. It was important to represent the social demography of Coldharbour Lane through changes in infrastructure, followed by several interviewees' accounts of their social practices.

### **2.1.3. Brixton Village**

As for Brixton Village, though similar to Coldharbour Lane, it was more focused on the gentrifier's side. There were also ten semi-structured interviews (see Appendix), and the length of each interview ranged from a half hour to two hours. In particular, compared to those in other chapters, interviews were conducted in depth, with both the planners and new entrepreneurs, on the gentrification of the east side of Brixton Village. There were also richer visual archives in the Brixton Village chapter that were used to compare the effects of the regeneration between the past and present. The past visual images were mostly collected from the Department of Town Planning, while the present images were taken by myself, as

well as from the website of the *Space Maker Agency*, a postcard of Brixton Village and a local newspaper.

According to Crang and Cook (2007: 104), the subject's photos and the researcher's photos can be used by their subjects to alter meanings; subjects in research can also be influential in photographs, as well as the subjects of those taken by researchers. Photographs such as postcards and magazine images in popular culture are shown not simply to be an existing discourse 'by foregrounding difference, hiding photographers and so forth' (Crang and Cook, 2007: 105; Stephan, 1995). Subjectivities in photographs can be represented, as Bourdieu (1990b: 19; Crang and Cook, 2007: 109-110) suggested, as less than expectation, 'stereotyped and less abandoned to the anarchy of individual intentions'.

The visual archives as well as the auto-photographs in this chapter were represented with the subjects altered by the existing visual archives and the photographs of my research. The nostalgia of some photographs of Brixton Village represented a victimized community of ethnic minorities contrasted against the present (including the photographs on web-pages, local newspapers and photocards after the *Space Maker Agency* arrived) (see Chapter Seven).

Meanwhile, my auto-photographs were purposefully used in relation to the contents of interviews, representing a victimized situation on the west side of Brixton Village and the glamorous culture of the new Brixton Village on the east side. Although photographs like those of the street preacher and the pop-up shop (see Figures 7.4 and 7.8 in Chapter Seven) were purposefully used to illustrate this

comparison, I believe the photos are not drastically different from the actual situation of Brixton Village. Rather, the photos show the absence of the subjects which I misconstrued in the beginning of the research.

For instance, the changes in Brixton Village were represented as the transformation of this avenue from emptiness to fullness, but it also realized the photo for lack of this observation: 'it happened in a short period, and at the same time between the east and west side'. So, the representation of subjects in photographing hasn't appeared in the reality; instead they have given me an opportunity to reconsider the lack of the process before taking a picture.

According to Crang and Cook (2007: 106; Hastrup, 1992), 'many autophotographic studies have focused purely on the content depicted in such photographs, however, and have come dangerously close to being "thin descriptions" of forms rather than thicker ones concerning the meaning invested in them by the subjects'. Although some images are accepted or constructed, other absences are not noted or remedied in photographs; however, they are still spoken in the tensions between their absences (Crang and Cook, 2007: 112). Moreover, photographing also takes the role of being 'embedded in particular space-time configurations of observation that complicate simple models of subject and object, representation and reality, image and process' (Crang, 1997: 366). It makes us realize how we need to think less regarding the production of places and more about places of production, where the separation of 'original' and 'copy' becomes more complex, without a clear ontological pre-eminence of the former term (Crang, 1997: 362). Although the two photographs were represented as the images between the richness of the middle class culture

on the east side and the downgrading of the working class culture on the west side, they still show the process between them through the lack of their realities. My photographs are an example of such tensions between the absences of subjects in the field.

Finally, even though the field research was planned for the whole of Brixton Village, this was not quite possible. It would have been important to compare results between the east side (where most entrepreneurs, both gentrifiers and non-gentrifiers, were established recently), and the relatively non-gentrified west side which is occupied by long-term local entrepreneurs. However, there was simply a lack of time to approach the west-side entrepreneurs, as they mostly had daily business. In turn, only by focusing on the east side in detail, the depth of interviews in the regeneration of Brixton Village could be limited in their representative abilities.

#### **2.1.4. Brixton Central Square**

Finally, in terms of the observational research in the case study of Brixton Central Square, I heavily depended on the method used by Setha Low's *On the Plaza* (2000). Although her research was conducted in a completely different place, San Jose in Costa Rica, her empirical approach through cultural understanding of the two public spaces in this capital city was quite similar to the purpose of my research, i.e. to explore new urban public spaces through gentrification, and thus her approach was useful (see also the introductory section to Chapter Seven). In particular, I conducted research using her overt method of ethnographic research: mapping people's movements and their social and cultural activities before 2008

and after 2010, in terms of the regeneration of Tate Garden, St. Matthew's Peace Garden and Windrush Square. I'm confident that the results, through these research methods, show how each of these public spaces in Brixton Central was differently as well as specifically consumed before the regeneration, compared to other areas, and how the spaces have become similar to each other after the regeneration in 2009-2010. In comparing these three gardens, I have achieved an understanding of the activities and interactions of different social and cultural groups. I realized their numbers, duration of stay and directions of movement. Especially since these public spaces have been predominantly consumed by 'socially deviant' groups, it is important to observe their activities, particularly regarding who tends to stay longer, and to interact more deeply than with those in other ordinary public spaces.

In the same chapter on Brixton Central Square, it is undeniable that there was a lack of information as well as explanation about these socially excluded groups. Although some of them have given sufficient information for my fieldwork, most of the others were reluctant to be interviewed regarding the complicated situations of their lives. To avoid using the power of knowledge as an academic and for my own safety in the same field of the previous research (a sociology course for my MA), I avoided contact with these people as much as possible. Consequently, my aim to completely join in as a member of the deviant groups in these public spaces was later forced to become more distant (which was also due to my inability to communicate by speaking English). Moreover, maps for the chapter on Brixton Central Square were not appropriate for other scientific research, because of my research limitations and the size of the field (being too big for one researcher).

Therefore, it is uncertain whether these quantitative results accurately represented reality on paper. For instance, there were often misunderstandings about the number of people passing through these public spaces, as well as their directions. Furthermore, the distinctive categorizations between socially excluded and ordinary people were also more subjective rather than objective.

In spite of these abstractions, I still believe the research results suggested certain tendencies and clues that are relevant to the analysis of the regeneration of these public spaces. I also decided to conduct informal interviews of some people at the beginning of the research. As well as providing general knowledge, the informants, having a long relationship within these fields, played an objective role, offering insight into their experience, instead of me making subjective assumptions. As well as interviews, these informants often contributed as 'gate keepers', opening up new leads for me to follow.

My observational research had been substantially forced to change from covert to a more overt method; however, I believe that this process in the beginning was not simply ineffective, but rather, it was quite useful to get to know those in the community, and to conduct my movement mapping in Brixton Central Square. Barker (1984: 31) claimed that participant observation is important for ethnography, in order to approach a true understanding of the setting. It is necessarily important for scholars to have an interactive stage, which is then followed by a passive stage and an active stage, in order to set up a natural environment with informants. I think my 'unsuccessful covert way' at the beginning of the field research was quite a good process from interactive to passive

stages to have with informants, helping to understand the argot (not only linguistically, but also socially and culturally) in their communities. Because of this unsuccessful process at the beginning, I believe that I was finally able to move on to my active process of mapping, which is presented in this thesis. The number of these semi-structured interviews is eight (see Appendix), and the length of each interview was an hour to two hours. The photos and maps were also collected from the London Borough of Lambeth, Gross Max and myself. The research was conducted in two terms (during the autumn of 2008, and from the autumn of 2010 to the winter of 2011), and informed by field research in 2004 that was conducted for my MA dissertation.

As mentioned above, in the whole of this chapter, observational basic quantitative methods were used to account for demographic change in three public spaces in Brixton Central, and interviews were rarely used. However, the changes between the three public spaces could be represented by their social practice beyond these boundaries (Low, 2000: 157-158). Thus, although it is the main purpose that this descriptive, quantitative research sought to account for changes in the social demography in these public spaces, it alternatively represents the ethnography through the observation of non-verbal aspects.

In terms of participant observation, Crang and Cook (2007: 37) claimed it 'should not be to separate its "subjective" and "objective" components, but to talk about it as a means of developing *intersubjective* understanding between researcher and researched'. Although my observational research was closer to overt than covert, because of the public spaces, the fields provided me with some participant

awareness of being ‘a part of them’. Setha Low (2000: 39-41) (see Chapter Eight of this dissertation) explained that her observations in two plazas of Costa Rica consisted of three stages - 1. Mappings 2. Documenting 3. Interactings - and the public spaces finally enabled her transformative engagements to have friends in these fields. Involvements in public spaces naturally invite ethnographers to transform the separation between subjective and objective components into a means of developing intersubjective understanding.

In my case, this was seen in Mark, the manager of *Brix's* (see Chapter Eight). The first encounter with him came during the mapping of St. Matthew's Peace Garden, where he wondered about my engagement in this public space. After explaining my research to him, he welcomingly invited me into his office at St. Matthew's Church. A similar situation resulted in Mario's photo (see Figure 8. 37 on Chapter Eight) in the new Tate Garden. After exchanging several greetings in this public space, I was able to photograph him during the mapping and interview him with my evolving understanding. The difficulties of ethnographic research in Brixton Central Square were able to be partially solved by these mappings, providing interexchangeable understandings with informants.

Meanwhile, this took me a long time, and resulted in Setha Low's observation of increasing interaction to be insufficiently developed here. It was caused by the mappings being only a part of my dissertation, and intersubjective understandings in these fields were also developed through the rest of the ethnographic research in other chapters (see Knox's interview in Chapter Eight).

### **2.1.5. Conclusion**

My research methods roughly consisted of four sets of methods in each of the four chapters – the archives in Railton Road, the documenting in Coldharbour Lane, the photographing in Brixton Village and the mappings in Brixton Central Square – apart from the similar construction of the semi-structured interview in each chapter. Consequently, my research was varied between the different chapters, which could be represented as an inconsistency (Crang and Cook, 2007: 11; Hedges, 1985; Miles and Crush, 1993; Pile, 1993) in the methods of this dissertation.

Arguably though, these varied research methods also revealed the spatial reality of Brixton, which became fragmented in various ways through gentrification. In *The Arcades Project*, Benjamin (1999: 3; Crang and Cook, 2007: 183 -184) famously noted the method of his project was an aim to ‘make things present is to present them in our space (not represent ourselves in their space)’, where the ‘juxtaposition of elements that were not normally found together, which thereby produced new irruptive truths’ (Crang and Cook, 2007: 183). Therefore, in the case of my dissertation, adaptation to the varied processes of gentrification in Brixton was possible through the impossibility of adapting only a single particular method.

### **2.2. Ethical issues, rapport and ethnography**

Although I have tried to reduce prejudice through the maintenance of my academic view, it is uncertain whether I could obtain rapport with my informants while keeping an appropriate distance from them at the same time. There were also limitations due to my lack of English proficiency. However, by trying to recognize my position as an outsider, I believe that I could objectively keep some social

distance from any person during my field work, accessing information, but with a minimum influence (Barker, 1984: 32). I believe that the impropriety of language in the fields did not interrupt any of my ethnographic research. According to Crang and Cook (2007: 44), while a researcher of a minority background is welcomingly accepted as one of these groups, other researchers from a white middle-class background are, in turn, represented as counterpart to the stereotypes among these informants. Ley's (1974; Cloke et al., 2004: 175) ethnographic research in the black inner city of Philadelphia was a typical case in that his British accent was accepted as other; he later admitted to his inability to obtain an insider's view through the field. However, Ley's research was fairly accepted by many others through its politics of representation of white myths of black representation in inner cities (Cloke et al., 2004: 174-175). Crang (1994: 687) is well aware that ethnographic field research through social classification such as nationality, race and employment launches a starting point in gauging what role informants themselves should play. This also affects working with and on other participants' conception of the encounter, as 'given of' rather than 'simply given' (Crang, 1994: 687; Goffman, 1963). This is also the concern of Jackson (1983: 41) when it comes to balancing the participant-observer spectrum, between confining it to the 'observer' end or 'going native' and reducing acuity. Thus, how ethnographers approach the balance between the insider's and outsider's view depends upon their purpose. In addition, Whyte (1955; Crang and Cook, 2007: 706) claimed that it is better than trying to sound too much like an 'insider', which may be incompatible with the role of a well-meaning 'outsider'. My mediated approach was thus meaningfully achieved with regards to Brixton's gentrification through spatial transformation, from participant's to observer's viewpoint.

According to Keith (1992: 554), the selective disclosure of 'self' is important to examine 'how the presentation of self (as researcher) necessarily activates power relations which in the final analysis will always give the academic author the final words'. In his research into an 'Other', the police service, the ethnographic status was mediated between 'critical distance' to the Deputy Assistant Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police introduced by the partner of his cousin and 'academic objectivity', by which he carefully chose the disclosure of 'self", clearly giving him both gains and losses (Keith, 1992: 553-554). Therefore, it is less important whether a researcher is closer to their insider or outsider status with informants; rather it is more important to balance the distance with the informants and assess how they were positively and negatively affected.

Furthermore, by introducing myself to the interviewees as well as other people, I never hid my academic status as a researcher. Although I did not mention the details (mostly, I just said that I was doing a dissertation about public spaces in Brixton for a PhD), most people seemed to recognize me as having a social status that was different from theirs. Although this sometimes destroyed the natural setting to some extent, I believe it was important to tell informants what I'm doing for their security, particularly with regards to socially excluded groups. I felt that it was necessary to tell informants that I was not looking towards them for these purposes, but I was a researcher apart from their individual lives, which also made me safe in the research field.

Ned Polsky (1967: 125-126) described in his book, *Beats and Others*, that it is important for an ethnographer dealing with informants to be completely open

about what he is doing, because they will probably soon accept the researcher for his different character, and the group members will then behave as usual even when he is among them. Although my research is not related to criminology, due to the similar situation to some extent, it was important to create a firm boundary with informants from the beginning, even at the cost of losing some of their rapport. I believe that by making them understand my specific position, it would enable me to be 'other', while also being among them. According to Jackson (1983: 39), human geographers tend to ignore the current ethnographic situation where they stand by predominantly adapting such anthropology and social methodological ways. At the same time, it is dangerous for human geographers to overly persist in independent identities as their own rights, since the notion of 'intersubjectivity' has already proved itself of exceptional interest to those geographers (Jackson, 1983: 44).

According to Parr (2000: 228), her research on the social geography of mental health in Nottingham was chosen by covert ethnographic research, despite its availability in an overt way; she insisted that the current ethnographic diaries as a form of human geographic collection are 'no more nor less "objective" or "subjective" than any other form brought back from the field' (Cook, 1997: 146; Parr, 2000: 228). Although she did not deny that all of the other data collections are a socially constructed and useful defense against criticism about the lack of 'objectivity', Parr (2000: 228) insisted the research diary was a form that was more deliberately used to observe, reveal, expose, reflect upon and interpret as a concerted effort to understand some of the social dynamics of a particular place. Likewise, despite my distinctive identity from the fields by overt methods, the

covert way was still necessary to contain ‘the (inter)subjectivities of others and myself’ (Parr, 2000: 228) within the social dynamic of this place.

I believe this stance could be supported by my overt position from the beginning of my ethnographic research. For instance, in the case of Chapter Seven, Brixton Central Square, when observing the people in these fields, I tried to position myself in the same locations, which were basically at the edge of these public spaces. They were unlikely to be popular, but gave me a good vantage and enabled me to observe the whole area. Although members of socially excluded groups noticed that I was not one of them, due to my activities of watching, mapping and writing about their daily activities, I believe it was useful to notify people of the boundary between them and me, through a visual aspect.

The case was similar regarding photographs and other visual materials. In this thesis, I used photographs for the analysis of the public and private spaces in Brixton. These were also useful when conducting interviews, in order to explain my interest to the interviewees. Meanwhile, as I explained my ethnographic approach, because my research is related to many different groups, I needed to be careful when I took a picture, particularly when taking a picture of individuals without permission; I intentionally did not take a picture of informants. To keep up a rapport with them, I thought it was important to avoid interrupting their activities, because for most of these people, public spaces in Brixton were close to a private space, in which they spent most of their daily lives. Thus, my photos were basically about the public space, which was occupied by unknown people, or empty, or occupied by a street entertainer using the public space officially. In addition,

even on these occasions, I did not spend a large amount of time on this work; these photos are merely supplementary information in my dissertation, and have never been central. Through the research, I have noticed how the approach through photography brings in the subjective view of the researcher in the fields, as opposed to an approach through observations or interviews. With photography, I could focus it more for my own purpose; at the same time, I felt more distance by the narrowing of sight, which made me unable to interact with informants further. Rose (2001: 192; Hall, 1980) suggested that although visual images (and indeed all cultural texts) were encoded in their production with preferred meaning – the imprint of ideology of the dominant cultural order – this meaning could be decoded in quite different terms by a specific audience. In other words, the appropriate use of photographs can only be sustainable within the negotiation between the researcher's approach and the audiences. Therefore, my photos have been merely used, when I had enough time to do so, during observation or interviews, and I tried not to destroy the natural setting and my objectivity in the field.

## Chapter Three

### Literature Review:

#### **Retransformation of places and spaces in modernity and the transformation of inner cities by gentrification**

The geographical background of gentrification has significantly been linked to the transformation of place and space. In particular, gentrified areas have economically contributed to their differentiation, from both other parts of urban space (such as the suburbs), and the surrounding inner city areas. This has consequently naturalized the up-scaling of these areas within their enclave with strong ties to outer cities and suburbs through the complexity of class division as well as geographical linkage. Alternatively, these gentrified areas as ‘dis-embedded’ (Giddens, 1990: 21-29) have fragmented their inner cities, destroying the social ties of the pre-existing communities throughout the whole area.

In this chapter I introduce geographical concepts of gentrification, place and space in modern and postmodern cities, and notions of becoming and being in the work of Heidegger and others. At the beginning, I would like to examine how gentrification in the past and at present has influenced of the two terms. I will also introduce how gentrification currently directs attention to its dynamic transformation by differentiation through micro-spatiality. Finally, I would like to focus more on contemporary gentrification in terms of global migrants in Western inner cities, and how their communities provide the richness of cultural capital, while the dis-embedding of their social capital from the surrounding areas was

later triggered with regards to aspects such as race and public space.

After outlining the broad field of gentrification I go on to consider the importance of the geographical tools of space and place in our understanding of gentrification processes. I then consider the work of philosophers and social theorists such as Heidegger, Simmel and Lefebvre – focussing in particular on the idea of the *bridge* and the more general notion of ‘becoming’.

After examining both classic and contemporary theories of place and space, I focus in particular on the gentrification of Brixton, in terms of the transformation of its place and spaces, introducing race in Brixton – with some notes on terminology.

### 3.1. Gentrification

**Once...the process of “gentrification” starts in a district it goes on rapidly until all or most of the original working class occupiers are displaced and the whole social character of the district is changed. (Glass, 1964: xviii)**

The citation above by Ruth Glass is well known, since the term ‘gentrification’ was born out of her research on the working class community in Islington during the 1960s (Smith, 1996: 33). Since then, many scholars have attempted to use this term, referring to those involved in the new middle class as ‘urban pioneers’ (Smith, 1996), whose areas were once those of the lower class.

The term ‘gentrification’ refers to the process whereby older, run-down, properties

in inner-city areas are bought up by middle-class incomers who are keen to live properly urban lives. The properties are bought at low market values (a result of years of lack of investment in inner-city areas), 'done-up' by the incomers and then become too-expensive for the previous residents to afford. Thus an area largely associated with less well-off people becomes exclusive and exclusionary. Explanations for this process first centred on political-economic explanations from a largely Marxist tradition. The key hypothesis was the 'rent-gap' idea proposed by Neil Smith and others. The 'rent-gap' refers to the difference between the value of a property at a moment in time and the value after it has been 'improved'. To a Marxist, such as Smith (1996: 51-74), the main driver of the gentrification process is the ability to produce profit in this way. Political-economic approaches to gentrification have remained important but other approaches have also been used. David Ley, for instance, has taken a more liberal view of the process, seeing gentrifiers as an educated avant-garde elite. In this view, cultural factors are added to economic ones as part of the explanation. Over time, more variables have been used when analysing gentrification. Gender, race and sexuality have all been invoked, as well as broadly 'cultural' processes of heritage preservation and urban aesthetics (Lees, Slater and Wyly, 2008: 99-112).

In the present day, unlike in Ruth's era in North London, the term 'gentrification' has been loaded with more social and cultural complexity due to international migration and its representation in inner cities within global capitalism. In this situation, the middle class's flow through current gentrification occurs not merely due to the economic recession of inner cities on the bounce, but also their new cultural representation as multi-cultural spaces. The inner city areas, such as

Brixton, are most often areas with high densities of black and Asian people. Gentrification most often involves an increase in the population of white people. So race and class are connected in complicated ways. Part of the 'appeal' of these areas for the white incomers is the image associated with multi-culturalism (the mirror of the 'white' image of suburbs for instance). Insistently, Neil Smith pointed out that the current internationalization of the U.S. is particularly represented by international migrants in their areas, which has given these citizens the realization of globalism at the local level, exemplified by Chinatowns in Western cities. These spaces for 'others' enable the largely white middle class natives to realize global culture on both national and urban scales (Smith, 1996:77). According to Anderson (1988: 208), racial/ethnic diversity is also accumulated as a resource for the restructuring of capitalism in these inner cities, where appearances are encoded in to a 'building block of recurrent production and accumulation cycles'. Soja (1980: 220) is also aware of this internal globalization with regards to capitalism for the city; but as more uneven relationships develop between the developed and undeveloped areas, this becomes a manifestation of both macro- and micro-spatial economies (Smith, 1996: 77).

According to economic theories, a new perspective of Chinatowns shows that globalization through cultural capitalism is now becoming transformed on a less urban scale, where ethnic communities are both economically and culturally restructured through their aesthetic representations, but as 'being less affluent', without pertaining their daily lives to any particular reality. This is what Jane Jacobs (1996: 160) discovered in Spitalfields, where the urban regeneration by the London Borough was imposed on the local Bengalis and their heritage industries,

'by essentialising the construction of their identity and the system of commodification in this area, where those people are still struggling to make a home space in a new nation'.

Related to this is the idea of the social field developed by Bourdieu and Wacquant (1992: 101), who also accepted how the current economy is restructured by disposition, determined by the uneven distribution of various forms of capitals (not just economic). Using Bourdieu's ideas in relation to gentrification it is possible to chart the interrelations of the economic, social and cultural. According to them, each field, each concept of capital - such as economic, social and cultural - has priorities over the others, though they have been persistently restructured (Painter, 2000: 245; Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992: 101):

**While each field has its own logic and its own hierarchy, the hierarchy that prevails among the different kinds of capital and the statistical link between the different types of assets tends to impose its own logic on the other fields. (Bourdieu, 1985: 724)**

As mentioned above, through gentrification, we are now seeing more unequal distribution of different capitals, where the powerful disposition of the economy has imposed the distribution of its own field over those of the cultural and social. Bourdieu never neglected to mention the less powerful capitals of other fields; unlike the white middle class, who can more equally access varied types of capitals, the other fields of marginalized groups are likely to be absorbed into economic capital. For instance, the gentrifiers coming to old industrial areas can gain their

prior position in the field of social capital much more easily, though the local working class are less favoured by the same field:

**[T]he same occupational continuum [is] identified repeatedly by Bourdieu within the dominant class, from a position of high cultural capital and low economic capital, through a position of lower cultural capital but high economic capital. (Ley, 2003: 2540)**

Thus, through gentrification, the social field for socially marginalized groups becomes a useful tool for the middle class, whose disposition in different fields are more seemingly dispersed throughout those other capitals (Jager, 1986: 83; Lees, Slater and Wyly, 207-214, and Chapter Five of this thesis). For instance, according to Florida (2002: 256; Brown, 2006: 132 and Chapter Seven of this dissertation), gay communities in U.S. cities have historically made other residents in the same area feel that their community is sustainably diverse, a place where everyone is welcome. However, Florida goes on to state that this perspective on the gay community later attracts cultural and ethnological entrepreneurs, where their field of social capital is covered and expanded for the necessity of the middle class. Consequently, the gay community's struggle through their dispositions in a heterosexual society becomes manifest for the restructuring of economic capital for macro-spatiality, such as through housing that open the flow of the suburban middle class.

Like Soja and Smith, Beauregard also claimed that the restructuring of the postmodern economy currently occurs via restructuring of modern spaces at

different geographical scales. In this sense, the gentrified areas for socially excluded groups in inner cities become a minimum structure at the urban level via economic restructuring:

**The notion of spatial scales, in turn, is reminiscent of the superstructure metaphor. Both divide the world into levels. Spatial scales nested: urban within the regional, the regional within the nation-state, the nation-state within the global, for example. The base-superstructure metaphor contains a parallel of formulation, the economy subsumes civil society, which contains the state, social relations, and culture, and these levels over arch ideology. (Beauregard, 1989: 221)**

In other words, the field of economic capital at the urban scale transcends other forms of capital as micro-structures, restructuring them into parts of expanded compositions beyond their own fields. In another case study, Butler and Robson (2001:2146) suggested how gentrified areas of South London are currently being restructured for the resource of their social capital, through the network of normative structures within the pre-existing community, which is able to differentiate the new middle class and recreate their powerful dispositions among varied ideals existing in the current urban situation. The field of social capital for the non-middle classes thus becomes a useful tool for gentrifiers, not only in the same field, but also for economic capital where social positions become more relational as a quantitative resource for the macro-economy.

As described earlier, Bourdieu introduced his sociality of space, where different

capitals can provide the subjectivism of fields in parallel, though they are never entirely excluded from the possibility of following the agents of other principles of division. He also notably introduced his social space as practical division, where ‘nothing classifies somebody, more than the way of he or she classifies’ (Bourdieu, 1989: 19). Bourdieu’s social space exists as multi-dimensional, where each field of capital is relatively autonomous, and these sub-spaces enable occupants in objective positions to be constantly engaged in struggles for different forms, in spite of the subordination of their function to the economic field for production. In the case of gay communities, these movements were realized through a series of ‘spatial settings’, such as networks of economic, social and cultural institutions, where each autonomous field was diversely used to reconstruct their social space for liberation and their own politics (Castells, 1983: 143).

However, again, current gentrification has inverted this situation; socially marginalized spaces were immediately restructured for a macro-economy beyond their immediate disposition. For instance, Lees, Slater and Wyly (2008: 118) pointed out that gentrification transformed from authentic to aesthetic, quickly appropriating manufactured and mass-produced kitsch, leading their cultural capital to become an economic space for higher-earning groups:

**Perhaps, the power of the loft habitus, and the gentrification aesthetic, is revealed in this quotation – the industrial part is romanticized (some would say erased), the building is somehow authentic, and that it has (presumably market) ‘potential’. (Lees, Slater and Wyly, 2008: 120-121)**

In the case of Brixton, Mavrommatis found the tactic of gentrification as the accumulation of its local character of social and cultural diversity rather than replacement of diversity, which we have seen in more classic studies of gentrification. Under these circumstances, lively local places like the market or street cultures of Brixton became more ‘theatricalized’, co-habitable with mass consumption, such as that displayed at *Argos*, *Sainsbury* and *WH Smith* in the surroundings (Mavrommatis, 2003: 127; see also the end of Chapter Five, on the gentrification of Railton Road):

**[P]rocess of aestheticization and consumption of locally accumulated diversity take place through theatricalization of ‘native’ urban life. At the same time, these instances of exemplification will be informed with contemporary theories of gentrification, cultural consumption and aestheticization of everyday life. (Mavrommatis, 2003: 136)**

Thus, through the equalization between social and cultural capitals, the dispositions of individuals through each field are never represented. Rather, they tended to be represented as an aesthetic relationship (Beauregard, 1989: 213; Williams, 1977: 75-82), where the pre-existing communities and new middle class could exist beside each other. As Massey (2003: 51) suggested, postmodern space has serious problems with the residual of temporality; its heterogeneity through internal coherence is endlessly conceived as relocation of the historical, where their difference is exactly the same. In this ‘degree-zero’ space, the relationship that thrived from the past is continuously sustained, because their dispositions here are already re-inscribed. Unlike Bourdieu’s term, *habitus*, the dispositions of

individuals beyond their subjectivities and objectivities merely represent the point as a negation of space (Derrida, 1982: 41-42), as the repetition of time.

These marginalized spaces in inner cities have never been 'empty' spaces for gentrification; such spaces were important for socially excluded groups, who had these micro-spaces for restructuring, as their social norms are forced out by the dominant group. There shouldn't be degree-zero spaces but evolutionary space in parallel, where the difference between the middle class and those of the past hegemony are still necessarily reconstructing, alongside the interaction with later groups, tending to sustain the 'same disposition' that previously came from this field.

It is clear overall that gentrification in postmodern inner cities became manifest through the expansion of the economic field for the middle class. It was also important for the middle class to trace socially excluded groups in the same aesthetic positions through cultural differentiation within the same field of economy (see the sixth chapter of this dissertation: the gentrification of Coldharbour Lane).

For example, Figure 8.9 in Chapter Eight of this thesis shows how the image of the Afro-Caribbean community has been represented through the provisional image of the new Brixton Central Square, using two black women in the centre of this public space. As I will mention later, of central significance for the regeneration of this square is the question of how to fit other social groups into an aesthetic position (Back and Quaade, 1993: 68), rather than the representation of

the middle class as gentrifiers, where they also gain a new *habitus*, i.e. social position within this economic field.

Returning to the argument, as Beauregard (1989; 218) described, economic space can work across many places, i.e. 'reverberate'. It is undeniable that social division now transcends the social and cultural fields through macro-geography, with their constitutions becoming independent from the unequal relationship between fields through macro-spatiality:

**Spatial differentiation... is not uneven development. Many of the spatial differences in activities, investment, and value, might simply be due to agglomeration effects and historical patternings, rather than the result of the actual interaction of places of different values and use. That is, uneven spatial development goes beyond a recognition of geographic unevenness to articulate the mutually supportive and generative relationship between places having uneven level of development. (Beauregard, 1989: 219)**

The regeneration of Brixton Central Square through cultural difference is an example of such a situation, through the agglomeration of their historical patterning for economic unevenness through a mutual relationship.

This is Bourdieu's (1989: 15) idea of class division for 'themselves', in contrast to that of Durkheim and Marx, who believed that human beings in society can be grasped objectively by logical instrumentals, categories and classifications. Bourdieu is also aware that these groupings are based on social structures through

space for capital distribution, which is more likely to be stable and durable, while the form of other groups are always under threat from fracture and linkage to the opposition in the distance of social space. It is now presumed that such other groups within Brixton are currently facing this threat through the splitting of their sub-spaces, while bringing the stability of capital distribution for the economic field, where they themselves become involved through the perception of a sense of place as limits and shared distance.

Consequently, through gentrification, a new location for these 'others' (Jacobs, 1996: 154; Babha, 1985: 156; 1994: 38) can be seen. These many locals are currently involved as main players, both as employers and customers (see Chapter Six on the gentrification of Coldharbour Lane). Nevertheless, their social position is isolated from the majority of the white middle class in the gentrified areas (Taylor, 1992: 102), which shows that they can no longer seem to locally access Brixton, 'conventionally' making themselves cosmopolitan through these particular places, a situation which can currently also be seen throughout London (see the end of the fifth chapter). Gilroy (2004: 167; Massey, 2007: 171) similarly claimed that these 'domestic' cosmopolitanisms currently operate a lively and assertive convivial culture, through the face of another narrative of post-melancholia, as the reinvention of their identity inscribed at the street level. As Smith (1982: 142; see also Chapter Six on the gentrification of Coldharbour Lane) described, one of the important effects of gentrification is capital movement on different scales, but through structures with similar spatial evenness. Now, many places, through gentrification in Brixton, cohere to this evenness:

**[C]apitalism attempts to seesaw from a developed to an undeveloped area, then at later point back to the first area which is now underdeveloped, and so forth. (Smith, 1984: 149)**

Smith also noted that such a situation is currently much clearer on a smaller geographic scale, particularly with gentrification, which he seems to be concerned with. This micro-spatiality in inner cities is currently more significant than others; once they were developed, they've retransformed those in the midst of activities. Having introduced this theory, it should be proper that the current tendency for movement from suburbs to gentrified areas does not interrogate any economic superiority over the former; rather, it temporarily means the reconfirmation of the latter on another spatial level. In other words, through gentrification, this spatial evenness was brought into a micro-space beyond the latter areas, through lower class people where the middle class flow used to be.

As mentioned earlier, like Smith, Beauregard (1989: 221) also noted this spatial restructuring for the economy, by dividing the city into two scales; presumably gentrified areas are nested by smaller spaces, subsuming unevenness as structures in a larger space. Gentrification, the most symbolic space for economic unevenness, subsumes macro-space for the middle class, extracting other classes. Similarly, the current black gentrifiers involved in these areas, significantly shows their subsumed status within this larger geographic scale. More than Smith's (1996: 88) notion, the see-saw game of spatial economy only passes unevenness to a different scale.

Furthermore, the transformation of this unevenness through the black communities for micro-spaces can be seen in different scales. Though the representation of black cultures in inner cities, such as Brixton, guarantees the up-scaling of the local Afro-Caribbean communities, the opportunity is quite limited to those of the middle class. As a result, black communities sustain not only a marginalized status in gentrified areas, but also the perspective of limited success within the macro-economy. In the next section, I would like to discuss this further regarding Brixton's Afro-Caribbean communities.

### **3.2. Generalization of gentrification and the unevenness of micro-space**

As I accounted for in the last section, gentrification in the modern period has contributed to the restructuring of inner cities, where the new middle class adapted these micro-spaces for their requirements, but through an uneven relationship with socially excluded groups.

However, in the postmodern period, the term 'gentrification' faces a more direct form of revanchism, where the previous communities no longer exist within these micro-spaces, even with a socially marginalized status. The transformation of social structure through gentrification happens much more quickly, and the previous status of gentrifiers and the ordinary middle class is no longer distinctive.

According to Smith (2006: 193), the term 'gentrification' has been transformed decade by decade, where each phase was characterised by its own role through the situation of urbanity. Take for example the case of gentrification in New York: The '60s was the first decade, when Ruth Glass also incidentally found class

transformations within the inner cities of London. The second phase occurred between the 1970s and 1980s, when gentrification became acknowledged as more of a spectrum over a wider urban phenomenon, such as the relationship between inner cities and suburbs. And thirdly, the final phase occurred from the '90s, which was a reconfirmation of the earlier pioneering periods.

In particular, this third wave of gentrification is a 're-gentrification' of those areas from the earlier periods (see also the chapter on Coldharbour Lane). The diffusion of gentrification could emerge from the earlier periods, where anti-gentrification movements triggered the real estate establishment in other parts of the urban centre.

Furthermore, there are notions such as Lees' (2008: 148; 2003; Butler and Lees, 2006) idea for 'super-gentrification' – not only a higher level of gentrification, but also one superimposed on already gentrified neighborhoods. This has caused 'classically' gentrified areas to be left as caves surrounded by these super-gentrified areas through the globalization of economy.

**[W]hen one neighborhood after another goes upscale and new residents are not just fixing up old houses and lofts but also moving into new built luxury condos and mom-and-pop stores are replaced by bank branches, trendy restaurants, and brand-name chains, we're looking at more than a single trend of gentrification. (Zukin, 2011: 9)**

According to Binnie (2006: 16), this new middle class seeks out spaces as more

notable for their homogeneity than their heterogeneity; 'in the city which is massively multiethnic, its middle class, despite long rhetorical flourishes in favor of multiculturalism and diversity, huddle together into essentially White settlements in the inner city' (Butler, 2003: 2469; Binnie, 2006: 16). As Rofe (2003: 2517) acknowledged, these groups tend to form 'occidental cultural enclaves' (Hannerz, 1992: 245; Rofe, 2003: 2517) imbued with a sense of cosmopolitanism derived from select global networks; if we look at the case of Brixton, Butler and Robson (2001: 2157) found the gentrification has contributed this 'tectonic' social structure which celebrates diversity in principle but leads to separate lives in practice.

According to Beauregard (1989: 219), in contrast to the growth of the formal economy in the outer boroughs, an informal economy in New York is still sustained by affluent neighbourhoods, closed to immigrants or blacks and Hispanics in the same areas. In turn, the low-income communities in non-gentrified areas become 'tenuous', only linking to the new neighbourhoods through a core economy (Beauregard, 1989: 219). This economic structure also affected the patterns of investment and the distribution of population across boroughs, which left these majorities behind.

Though the pre-existing black and Hispanic communities in the case of Beauregard's Manhattan, gentrification through incomers left different classes between the same social groups. Another case study of New York by Taylor (1992 and 2002; Lees, Slater and Wyly, 2008: 110-111, and Schaffer and Smith, 1986) remarkably pointed out how the black middle class from the suburbs, coming back

to Harlem, ironically paved the way for ‘accelerating’ gentrification, which was followed by the wealthier white middle class; this merely left the local black communities as unsuccessful, posing new friction within the same area (see the fifth chapter of this dissertation).

This was also the case with Brixton, where gentrification paved the way for the black middle class, but also caused the re-positioning of the indigenous population as being less affluent (Mavrommatis, 2003: 189). A new middle class thus emerges from both sides of the Afro-Caribbean community (the new middle class, and the local community) through gentrification, leaving the rest of the people as ‘practically’ less affluent.

Regarding the situation of Brixton, it is obvious that the new middle class emerged from the racial discourse beyond the past community, with the less affluent Afro-Caribbean as a majority. This brings economic benefit to the emergence of the middle class through the unevenness of space on a micro-scale.

Thus, it can be concluded that the gentrification of Brixton through the field of economic capital, contributes to spatial evenness in two ways: firstly, by a new aesthetic position of the black and white relationship; secondly, by the fact that this economic field never ‘covers up’ the whole space of Brixton, which can continuously bring economic benefit to the other space on a macro-scale. Thus, Smith’s argument of the see-saw game, can be illuminated as a micro-spatial issue: because one of the most important characteristics of gentrification is to make a gap of reality between the structural level of space, which is able to transcend the

micro-spatiality of horizontality through economic hierarchy.

### **3.3. Gentrification and public space**

While gentrification literature has tended to focus on housing and urban amenities such as shops and restaurants, public spaces in postmodern inner cities have also become iconic for the central argument of gentrification, in which social struggles have symbolically become sites for their citizens. For instance, according to Low's (2000: 128) plazas in Latin American cities, through contests around these public spaces, their built environments by local authorities later faced users' requirements for appropriation through their differentiation of public space as a homogenous concept.

However, Don Mitchell (1995: 115) interestingly contested these inscriptions of 'everyday practices' on public spaces through the appropriation of their lives in the postmodern period. According to him, the transformations of public spaces from 'representational' to 'of representation' (Mitchell, 1995: 124; Lefebvre, 1991: 245) reversed, where ongoing government and local authority practices enacted symbolic exclusion, such as of the homeless in skid row parks, while 're-contested' work on the interactions in these public spaces was sustained through the prevention of their existence. Here, public spaces are represented, which legitimates the publicity for socially excluded groups as a part, but only through their illegitimacy out of society:

**By being out of place, by doing private things in public space, homeless people threaten not just the space itself, but also the very ideal upon which we have**

**constructed our rather fragile notion of legitimate citizenship. Homeless people scare us: they threaten the ideological construction that declares that publicity – and action in public space – must be voluntary... (Mitchell, 2003:183)**

According to Low (2000: 50; Mitchell, 1995: 124), a series of instrumentations of public space reach out not only to their spatiality, but also to users whose daily lives are also activated by these spaces. Such arguments were followed by Bourdieu (1977) and Lefebvre's (1991: 373) notions of public spaces blurring the distinction between the subjectivity and objectivity of spatiality. In this sense, public spaces, such as skid row parks for the homeless, represent the social power relations in inner cities.

**As Pierre Bourdieu pointed out, built forms structure the world and naturalize our experience of it in ways that are not always open to challenge, unconsciously reproducing the power relations of the past...Examining origins and design of spatial forms, therefore provides insights into the discourse of power relations and the ongoing, site-specific struggles. (Low, 2000: 50)**

Mitchell (2003: 138) also discussed how the failure of these dead public spaces responded to the development of 'festive' spaces, which encouraged the consumption of inner cities in the U.S., such as through downtown and seaside marketplaces, gentrified districts and shopping malls. As he described, though the distinctions between 'dead' and 'festive' spaces seem to be different, both are, however, 'premised on a perceived need for order, surveillance and control over the behaviour of public' (2003: 138; Fyfe, 1998: 8); the fear of space brings other fears

through these spaces (Davis, 1998: 224). The context of anti-gentrification and homeless rights struggles such as in public space can be represented by this spatial difference as the most micro-scale, produced in and through societal activity which in turn produces and is produced by geographical structures of social interaction for the site of potentially intense political struggle (Smith, 1992: 62). Instead of these working class for the poor and unemployed, racial and ethnic minorities become reserved in public space as 'the terrain of the inner city' (Smith, 1996: 6) for 'gentrification from a comparatively marginal occupation in certain niche of the real estate industry to the cutting edge of urban change' (Smith, 1996: 8).

This has caused the symbolizing of contemporary public spaces through discourses of hatred in postmodern urbanity. According to Wyly and Hammel (2005: 21-22; Lees, Slater and Wyly, 2008: 226), increased visibility of the homeless in current public spaces becomes a turning point to justify 'the creation of new landscapes of wealth and privilege' in inner cities through gentrification. It connects the poor class with the 'material and rhetorical imperative of globalization' through a cleansing of public space, such as by the police and local enforcement (Lees, Slater and Wyly, 2008: 226; Mitchell, 1997: 309).

This idea is also reiterated by Mike Davis's fortress of publicity in the same downtown areas in the U.S., where socially excluded groups such as Latinos, blacks and the homeless are tactically enclosed and become symbols through surveillance by police and private security in particular areas of L.A. The enclosure of socially excluded groups results in these areas becoming a target for regeneration, allowing the white middle class to expand the built environment of the city, sustaining the

downtown of the past, but not through the articulation of these socially excluded groups in the present space (Mitchell, 2003: 186-187; Davis, 1990: 229). This was similarly seen in the central square of Brixton through the last few years, which I would discuss further at the end of this thesis. The current existence of the street drinkers, drug users and rough sleepers encouraged the local authority to regenerate this public space; the symbolic image of the new square, through the politics of left-wing liberalism, was extradited, such as through the relocation of Henry Tate's statue in the centre as a symbol of colonial legacy, aside the new representation of black history (Wells, 2007: 198). Using more cases of diverse groups with regards to gentrification, I explore this concept further in the later section: *Introducing race in Brixton – with some notes on terminology*.

### **3.4. Space and place**

So far, this chapter has considered various aspects of the literature on gentrification. At a higher level of abstraction there is a literature on space and place than needs to be outlined in order to make clear some of the interpretation of transformations in Brixton that I consider in the empirical chapters of this thesis. Sections 3.4 – 3.5 are thus focussed on space and place. The starting point for such a discussion is the distinction, from humanistic geography, of space as an abstract sense of extension while place is a lived focus of meaning and everyday life (Tuan, 1977; Cresswell, 2004). Work on place developed over time from seeing it in a romantic light as a point of security, attachment and authenticity (in the work of humanistic geographers) to a more critical perspective that sees place as necessarily exclusionary. We can see this in Brixton – as some people are able to construct places in their own image, others are excluded. More recent work by

Massey and others has argued for a 'progressive sense of place' that links the local to the wider, always temporal, world of 'space' beyond.

This binary of space and place has been made considerably more complicated by recent work on space which outlines a number of forms of space such as absolute space, relative space, relational space, lived space and third space (Lefebvre, 1991; Massey, 2005; Sack, 1980; Soja, 1996). Since the beginning of the last century, many spatial theorists have attempted the critique of space, which was previously used for the domination over time through its negation of temporality. In this sense, present space becomes a container for signs in paused time between the past and future. The idea of this present space is 'phantasmagorical' (Giddens, 1990: 19) between other times, which become geometric without the interaction of time-space.

Rather than seeing space as pure empty and abstract, it is important to reconsider existing space not only in relation to temporality, but also in terms of the past and future for heterogeneity. Heidegger chose micro-spatiality as a particular location for his *Dasein*, where the present space emerges by temporalizing itself between the past and future:

**Just as the Present arises in the unity of the temporalizing of temporality out of future and having been, the horizon of a Present temporalizes itself equiprimordially with those of the future and of having been. In so far as Dasein temporalizes itself with regards to its Being as temporality, Dasein is essentially 'in world'. (1962: 417)**

Following this idea, he also introduced another term, the *bridge*, as a topological place, where this time-space is still possibly represented before collectedness in totalitarian space:

**But the bridge, if it is a true bridge, is never first of all a mere bridge and then afterward a symbol. And just as little is the bridge in the first place exclusively a symbol, in the sense that it expresses something that strictly speaking does not belong to it. (Heidegger, 1971:151)**

However, the *bridge*, Heidegger's place for time-space, still does not seem to be enough to avoid the compression of time through present space. Derrida criticised Heidegger's place as present rather than 'now', which still excludes the space from time as affected by the past and future:

**[T]ime is defined according to its relation to an elementary part, the now, which itself is affected – as if it were not already temporal – by a time which negates it in determining it as a past now or a future now The *nun* ('now' in the Ancient Greek), the element of time, in this sense is not in itself temporal. It is temporal only in becoming temporal that is, in ceasing to be, in passing over to nothingness in the form of being-past or being future. (Derrida, 1982: 40)**

Following Derrida's critique above, scholars, such as de Certeau (1988), Deleuze (1986 and 1987), and Lefebvre (1991), have developed new perspectives of space for new forms of temporality, which represents the present space externally rather than internally. In doing so, for example, Lefebvre suggested that space must not

be interrupted by any internal frames, and should rather be disconnected in its purity as wholeness through differentiation:

**Space conceived of in its 'purity'...has neither component of parts nor form. Its parts are indiscernible, in which respect it closely resembles 'pure' identity – itself empty because of its 'purely' formal character. Before any determination can exist here, some content must come into play. (Lefebvre, 1991: 297)**

However, through these notions, the possibility of micro-space, as Heidegger described it, is still an important argument for this frame, which is also a clue to the restructuring of time, existing like the other parts in space. As Massey (1994: 155) has shown, the current city as a sense of place still restructures the locality under globalization; these micro-spaces are extensional over their internal effects, which perpetually consist of their uniqueness of locality. This is quite similar to how Cresswell questioned the definition of place as 'an organized world of meaning' (Cresswell, 2001: 15; Tuan, 1977: 179); senses of place would not be able to provide modern man with moral coordinates in a world as process. It was also the caution by Giddens; it is important to stress the distinction between the two notions: space and place, which 'are often used more or less synonymous with one another' (1991: 18). Place is 'best conceptualized by the means of the idea of locale, which refers to the physical setting of social activity as situated geographically' (Giddens, 1991: 18), while 'in pre-modern societies, space and place largely coincide, since spatial dimension of social life are, for the most of population, and in most respects, dominated by "presence" – by localized activities' (Giddens, 1991: 18). For instance, Kolb (2008: 95) called the accounts of the social spaces by Lefebvre exaggerated

holistic larger space as revolutionary intent, which dominates local areas, painting 'a totalizing picture that misses the complexity and linkage of local places'. Here, as elsewhere, space and place are played against each other. Places emerge (as centres of meaning) within larger spatial realms. In the language of Lefebvre, place is 'social space'. In the language of de Certeau the humanistic understanding of space and place is reversed so that space is social and rich while place is empty and abstract. His use of the term place is closer to Anglophone uses of the term 'location' (de Certeau: 1988).

### **3.5. A sense of place: the distance between social spaces**

A variety of scholars attempted the compression of time into space in the modern period, where they sought the possibility of space, such as through the restructuring of social distance between them. It is here that I want to introduce Heidegger's notion of the bridge. Heidegger's idea of the *bridge* is a place located in 'between', rather than in the centre, because this stream in space potentially becomes a place for 'being':

**[T]hat now means: a 'where' in whose squares and alleys the uncanny shines explicitly and the essence of Being comes to presence in an eminent sense.  
(Heidegger, 1992: 117)**

In this sense, he recognized the definition of place as a flow in the uncertainty of space, rather than as a position in fixed space. This is a significant point that distinguishes his meaning of 'place' from those of other researchers from the same period. Particularly, for Heidegger, place is unnecessarily positioned in the centre,

which should be more homogeneously isolated from the rest of space; these ideas are also stated by those such as Lefebvre (1991) and Bourdieu (1985 and 1989) with regards to the sociality of dispersed space. Following these assertions, problems arise out of the realization of nearness and remoteness (Bourdieu, 1990a: 137), which define space through its centralization:

**Nearness, it seems, cannot be encountered directly. We succeed in reaching it rather by attending to what is near. Near to us are what we usually call things. But what is a thing? (Heidegger, 1971: 166)**

Therefore, for Heidegger, things could be represented in place only by nearness, where they've not been accessed before being experienced as measurable. Bourdieu (1985: 728) also pointed out that this realization of remoteness can't exist in his sense of place before its transformation into spaces as measurable. For Bourdieu, things are close to each other in places; therefore, it is important for them to exist in-between external spaces. In other words, a place must exist in these reduced spaces as non-measurable:

**The difficulty of combining the existential and naturalistic views reflects the underlying polarity is the increase the distance between the subjective and the objective in our understanding of place...A distinguishing feature of the modern version of this polarity is the increased "distance" between the subjective and the objective views. (Entrikin, 1991: 7)**

This is significant in considering how a sense of place should be properly located

in postmodern space. Because, without this betweenness, the whole spatiality becomes 'being' beyond its representation:

**A boundary is not that at which something stops but, as the Greeks recognized the boundary is that from which something begins its presenting. (Heidegger, 1971:152)**

Nevertheless, there should be a critique of this sense of place, which is also introduced by Bourdieu, with another term, *social space* (Bourdieu, 1989; 1985). Unlike that of Heidegger, Bourdieu's space, based on Goffman's (Bourdieu, 1985: 728; 1989: 17), has a more structural basis, in which space is composed of different purposes – economic, social and cultural. He controversially introduced the idea of social space as the distance between these different capitals and as reducible in physical space:

**Spatial distance – on paper – coincides with social distances. Such is not real space. It is true that one can observe almost everywhere a tendency toward spatial segregation, people who are very distant from each other in social space can encounter one another and interact, if only briefly intermediately, in physical space. (Bourdieu, 1989: 16)**

Bourdieu (1985: 728) also introduced this social space, composed of 'what one can nor cannot permit, with a tacit acceptance...as limits, distances and amounts to share, which are marked, kept as respect or expectations'. To him, through these spatial limitations, the objectivities of the social world are, in turn, followed by

politically proper action, with indeterminacy and fuzziness, with a practical, reflexive and implicit scheme of perception applied. Through this sense of place, knowledge of the social world and its categories are possibly made into ‘inextricably’ theoretical and political struggles for power, by conserving and transforming these perceived categories (Bourdieu, 1985: 729; the emphasis is added by the author).

In doing so, furthermore, Bourdieu introduced the idea of *field*, which can determine different activities through these capitals in social space. This idea is quite different from the same term of social space by Lefebvre, which is captured more by physical geographic scale (1991: 402), rather than reduced and induced space in modernity (1991: 250). This seems to be the reason why Bourdieu needed to introduce another term, *habitus*, to bury his narrower sense of space within the gap between *field* and social space (Jenkins, 1992: 39):

**By constructivism, I mean that there is a twofold social genesis, the one hand of the scheme of perception, thought, and action which are constitutive of what I call *habitus*, and on the other hand of social structures, and particularly of what I call *fields* and of groups, notably those we ordinarily call social classes...[A]n analysis of locations in the space of positions of power – what I called the field of power...(Bourdieu, 1989: 14-19)**

Through gentrification, this idea of *habitus*, of ‘the field of power’ (Bourdieu, 1989: 16), has been tactically transcribed into micro-space through dispositions of a social structural basis. Ley (2003: 2531) discussed how Bourdieu’s idea of social space allowed an explanation of the emergence of the petit bourgeois in the ‘60s

and early '70s in France, in his remarkable work, *Distinction* (1984), and its later extension, *The Field of cultural production* (1993), through their dispositions of cultural capital. Their aesthetic position for rootedness as the middle class has contributed to cultural capital in gentrified areas such as in Canada (Ley, 2003: 2533):

**Not only, the appropriation of high levels of cultural capital, but also the discipline and achievement of learning an aesthetic disposition, identify artists as members of the middle class. Correlation of the location of artists in Canadian cities in the 1970s identified them as overlapping with the residential areas of higher socioeconomic status, if sometimes on their margins whose gentility has become frayed at the edges. (Ley, 2003: 2553)**

Thus, through gentrification, the reverse of place from modernism to postmodernism – its location from 'between' to 'centre' – has shown separation between time (place) and space. In particular, in gentrified areas, such as inner cities, micro-spaces that make these 'places in space' caused their aesthetic representation to be apart from the reality of the surrounding grassroots. In turn, this also caused the necessities of these spaces to be marginalized by the centralization of places, restructuring them into new places as 'between'. This is also the counter notion against Heidegger's withdrawal into phenomenological place by Lefebvre, who sought to produce alternative and more humane spaces and places (Harvey, 2009: 184). As Harvey (1996: 297) suggested, time-space around the 1970s is its restructuring from 'place as the locus of the community' (Harvey, 1996: 310) to 'power of place' (Harvey, 2009: 198; 1996: 320); if place becomes for

power, then space becomes a clue as to how to escape it (Reynolds, 1998: 344). According to Massey (1996: 264-269), the most important key factor to solve the argument about the space in postmodernity is its joint constitution as both spatial and temporal; the one has been thought as its dislocation, and the other as chaotic multiplicity. The both are contradicted in the same time; and the reconstitution to 'an alternative view of space' through the time-space in the margin becomes important.

### 3.6. The *Bridge* as place: from being to becoming

**[T]he bridge indicates how humankind unifies the separatedness of merely natural being, and the door how it separates the uniform, continuous unity of natural being. (Simmel, 1950: 402-403)**

Current gentrification in inner cities makes a significant contribution towards representing global economy, by 'dis-embedding' (Giddens, 1990: 21-29) particular micro-spaces from their surroundings and linking them more closely to other areas over a distance. Certain areas have been more targeted for gentrification than others, where their micro-spatiality was readily transformed, in comparison to more homogenous areas. In particular, inner cities having social and cultural diversity are currently prevalently targeted for gentrification.

Meanwhile, such spaces have also been a medium for diverse groups to restructure the inner cities after their own identities. In turn, it is important for gentrifiers to retrace the structure of these micro-spaces into their own grid through

centralization into the macro-economy. The transformation of these spaces into new kinds of places becomes a useful tool for gentrification at the macro-economic level.

In this section, I further argue with regards to the idea of place as a *bridge* following Heidegger (1971), as well as with regards to other scholars such as Simmel (1950), de Certeau (1984), and Deleuze (1987). The term *bridge* is important for social space, where places can re-emerge from appropriate interaction over distance, becoming immanent rather than points crossing from one to another (Deleuze and Parnet, 1987: 31). A bridge which is suddenly built across a river transforms the space around it – making a connection where there was not one previously. It gathers space to make a place. Through this *bridge* as the betweenness of space geometric places are restructured into time-space, which enables time to ‘become’ apart from the past and future, and be fixed in the present space (Derrida, 1982: 8). This idea was also discussed by de Certeau (1988: 126-129), who claimed that the geometric knowledge between places becomes a trajectory through subjective experience in space. For him, the *bridge* is out of these places, while space is left between them. This concept of the *bridge* was similarly used by Heidegger, though his definitions of the terms were contested by other scholars.

**In short, space is practical place. Thus this street geometrically defined by urban planning is transformed into a space by walkers....Between these two determinations...the awakening of inert objects (...) which, emerging from their stability, transform the place where they lay motionless into the foreignness of**

**their own space. (de Certeau, 1988:117-118)**

Here de Certeau is underlining the importance of the way in which spaces are not achieved accomplishments but always in process – becoming. Deleuze and Parnet (1987: 35; Deleuze and Guattari, 1986: 121) also referred to this interactive betweenness as ‘and’, in which non-parallel evolution can emerge in space as ‘a line of flight’. Without any objective position of transformation, this consequently represents the heterochronous time as ‘becoming’, rather than the hegemonic notion of time as ‘being’, between the present space and the past and future (Derrida, 1982: 13).

The *bridge* was also recognized by Simmel (1997: 174), who was aware of it as the idea of place unifying human beings but separated by *doors*. For Simmel, although human beings exist in infinity through these *doors*, they are also kept in the continuity of this space as ‘natural being’. Through this immanent space, such individuals are strangers to each other.

**The unity of nearness and remoteness involved in every human relation is organized, in the phenomena of the stranger, in a way which may be most briefly formulated by saying that in the relationship to him, distance means that he, who is close by, is far, and strangeness means that he, who also is far, is actually near. For to be a stranger is naturally a very positive relation; it is a specific form of interaction. (Simmel, 1950: 402-403)**

The distance between spaces through alienation enables an existence not only on

the 'ground' but also 'above'. Above, spaces become as large as their physical geography, lifting those from the ground, each of which are now able to view themselves more vertically rather than horizontally. In this above, the distance between spaces is no longer quantitatively erased for the compression of time, but qualitatively restructured for the irreducible (Derrida, 1981: 94; Massey, 2005: 53). In these circumstances, the distance becomes more interactive in this practical space, transgressing the nearness or remoteness of physical spacing (Derrida, 1981: 92; 1982: 13; Massey, 2005: 51).

**With the objectivity of the stranger is connected, also, the phenomenon touched upon above, although it is chiefly (but not exclusively) true of the stranger who moves on. (Simmel, 1950: 404)**

The distance for this spacing is also seen through the work on *differance* by Derrida (1982: 3-27; 1981 and 1978; Massey, 2005 49-51), who also claimed the otherness of space for becoming and the 'temporalization of temporal space' (Derrida, 1982: 40). According to him, *differance* can also emerge from the otherness of present spaces, which makes the distance between them, inviting individuals in ever-changing social positions, whether they are similar or different from each other:

**When dealing with *difference (ts) (ds)*, a word that can be written with a final *ts* or final *ds*, as you will, whether it is a question of dissimilar otherness or of allegoric and potential otherness, an interval, a distance, *spacing*, must be produced between the elements other, and be produced with certain**

**perseverance and repetition. (Derrida, 1982: 8)**

And as mentioned before, the same *bridge* was also used by Heidegger (1971: 154-155; Harvey, 1996:268), but in a slightly different manner. He referred to it as ‘gathering’, which alludes more to connection rather than separation between spaces:

**With the banks, the bridge brings to the stream the one and the other expanse of the landscape lying behind them...The bridge gathers the earth as landscape around the stream. (Heidegger, 1971: 154-155)**

Though he emphasized the connection of the distance between spaces, Heidegger’s *bridge* never seemed to be solid. Here, individuals and things in space are more attached to each other, which are not framed by the *bridge*; instead, spaces become parts of themselves for *spacing* (Derrida, 1981 and 1982; Massey, 2005: 49-51). Derrida also shows how this connection makes the spaces surrounding the bridges limitless, rather than limited, in distance:

**Spacing designates nothing, nothing that is, ‘no presence at distance’; it is the index of an irreducible exterior, and at the same time of a movement, a displacement that indicates an irreducible alterity. (Derrida, 1981: 81)**

For Derrida, this distance for *spacing* is not measurable, because it, in itself, already limits space as real. According to the *Oxford Dictionary*, the verb *distance* means ‘to become, or to make somebody/something become, less involved or

connected with somebody/something' (the 7th edition, 2005). In this sense, as well as space, distance must also be restructured into a part of space as exterior.

Lefebvre also made claims for this irreducible space. Although in *The Production of Space* (1991), Lefebvre never mentioned the term *bridge*, he similarly argued for the possibility of the sociality of space, which should be expanded like the physical and sustained as a whole, in spite of distance, between certain places through their collective activities:

**The truth of space reveals what mental space and social space have in common – and consequently also the differences between them. There is no rift between the two, but there is distance. There is no confusion between them, they do have a common moment or element. (Lefebvre, 1991: 399)**

This quotation shows the reason why he repeatedly emphasized the transgression of his production of space, which enables it to transcend to another level, 'being neither space-as-sign nor an ensemble of sign related space' (Lefebvre, 1991: 402). This idea reflects Deleuze (1986), who also claimed 'nomad' space as 'a line of flight', composed above the points and nodes in the past and placeless below those in the future:

**While sedentary people use roads to 'parcel out closed people', nomadic trajectories 'distribute' people in open space. The nomad is never re-territorialized, unlike the migrant who slips back into the ordered space of arrival. (Deleuze and Guattari quoted in Cresswell 1997: 364)**

Such notions are important in the argument of gentrification, which was caused by the aftermath of the modern period and has been neglected by many scholars because the gentrification of inner cities in the postmodern period has emerged from the restructuring of modern space, whereby these time-spaces become re-transformed into a narrow sense of 'being' rather than 'becoming' (see also section 3.4).

According to Keith's (2008) research, for instance, the regeneration of the Thames Gateway in London represented this dichotomy between architectural modernity as 'being' and the reality of postmodernity as 'becoming'. Architectural place-making through modern urbanity – for Keith (2008: 80) as an ideal for 'being' for Heidegger – has caused these micro-spaces for 'the future of the past' (Keith, 2008: 78-79) to exist apart from the natural environments actually suffering from these effects. As Butler and Lees opposed to the idea of the super-gentrifying class as an emergent elite who 'projects its identity from the scale of the local on global' (Butler and Lees, 2006: 471; Rofe, 2003), the current elite gentrifiers are 'projecting a global identity onto the local' (Butler and Lees, 2006: 471) as place basis. May argued that politics of place identities in postmodernism consisted of two terms; "progressive sense of place', one within which, instead of closed, place is understood as the unique point of connection in a wider series of flows' (May, 1996: 195; Massey, 1991a; 1991b; 1992); but, as more possibility 'to the way in which such connections are imaged, and by whom, before automatically assuming that a global sense of place describes a more progressive identity politics' (May, 1996: 210-211).

### 3. 7. Postmodern inner cities: urban periphery for micro-spatiality

In the previous section, I focused on notions of becoming in relation to the idea of the *bridge*. In this section, I focus more on the actual situations in inner cities, where gentrification has occurred in order to show how a focus on ‘becoming spaces’ is useful – how places are made and unmade through processes of connection and disconnection – not unlike the banks of a river connected (or otherwise) by a bridge. First of all, I would like to introduce the restructuring of postmodern space by global migrants in inner cities. The spaces for global communities have become important to the restructuring of urban spaces and places since the advent of the postmodern period, as these communities make a sense of place within their nomadic and immanent space.

As mentioned earlier, Bourdieu (1990a: 137-138) suggested how nearness between individuals in the objectivity of space becomes, in turn, an opportunity for its remoteness through their subjectivity. In particular, inner cities in postmodernity become a minimum-scale as ‘the edge of urban reality’ (Lefebvre, 1996: 125; 1991: 373-374), a focal point for their indemnity to tackle the dominant society without any physical distance:

**Minimum-objective distance in social space can coincide with maximum subjective distance. This is partly because what is ‘closest’ presents the greatest threat to social identity, that is, difference. (Bourdieu, 1990a: 137)**

Thus, for Bourdieu (1990a: 138), the physical nearness that comes with division – such as class, race and gender – invited these objectivities to a destination for ‘the

last difference': subjective difference between themselves. For example, it is presumed that inner cities as urban peripheries have historically given the opportunity for these migrants to turn their objectivity to proximity, restructuring the remoteness between individuals in this space (Harvey, 1996: 100-104). This is contrasted with the dominant class in the urban centre, where their objective status is hidden by physical proximity, keeping other groups at a social distance, to maximize their economic profit through the contradictory negation of the physical (Bourdieu, 1989: 16).

Their remoteness in social distance, but physical nearness to the urban periphery, enables other groups to seek their own grids, because the social distance from the dominant space never properly benefited marginalized groups. Lefebvre typically saw this possibility of urban marginality in shanty towns in Latin American cities; he referred to it as 'forbidden' or 'guerrilla' (Lefebvre, 1991: 373) space, that which gave opportunity for the restructuring of the difference of marginalized groups into produced dispositions (Lefebvre, 1991: 250). This also seems to be Deleuze's conclusion regarding this urban periphery, where he found nomadic spaces, such as cultural autonomy for gangs. By encountering others through their own roots, within micro-spaces where their meeting each other becomes the bloc universe, these communities start to move, no longer belonging to anyone but everyone, in the sense of 'and' as the continuation of present space for becoming (Deleuze and Parnet, 1987: 9).

Modern inner cities for migrants have become a space for a series of arguments regarding socially excluded and peripheral groups; that space at the margin is re-

valuated for seeking to establish difference through the metaphorical longing for 'the formation of utopian communities in-far way land, migration' (Harvey, 1996: 230). Furthermore, these migrant groups have also attempted to construct their view throughout the whole urban realm, beyond the distinction between the centre and periphery. The proximity to dominant spatial discourse, and the sustaining of their connections indirectly rather than directly, has historically encouraged spatial politics that are neither objective nor subjective throughout urbanity. Once again, according to Lefebvre's (1991: 373) shanty towns in Latin America, their attempts through spontaneous architecture and planning were always subject to homogenization from dominant spaces, which sooner or later became obstacles for both sides between the margins and the centre of the city. However, these attempts have consequently made the spaces sustained as changeable, where these dualities were later necessarily restructured (Lefebvre, 1991: 374).

Such a case was seen in recent urban regeneration in Brown's (2006: 234) work in East London, where the gay communities historically existing in Spitalfields challenged their marginalization, through the fluidity of micro-spaces as a result of commodification. The restructuring of micro-spaces in marginal 'residuals' (Harvey, 1996: 104) was attempted by these socially excluded groups, now through the emergence of their total view beyond the distinction between the subjective and objective within the city. These groups' psychological distance from the dominant space, but physical nearness through the multiplicity of these macro-spaces, enabled them to have a total view throughout the whole city, through both inside and outside spaces. This effect was famously noted by Foucault and Miskowiec (1986) a few decades ago, with their idea of *heterotopia*, the third-

dimensional space in which colonies exert a 'mirror effect' on a global scale:

The mirror is, after all, a utopia, since it is a 'placeless place'. In the mirror, I see myself there where I am not, in an unreal, virtual space that opens up behind the surface; I am over there, there where I am not, a sort of shadow that gives my own visibility to myself, that enables me to see myself there where I am absent: such is the utopia of the mirror. But it is also a *heterotopia* in so far as 'the mirror does exist in reality', where it exerts a sort of counteraction on the position that I occupy. (Foucault and Miskowiec, 1986: 24; emphasis is added by the author)

According to Malpas (1999: 104), as Heidegger claimed, 'enclosing things in space' does not set themselves into the final determination, but opens up through their being; in other words, the collections with objective status in marginal urbanity bring their spaces from the present representation to another level for becoming. This is particularly important for socially excluded groups, who needed to restructure their marginalized positions in postmodern urbanity. While in the same postmodernity, this micro-space also has a problem caused by losing its own roots through openness. This is why Cresswell (2001: 15) cautioned against the reason for Heidegger's place with being, where the German philosopher 'was terrified by the speed and mobility of the modern world and chose, in theory at least, to retreat into a sense of rootedness in place'. If you explore further into the case of Brixton, the restructuring of the micro-space through isolation from the other parts of the city enabled this enclosure in the post-war period, and it now becomes a problem through its openness and reconnection through gentrification

(see Chapter Five of Railton Road).

As Ley (1996: 198-199) argued this ‘topography of meaning’ as heterotopia also caused an opposing effect by gentrification through its disclosure in the margin. This was also reminded to us by Butler and Lees (2006: 471; see also the section 3.2), where global identity through the recent gentrification is ‘rooted in what might be seen as rather place bound and traditional industries which have nevertheless managed to make themselves indispensable to new accumulation regimes’.

### **3.8. Introducing race in Brixton – with some notes on terminology**

As described in the previous sections, inner cities have been useful for the restructuring of micro urban spatiality, such as by international migrants, where their objective status has been previously transformed made marginal as ‘residual’ or ‘surplus’ (Harvey, 1996: 104). In particular, black migrants in Western inner cities are a significant phenomenon, where their struggles are still continuous with colonial discourse. Paul Gilroy (1993) noted, in his argument on the ‘Atlantic connection’, that the colonial experience of the black diaspora on board slave ships are the conditions par excellence for explaining their continuation in the host countries. The slave ships that travelled from Africa to the colonies, where the black diaspora experienced micro-spatiality, are closed but fluid spaces, open yet closed to the rest of the world at the same time (Gilroy, 1993: 16). According to Gilroy, this affected the repeated accumulation of their experiences in the American continent and Caribbean Islands, where a peculiar form of identification with these colonies emerged. Similarly, black migrants in modern inner cities were

continuously experimenting with attachments and detachments through their spaces in the host countries. Interestingly, Gilroy's argument was also seen in Foucault's heterotopia; this idea of spatiality was found in common usage, referring to the boat in the same colonial legacy (see the following chapter, the gentrification of Railton Road):

**Brothels and colonies are two extreme types of heterotopia, and if we think, after all, that the boat is a floating piece of space, a place without a place, that exists by itself, that is closed in on itself and at the same time is given over to the infinity of the sea. (Foucault, 1986: 27)**

Foucault demonstrates that the spatiality of colonies was not only negatively defined as closed through the imagination of Western imperialism, but also positively defined as open space for a separate reality (Foucault, 1986: 27). And controversially, the imaginations of black descendants were reflected into reality not only through the colonies, but also through their mother countries in Africa beyond the limitations of physical geography. This is also the instance that hooks (1984: i; 1990: 144-153; see also the following chapter on Railton Road) suggested regarding the southern U.S., which has represented Afro-Americans throughout its wholeness, containing both those at the margin and at the centre of American societies. Rather than existing peripherally, in this process, the imaginations of Afro-Americans could not be represented as reduced within, but as a reality that has expanded to dominate the space as a whole. In doing so, their identities in colonial or postcolonial cities were available as a great threat to social identity, through negation against their proximities (Bourdieu, 1990a: 137). Furthermore,

Lefebvre (1991: 250) revealed how 'spontaneous' difference emerges not from contradiction, but from parallelism in the same space:

**[N]either of the opposing images was constituted specifically against the other, in contradiction to it. Rather, the difference occurred spontaneously, which is what distinguishes produced difference from difference which is induced, and generally reduced. (Lefebvre, 1991: 250)**

It is typical, as with such cases, that the complexity of the identities of international migrants within their race, ethnicity, and nationality must also exist in postmodern inner cities. As Stuart Hall (1997: 57) notably claims in *Old and New Identities*, it is also necessary for these migrants to compose their political identity within the complexity of blackness, which historically has always been constructed. He also suggested how conceptions of blackness in a marginalized position can be negotiated with the fluidity of such terms beyond postmodern inner cities:

**That [Blackness] we are all complexly constructed through the different categories, of different antagonism, and these may have the effect of locating us socially in multiple positions of marginality and subordination, but which do not yet operate on us in exactly the same way. (ibid)**

In this sense, the difference of black identities in their countries, such as between the Caribbean Islands, becomes an important notion, giving an opportunity for new identities, as blackness that counters sameness.

Throughout this thesis, I intend to refer to their cultural identity with the broad term of 'Afro-Caribbean', which is a reference beyond the difference between Blacks, West Indians as well as Caribbeans. For instance, through the historical context of their status as post-war immigrants from former colonies, the term 'West Indians' can be more appropriately represented here, particularly for those of the first generation. Meanwhile, terms related to race and ethnicity are important for the second and third generations, who prefer to seek after difference as a notion of their national identity. Although I would like to use specific terms from occasion to occasion, to avoid confusion, in this paper, I generalize with the term 'Afro-Caribbean', which seems to be most appropriately used beyond the different generations in these communities.

This is also an important argument for black communities in inner cities and the different notion of their identities between those migrants in the post-war period and through phases of gentrification. In Chapter Five of this thesis, for instance, regarding Railton Road, the term 'Caribbean' or 'West Indian' was emphasized by interviewees; their quotations within these contexts typically showed their historical struggles as ones surrounding migration rather than gentrification through social status. Meanwhile, in Chapter Six, with the case of Coldharbour Lane, their usage of the term 'black' seemed to reflect the invention of counter publics and the struggles of these second and third generations against gentrification. Finally, in the latest case of gentrification in Brixton Village, addressed in Chapter Seven, this was no longer seen in their social and cultural awareness. Here, their heritage was more importantly described as ethnic culture (Caribbean), rather than identifications as nationality (Englishness) and race

(Black).

According to Hall (1997: 54), the racial awareness of the Caribbean occurred in 1970s Jamaica, where the notion of blackness was solidified through their cultural revolution, as typically seen in Rastafarianism, and, particularly, in the figure of Bob Marley. This was also inherited by youth migrants in the U.K. (Hall, 1997: 55), as the third generation came to a greater awareness of the complexity of the three different terms of Blackness, Englishness and the rootedness in their island (Hall, 1997: 59).

However, though this was positively described by Hall, gentrification later followed this differentiation. A more direct way of gentrification, such as through the housing of migration in the postwar period, complicated cultural terms in the later period. In particular, communities of migrants with working class status in the earlier period were tactically used for gentrification through their differentiation as having both insider and outsider status. For example, Monique Taylor's (1992: 102; 2002: 91; Lees, 2008: 110-111) awareness in Harlem, New York was a typical case of the Afro-American suburban middle class rejoining the inner cities, where their communities represented a very distinctive future between the white gentrifiers and the black working class, not only racially but also economically. These communities seem to be a useful tool for the social fragmentation in gentrified areas, where their ordinary regeneration later paved the way for the arrival of the white middle class.

This will be discussed further in the later chapters, in particular Railton Road,

Coldharbour Lane and Brixton Village. The former two case studies will focus on fragments of Afro-Caribbean communities between long-term residents and the newcomers after gentrification. This later transformed them by inviting the white middle class to the recent gentrification of Brixton Village, as detailed in the latter chapter. As Lees (2003: 2491) argued that the stage model of gentrification imagined super-gentrifiers as the end of point of its process, existing Afro-Caribbeans as heterotopic community in the earlier period of gentrification in Coldharbour Lane brought prediction of the 'future course of gentrification' (Lees, 2003: 2491) in Brixton Village.

As Smith (1996: 143) mentioned, Brixton since the 1980s is the site of the transformation 'from a riot-torn battle ground to a gentrified playground' (Grant, 1990: 56-57; 143). It has been caused by the justification passed to the next regeneration for more of the white middle class, but not balanced by equal numbers of people of Afro-Caribbean descent (Smith, 2002: 445). This was also argued in Smith's (2002: 445) other work concerning how gentrification strategy such as the liberalization of politics consisted of the concept that everyone based on racial equality apart from the reality of grassroots community in the previous periods.

From Chapter Five, I construct an argument regarding the relationships between the macro-micro spatiality of Brixton through four case studies. Firstly, I introduce the gentrification of Railton Road since the Brixton Riot in 1981, particularly in terms of its historical background. I then proceed on to more recent and micro-case studies.

## Chapter Four

### **The historical and geographical background of gentrification in Brixton**

It is impossible to assess the gentrification of Brixton without introducing the historical and geographical backgrounds to its spatiality. Before I go on to discuss four sites in the gentrification of Brixton, I here present the history of Brixton since the beginning of the last century. The contents of this introductory chapter contain those histories of demographic change, international migration, public spaces, industry, economy, enterprises, plans of regeneration and gentrification. These aspects also serve as an introductory section to the following chapters.

#### **4.1. The history of demographic change in Brixton**

Before the beginning of the last century, Brixton used to be suburban, a product of the suburbanization of South London, through the expansion of railways, as well as the completion of both Waterloo and Vauxhall Bridge during this period (Thorndycraft, 1976: 1). Most of the residents were from the wealthy middle class, who had professional jobs, such as professors, doctors and businessmen (ibid). Interestingly, many had experienced life in the colonial periods of the Caribbean Islands. For instance, it is interesting that Sir Henri Tate, an inventor of the sugar cube, used to live in Streatham Common, South Brixton, where his wife donated the Brixton Oval as a public garden (Piper, 2001: 10-11) (also see Figure 4.1). This is currently known as the Tate Garden, which became a part of Windrush Square in 2009 (see the section addressing public space and regeneration in this chapter).

However, during the evacuations that occurred over the two world wars, this situation gradually changed through the migration of those residents to the countryside, which caused a flow of population out of the city. Afterwards, the population of Brixton became increasingly represented by foreign immigrants.



**Figure 4. 1: The Brixton Oval at the end of the 19th century. Before being donated as a public garden, this ground used to be sheep pasture. (Burnham, 1890)**

In the 1950s, the majority of Brixton's middle classes had already left Brixton, and commonwealth migrants, such as Afro-Caribbeans, started to appear (see also the next section about the international migrants in Brixton).

Since the 1980s, alongside Afro-Caribbeans, the population of other immigrant groups, such as those from Latin American and European countries, has grown.

This shifted the social structure of Brixton from those of the African diaspora to that of a more diverse culture. Furthermore, the arrival of the middle classes, from not only UK but also from other European countries, has also significantly changed the social structure of Brixton since the '80s.

#### **4.2. The history of international migrants in Brixton**

Since the post-war era, migrants from the former colonial countries, such as the Caribbean Islands and Africa, have significantly changed the demographic profile of Brixton. However, the history of black migrants in Brixton goes much further back (Newman, 2002). Even during the slavery era in the mid-18th century, there were a few from the black population who came as servants; they came to Brixton through its suburbanization and the arrival of middle class families after the establishment of bridges over the Thames River. Moreover, in the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, some entertainers from the U.S. independently settled down in Britain; they sought more opportunities to work in theatres, such as in South London, in order to escape from American racial prejudice (Newman 2002: 46).

Nevertheless, the most significant period during which most of the Afro-Caribbean migrants settled down in Brixton was after the Second World War, and there were many reasons why they chose the areas around Brixton during the post-war period. This first phase was at the beginning of the 1950s, when many Afro-Caribbean men arrived in London without luggage or friends or relatives; they found the Clapham air-raid shelters, which they used as their temporary accommodation. These temporary homes were also found around the LCC (the London County Council) reception centre in Peckham, where they registered at the

*Brixton Employment Exchange*, before seeking jobs and finding permanent accommodation.

Another reason why the Afro-Caribbean migrants, during the post-war period, were attracted to Brixton was entertainment. According to Patterson (1963: 54), Brixton had long contained a large number of theatrical boarding houses around the *Empress Theatre*, Brighton Terrace. Even after the closure of the *Empress* in 1957, the landlords of those accommodations continued to accommodate entertainers, including a considerable number of black entertainers playing elsewhere in the West End. According to Thorndycraft (1976: 5), by 1948, there were already a number of boarding houses whose landladies had been accustomed to accommodating 'Coloured professional entertainers', and were therefore more willing to accept new immigrants in the later periods (Patterson, 1963: 54).

Moreover, even after this first phase, the poor housing conditions in South London, such as those dormitories for single men, had cheap rents compared to those in other areas; this encouraged the post-war migrants to settle down and find employment opportunities in this area near Central London. These areas around Brixton also had economic advantages for these post-war migrants, who were able to buy low-priced products, such as those sold in Brixton Market. In particular, Somerleyton Road and Geneva Road, in the southern part of Brixton, became the most visible areas for post-war migrants, particularly Afro-Caribbeans (see Figure 4.2). Later, they also moved southward (with a slight westward bias) up Hearn Hill and Tulse Hill, and even as far as South Norwood over the Croydon border; eastward to Peckham, East Dulwich, New Cross, and Deptford; and westward to

North Clapham and Battersea (Patterson, 1963: 55). Most housing in these areas was large, ugly, dilapidated, Victorian-structured, and semi-detached, with neglected and rubbish-strewn back gardens, which merely remained as they were until official housing programs disposed of them (Patterson, 1963: 215). For instance, the purchase of the freeholds of the whole areas of Somerleyton and Geneva Road was encouraged by Lambeth Council from the end of the 1950s, when the majority of Afro-Caribbeans needed to find new accommodation somewhere else. Ken Dixon, the author of *Brixton Memories*, described both streets in the 1960s, when he was working as a carpenter for the maintenance of the public housing in Lambeth Council:

West Indians sometimes clubbed together to buy a big house and paid one of their number who acted as the landlord. A lot of these were in Geneva and Somerleyton Roads, solid houses but getting crowded. In time, nearly all aging houses in these roads were taken over by the Council. I did a lot of work in these homes, like replacing rotten wood in floors, doors, windows and roofs. Huge sums were spent by the Council in re-roofing. But all these dwellings and those in Sussex Road were demolished to make way for the Moorland Estate. (Dixon, 1994: 17)

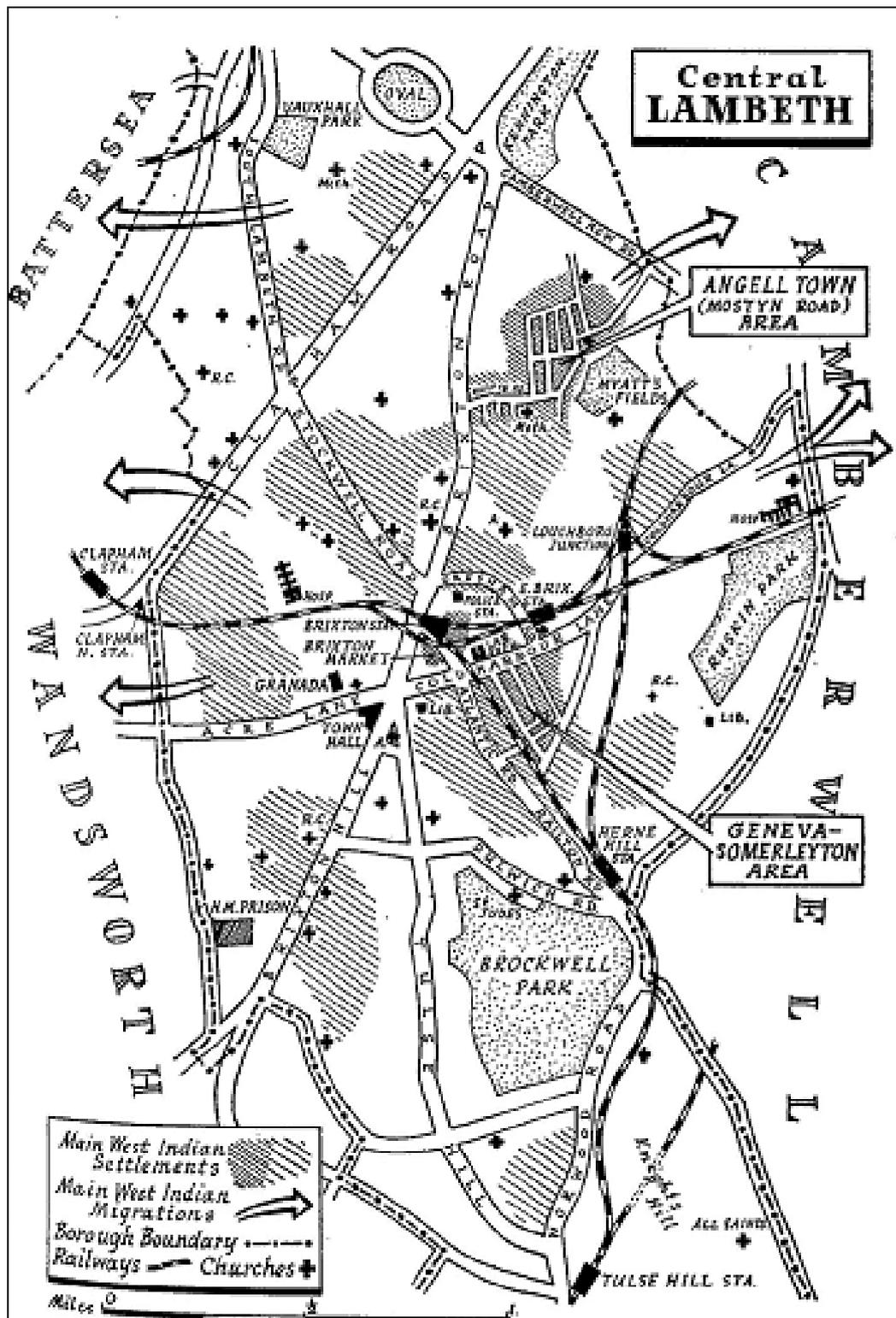


Figure 4. 2. The settlements of Afro-Caribbeans in Brixton during the post-war period (Patterson,1963: 12)

An example of this demolition occurred in 1966, when the local authority

encouraged the Afro-Caribbean families in Somerleyton to move to the properties around Railton Road. However, these houses were still large, old, and neglected, with poor conditions and overcrowding, though the demolition encouraged the properties in the previous area to become used for squatting and to fall into dereliction, which contributed further to the removal of the remaining Afro-Caribbeans along Somerleyton Road (Williamson, 2007: 22).

Meanwhile, through the replacement of Afro-Caribbeans in these high density areas, Railton Road notably became a centre for Afro-Caribbean communities by the 1970s. On this street, there was also a lot of housing, due to the neglect of the original buildings or wartime destruction, which many Afro-Caribbeans could afford. However, Lambeth Council also replaced the housing at the centre of the *Front Line*, sadly despite only minor damage from the Brixton Riot in 1981 (Piper, 2001: 73; see also Figure 4.3). The settlement and housing of Afro-Caribbean migrants are addressed in the following section.



Figure 4. 3: The small house in front of Marcus Garvey Way used to be the centre of the *Front Line* (on the top) during the 1970s. (Department of Town Planning, 1975a)

Following the Brixton Riot in 1981, the demographic change in Brixton was characterized by new immigrants, rather than those from the former colonial countries. Many of these new migrants were Africans, Latin Americans and East Europeans, such as the Polish. Moreover, since the '90s, the arrival of the middle class from other West European countries became more significant alongside the up-scaling of housing in the areas around Brixton. This flow has been significantly linked to the regeneration and gentrification of Brixton since the 1980s. In particular, these middle class Europeans, who were mostly involved in professional jobs, settled down in the southwest parts of Brixton, such the area around

Brockwell Park and Tulse Hill (Butler, 2001: 2156; 2003: 93).

### **4.3. Housing Policy**

The reason why many international migrants settled down in the areas around Brixton has been significantly decided by their housing preference. In addition, the housing policy enacted by Lambeth Council and the government has also influenced the cultural diversification of Brixton by the post-war immigrants, who more accessibly found their accommodations there.

As I mentioned earlier, before the World Wars, Brixton used to be part of the suburbs of outer London, and until the first half of the last century, Brixton was mainly a residential area for the middle class, who were mostly intellectual professionals, including doctors, professors, musicians, and other artists, as well as businessmen (Thorndycraft, 1976: 1; see also the first section about the demographic change); they are still part of the cultural richness of Brixton.

However, even during this period, the situation had already started to change. After the First World War, a change of social structure had begun to gradually take place, with the demographic movements of the middle class to newer suburbs, and their residential areas in Brixton being replaced by skilled workers, whose labour was required in Central London. However, even during this period, certain parts of Brixton were still considered to be a highly desirable residential area (Thorndycraft, 1976: 4).

This transformation of social structure was further encouraged over the following

period, during World War II. During this period, the middle class in Brixton were evacuated to avoid the bombs in South London, often selling their properties in this area. In turn, after the two world wars, there was a serious shortage of housing in the other parts of London that had suffered significant damage compared to Brixton, which was relatively unaffected by the bombs. Additionally, during the fifties and sixties, the properties in Brixton became footholds for those who were coming back to London from the services and evacuations in search of work (Piper, 1996: 78). They easily found accommodation in Brixton and often squatted in abandoned houses. Consequently, housing in Brixton has been continuously unrepaired since the Second World War, which later encouraged the low quality of housing in Brixton and its dilapidation, compared to other inner areas of London.

Another notable factor contributing to the low quality of housing in Brixton was its lack of rental houses compared to other parts of London. This was mainly caused by the rent control during the First World War, and since this period, privately rented housing in Brixton has slowly declined. This situation became worse by the 1950s, because housing in this area was no longer being built for rent, and the stock was declining, which caused the selling of the remaining privately rented houses and slum clearance by the local authority (Piper, 1996: 78). Among them, Brixton Central particularly has had the lowest quality of council housing in the Borough of Lambeth; these properties did not have enough facilities for families and were prone to overcrowding through their multiple uses. In some streets, the conditions of these properties terribly deteriorated to the point where the leaseholder no longer spent money on refurbishment (Piper, 1996: 78). In turn, these areas have had the largest proportion of Afro-Caribbean householders since

the post-war period (Scott, 1971: 18). For instance, according to Williamson (2007: 22), when the number of Afro-Caribbean families grew on Somerleyton Road in 1996, they were forced to move to the area around the railway lines in Railton Road. Most of these houses were large, old, and neglected, with some social problems, such as overcrowding tenancies and debt issues due to poor conditions. Meanwhile, this caused the emptying of housing in these areas, resulting in squatting and dereliction in the following period.

On the other hand, in the following few decades, the number of rental accommodations, such as those commissioned by the public sector, gradually increased in the areas around Brixton. Because of the housing shortage after the Second World War, the local authority rebuilt the areas damaged by bombs, which were mostly replaced by council housing, such as blocks of flats similar to those that can still be found in areas like Loughborough and Angel Town in the outer areas of the east side of Brixton (see Figure 4.4).

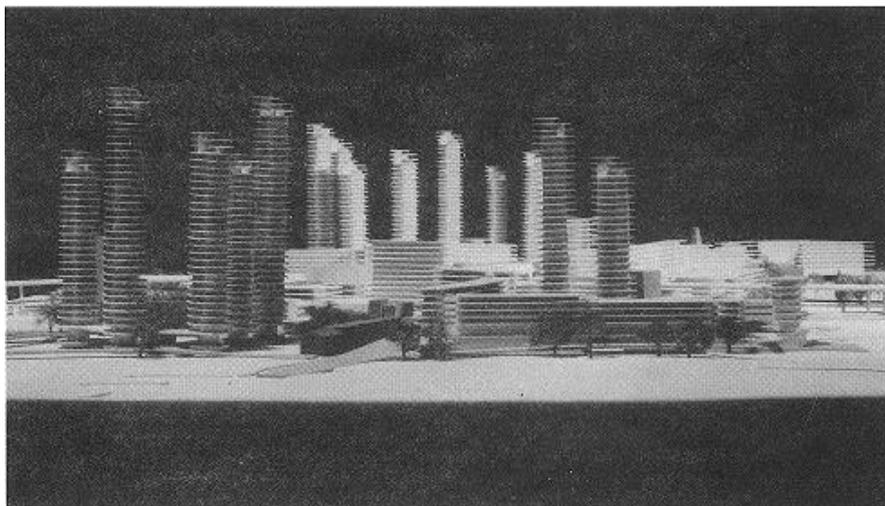
Furthermore, many other new flats were also built during the same period, even to replace existing housing. After Brixton and the other surrounding areas were expanded as a new London Borough in 1965, Lambeth Council launched further large-scale building projects, with the purpose of increasing the number of tenants as much as possible (Piper, 1996: 79). In this situation, tower blocks, some of which were 50 storeys, were planned even in Central Brixton, though they were never implemented (see Figure 4.5).

However, these blocks of housing were further developed in the outer circle of

Brixton, and in particular, the council housing by the Loughborough Estate completely replaced the Victorian housing of the pre-war period in those areas, during the 1960s (see Figures 4.6 and 4.7).



**Figure 4. 4:** The blocks of council housing in Barrington Road, which was one of the areas of New Loughborough Estate, built by Lambeth Council in the post-war period. (Piper, 1996)



**Figure 4. 5:** Tower blocks in the south part of Town Centre proposed in 1967 (Brown, 1982: 81; Piper, 1996: 81)

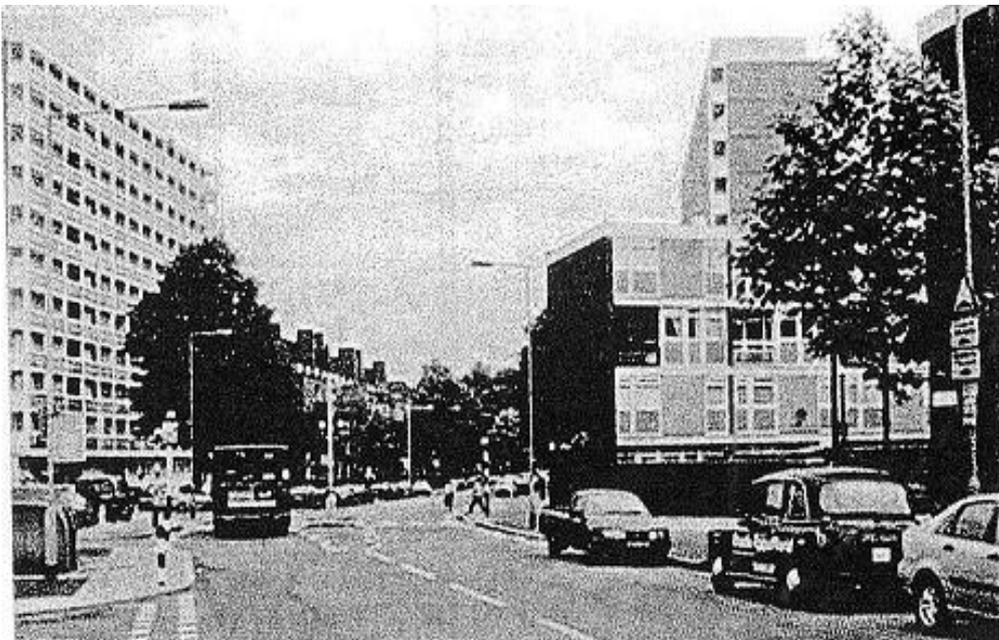
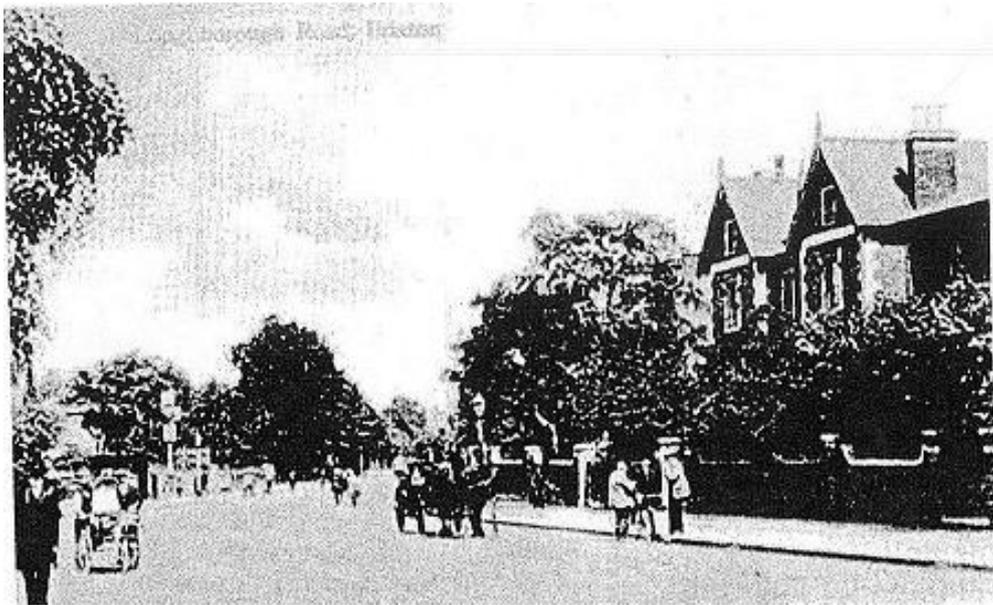


Figure 4. 6 and Figure 4. 7: Barrington Road at the beginning of the last century (on the top) and 100 years later (on the bottom). These current council housing buildings were built from 1950-60s. The council housing in the photo was the London Borough Estate, which was built by London County Council by the 1950s. (Linskey PostCollection, 1905; Rutter, 2009: 11)

These large scale housing strategies caused the destruction of the communities in

these areas, by no longer encouraging the blocks of housing from the earlier period. Among them, for instance, the properties of Afro-Caribbeans on Geneva Road were removed and replaced with Southwyck House by Lambeth Council in the 1970s (198 Gallery, 2008), which became famously known as *Barrier Block*. This council housing was originally designed to surround other council housing by the Moorlands Estate, due to a planned highway. The plan was, however, discarded after a few years (see Figure 4.8). For this reason, the building was constructed as one big flat block with a few windows directed towards the provisional highway; this, ironically, made the council housing a crime spot for burglary, robbery and drug dealing (Lambeth Council, 1988: 77) (see Figure 4.9). Later, Lambeth Council split Southwyck House into several blocks for security reasons, as well as other minor changes through the *Brixton Challenge* (see the following section of this chapter) in the 1990s (Editor, 2010).



Figure 4.8 and Figure 4.9: The Southwyck House (Okada, 2005) (on the left), generally known as a 'barrier block', used to be popular for drug deals. It was designed for the next motorway, which was originally planned in the '70s. However,

it was wrongly directed to face the opposite way and the plan was also later discarded. The photo (Safe Neighbourhoods Units, 1988) on the right shows how the inside of the building was used for acts of vandalism.

Due to these reasons, as well as lack of financial resources, since the 1970s, the local authorities have launched more small estates, such as terraced housing, through their complex 'medium-rise' (Piper, 1996: 79) layout, particularly in the northern part of Brixton, such as Stockwell Park and Angell Town. This proved difficult for Lambeth to manage, considering the original form of their housing project, by the mid-70s, when they found a more economic and effective way of using the land to attract new tenants (ibid). Furthermore, from the 1980s, the housing strategy of the council and central government has been more concentrated on rebuilding the existing housing, rather than establishing new ones. In particular, before this period, a number of old housing units in places such as Railton Road and Coldharbour Lane were being used by squatters. After the demolition of the areas in the 1970s, both authorities and new estate agents found the opportunity to rehabilitate these housing units.

This housing strategy later triggered a boom of gentrification in Brixton, through the arrival of young professionals in houses, such as the ones on the shopping streets in inner areas. In particular, the Brixton Riot triggered the upgrade of the existing deteriorated properties, because the prices of properties were low enough for those from the middle class who could not afford accommodation in the other surrounding areas of inner London, such as Clapham, Battersea and Balham (Butler, 2001: 2156). An example was *Poet's Corner* in the 1990s. Next to this area,

Railton was a main stage of the Brixton Riot in 1981, and it became a target of gentrification in the aftermath. For instance, Shakespeare Road had been developed by both the local authority and two housing corporations (London and Quadrant Housing Trust and Tower Housing Association), through the *Brixton Challenge* since the mid-90s (see Figure 4.10). The project, the *Shakespeare Sliding*, redeveloped a hundred homes in a derelict area of this street; however, only fifteen of them were available as shared ownership (Brixton Challenge, 1993a) (also see Figure 4.11). I further address the issues regarding gentrification and housing in Brixton, particularly those in Poet's Corner, in the first chapter, 'The Gentrification of Railton Road.'

The properties on Railton Road, those in the former *Front Line*, also became a target for gentrification after the Brixton Riot in 1981. Most entrepreneurs, before the riot, left this area, after which the properties were converted into studios or flats. For instance, the congested duplicated houses and shops in the triangular area at the centre of the *Front Line* were replaced by the small-scale housing estate built by Lambeth Council, even though a few of those properties had already been rebuilt due to the damage from the riot in the '80s (Piper, 1996: 73).

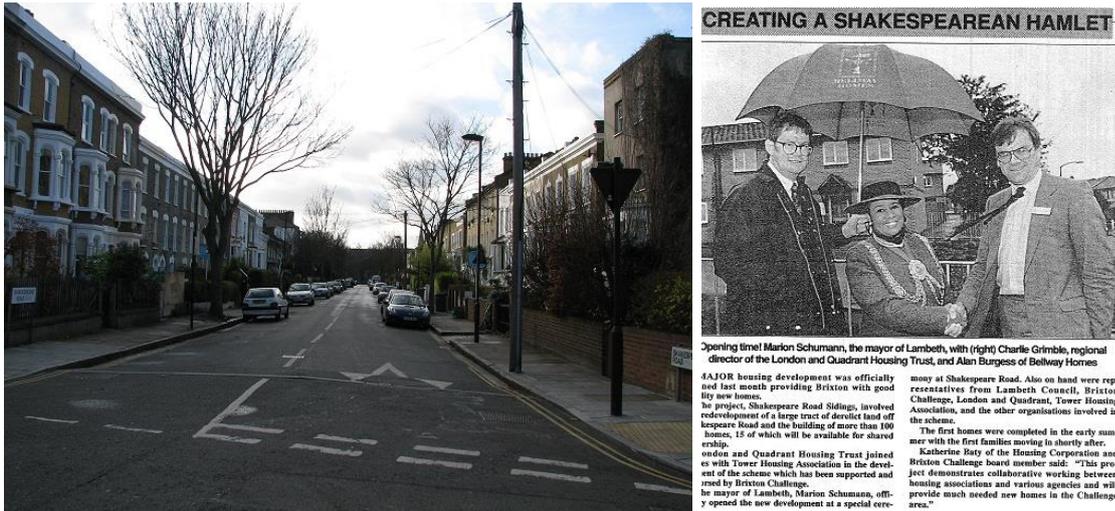


Figure 4. 10 and Figure 4. 11: Along with Milton and Spencer Road, Shakespeare Road (on the left) has been called ‘Poet’s Corner’ since the late ‘90s; these were the first gentrified areas of Brixton, and interestingly, they are just next to Railton Road, famously called the ‘Front Line’ from the beginning of the ‘80s. On the right is an article from the *Brixton Challenger*, which shows a mayor of Brixton (on the right of the photo) agreeing with two estate agents on the scheme of new homes.

#### 4.4. Public Space

As well as housing, there have been problems with the public spaces of Brixton for a long time. As I mentioned earlier, suburbanization pushed new building away to the countryside, as people were anxious to safeguard some open space in areas such as outer London, including Brixton. This tendency has been demonstrated historically by the *Rush Common Act* in 1806, when Parliament enclosed the undeveloped lands in the eastern part of Brixton and Norwood. Now, these spaces still remain in Brixton Hill, such as the woodland walks and parkways (Hollanby, 1978: 25).

In contrast, most public spaces in Brixton, and in particular, those at the centre,

have been strictly limited to spaces such as St. Matthew's Peace Garden and Tate Garden in Brixton Central (Lambeth Development Plan, 1978: 25), which became Windrush Square through the regeneration in 2009-10 (see also the eighth chapter, 'the regeneration of Brixton Central Square'). Moreover, many of the public spaces in Brixton Central are relatively small, and their locations are mostly enclosed by main roads with heavy traffic (Lambeth Development Plan, 1978: 25; Jeremy, 1984: 81-83), having never been developed with proper facilities and thus remaining as 'wasted land' for a long time. This was a typical case of public space in Rush Common in 1947, where Parliament gave power to the local authority for the 1806 building restriction of these spaces. This further encouraged the public spaces in Brixton Central to be proscribed lands, on which neither buildings nor parks have ever been established (Piper, 1996: 16).

Such scenarios have encouraged the public spaces in Brixton Central to be dominantly used by socially excluded groups, such as rough sleepers, street drinkers, drug users and the unemployed. They have become associated with the criminal activities that are seen in the current public spaces of Rush Common. It seems that, for these reasons, the authorities were reluctant to develop the public spaces in Brixton Central until recently when, recognising the need for entertainment and regeneration in the current area, the development of public space has been gradually encouraged. In terms of public spaces in Brixton, particularly those in the centre, I address these issues further in the third chapter, 'the refurbishment of Brixton Central Square.'

In addition, the poor facilities in public spaces encouraged people in Brixton,

particularly post-war migrants, to use the streets as private spaces for their social activities. For instance, pedestrian crossings and markets have been historically important for social cultural activities in Brixton. Moreover, both public and private facilities around Brixton Central have been symbols of protest, particularly for the post-war migrants (see Figure 4.12). A typical example is the pubs for Afro-Caribbean migrants during the post-war period. Most of them were previously used by the white working class, from areas where strong racial discrimination existed. However, after the Brixton Riot in 1981, most pubs in Brixton centre were taken over by Afro-Caribbean owners, who often used new venues to promote the cultural roots of migrants. This was the case with the pub, *George*, which became one of the main targets during the riot. Later, this pub was replaced by *Mingles*, a 'designer pub' (Grant, 1990: 58), which became one of the symbolic places for reggae music, with their reputable sound system (see also the enterprise section in this chapter).

Another example is the Brixton Recreation Centre on Brixton Station Road. After many arguments over the provisional plan, which included financial resources from more than a decade ago, this sports centre finally opened in 1985; it became one of the social and cultural symbols of Brixton, particularly for Afro-Caribbeans (Mavrommatis, 2003: 150-151). This was seen in 1996, when Nelson Mandela visited the United Kingdom and briefly visited this centre to present himself to the local residents of Brixton (see Figure 4.13).



Figure 4. 12 and Figure 4. 13: A black feminist, Olive Morris (on left) contested the presence of *Special Patrol Group (SPG)* at Tate Garden (London Borough of Lambeth, 1978). This photo is currently also used for the *Brixton Pound*, the community currency of Brixton. The right photo was the local article about Mandela’s visit to Brixton. The place where he was standing is the second floor of Brixton Recreation Centre. (Brixton Challenge, 1996: 1)

The change in social structure in Brixton also influenced these public facilities through gentrification since the 1980s (see also the later section in this chapter on the urban planning of Brixton). These symbolic spaces for black people became the centre of gentrification since the Brixton Riot. Among them, Brixton Recreation Centre also had difficulties during this period, due to poverty and the insecurity of facilities, such as crime and illegal activities by both users and non-users from the surrounding area. Furthermore, LCC (Leisure Connection Limited), the

organization which runs Brixton Recreation Centre, a building and service that was half-owned by the council, was taken over by GLL (Greenwich Leisure Limited), a non-profit company, which also had other sports clubs throughout London. After several months' break in the middle of 2006, the facilities of this recreation centre were completely refurbished to be more of a sports centre for residents, not only from Brixton, but also from the whole of London (see Figures 4.14 and 4.15).



**Figure 4. 14 and Figure 4. 15: 'A Safe Place to Play': The advertisement of the new Brixton Recreation Centre (on the left) is presented just beside the London Eye (on the right), quite a distance from Brixton itself. (Okada, 2008)**

#### **4.5. Industrialization**

Because Brixton used to be a suburb during the pre-war period, this caused the area to lack large-scale industry (Piper, 1996: 73). However, during the same period,

some of the main roads in Brixton were also used commercially for the development of transportation, such as railways, and providing dormitories for workers in those new industries. Most of these new industries were located in the northern part of Brixton, such as Clapham, Acre Lane, Brixton Hill, and Loughborough. Most of the industries in the pre-war period were small industries, such as fabrics, foods, printers and car industries.

Through the early period of suburbanization in the beginning of the last century, 'art deco style' factories, such as those by *Sunlight Laundry*, were located in Acre Lane. Even now, these buildings of the art deco style are contrasted against the old Victorian houses in the other areas of Brixton. Furthermore, before the First World War, a large printing factory was established on Clapham Road, while the eastern part of Effra Road had also been franchised by a printer, the *Free Land Company*, at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and became known as *Poet's Corner*, due to the naming of the streets after famous poets.

In addition, food industries, such as *Sharwoods*, were established on Clapham Road in the later period; their factories were also operated on Offley Road, Brixton during the 1960s. The *Royal Arsenal Co-operative Society* also had a large bakery in Brixton Hill, which has been open since the beginning of the last century.

Most of the other main industries were car industries, located in such areas as Acre Lane and Loughborough Junction. Several large garages for those companies, such as the *Allard Cars*, were already established before the World Wars; however, even after these companies left, these areas have sustainably been used for the car

industry, particularly repairs and services, under railway arches. This economy has been further encouraged by the *Brixton Challenge* since the '80s, where new housing for these factory workers were also established (see Figure 4.16). Among them, the *Brixton Estate Company* built their first industrial estates on the northern end of Brixton Road in the 1920s, and these estates for factory workers are now also seen in such places as Acre Lane and Loughborough Junction (Piper, 1996: 73).

# Motor trade can boom underneath the arches

**DISUSED** railway arches at Loughborough Junction and an industrial site at Mount Road are yet to be transformed into a thriving new centre for Brixton's motor trade.

The project, which has just been approved by Brixton Challenge, involves the construction and re-arrangement of a new industrial complex and the refurbishment of railway arches to provide workshop space and commercial space for car parks attached to vehicle repair and servicing.

The development will cover land owned by London Law and Land - a private sector property company - Brixton Rail Property Board land and arches, and a smaller block of land owned by London Council.

Construction work is set to be started over a number of years but will begin with the establishment of the building arches.

Work will also involve the construction of a new vehicle access road, a first floor covered and

enclosed car parking compound, and include the option to replace existing and create space within the main Mount Road industrial site with new purpose-built motor facilities on the edge of the motor park.

The main site of the scheme, developed by London Law and Land, is to give local business a boost by developing an improved and regulated working environment for motor trade firms at affordable cost, management and specialised back up, a secure compound for Chicagoan vehicles, creating inter-urban customer experience, and improved environmental standards by adopting local residents and tenants. It is hoped the scheme will provide training and employment opportunities for people living in the Challenge area with the creation

of 200 permanent jobs and 200 temporary construction jobs. The area has been put at a cost of £4 million. Brixton Challenge has agreed to provide £1,200,000, with the balance coming from other private and public sector sources.

"This scheme offers the opportunity to competitively develop one of the largest and problematic industrial sites in the borough. It will not only help to improve the area environmentally, but will also help to create new jobs and training opportunities in the Challenge area. Many measures are being taken for the scheme and work, it should also prove an economic success," said Len De'Nevo, Joint Brixton Council, Brixton Challenge board chairman for the small local business sector.



A big welcome to the scheme from Len of Aldrex

# REFUGEES BEING TARGETED ON THE HEALTHCARE FRONT

Brixton Challenge has approved funding for a project designed to improve health care services for newly-arrived refugees and migrants.

The project aims to identify new arrivals, refugees and other groups in emerging primary care services and to ensure that they are able to access to these services in the Challenge area.

In addition, the project wishes to increase the use of primary care services, to develop health promotion and education initiatives targeted at refugees and migrants, and to improve the quality and accessibility of primary health care services in the area.

Specialist health care will include improving links with organisations such as the community, voluntary and primary care to set guidelines for referral mechanisms, and conducting surveys to determine which services should be targeted.

Improvements to the information in health services and the rights of refugees and immigrants to go to the GP surgery, dentists and other health care services will be made available in GP surgeries, dentists and other health care services in a wider range of languages.

One of the aims of the project is to create a new community development office and the appointment of a community development worker who will help to identify target groups and training needs for those involved in the health services.

**Concern**  
Brixton Challenge has approved funding of £100,000 towards the £100,000 cost of the project with the balance being met by the South East London Health Authority and the Family Health Services Foundation.

"Cities like Brixton with GP and other health services, housing, employment, social services, community groups and voluntary organisations have high quality health care for refugees, new arrivals and some immigrants as a major social concern," said Brixton Challenge chief executive Raymond Elford.

"This project encourages a multi-agency approach which also seeks to involve service users in improving the health of Brixton. The end result will be a healthier and more vibrant population. The project will ultimately ensure that primary health care services for those groups are able to be the result of a better part of the community."

# £200,000 BOOST FOR WOMEN WORKERS

A TRAINING centre developed to meet the needs of women is set to receive a £200,000 boost from the Brixton Challenge Company.

The Brixton Centre for Women's Services in the Brixton Challenge area is providing training courses for those entering the work force after leaving children and teenage people.

Funding will be used to help improve children facilities at the centre with the building of a nursery incorporating a play room, reception, supervisor's office, kitchen and laundry. The money will provide for up to 20 children and is expected to help make it easier for women in the area to undertake the job skills training they need to return to the workforce.

Brixton Challenge's investment will also go towards the installation of a lift for the disabled, first-floor toilet and the refurbishment of new classrooms.

Once the full refurbishment programme is complete, the centre will provide 100 training places each year providing employment from intensive training and business administration, in English as a second language and foreign languages. It will have support services to meet the child care and language needs of those who live in and offer a further range of training courses.

The Brixton Centre was established by the David's End Educational Foundation, a charity in the social education field. It is to be used to enhance the Foundation has established 1000 training courses. The first cost of the refurbishment project is more than £1.5m with the balance of funding being met by the South Thames Enterprise Council, London Council, the private sector and charities.

# Landmark gets £50,000 to help HIV sufferers

All important day centres which offer help and support for people living with HIV infection, it is to be extended thanks to a donation from the Brixton Challenge Company.

Brixton Challenge has agreed to provide £50,000 in funding to the Landmark Project, which plans to refurbish and extend its day centre for people living with HIV infection and other services such as drug facilities, advice, counselling, telephone support services and complementary health services.

Directed for the services that runs regularly from 200 registered users in May 1990 to 2300 users in June this year, leading to the need for the centre to expand its facilities.

Once the project is complete, the Landmark will be able to accommodate 120 users at one time and will also have adequate storage space for medicine, washing facilities, refrigerators and other health care appliances which are available to use on all people with HIV infection in the local community.

The project involves converting the original Landmark building with a neighbouring building used as a health centre.

The new building needs to be fully refurbished before it can be used by Landmark and the old building needs to be structurally altered to help cope with increasing user numbers.

The entire project is expected to cost about £100,000 in completion. In addition to the £50,000 from Brixton Challenge, the Department of Health has provided the bulk of the funding needed for the project with further funding from London Council (£17,500), and the Blue Nile Foundation (£10,000). A shortfall of £16,750 will be found through fund-raising.

Brixton Challenge board member for health, Len De'Nevo, said: "The high number of service users at the Landmark demonstrates the need for such a service in the area. There is no comparable service available in South London and it is clear that an increasing number of people are finding the services and support offered by the Landmark centre of tremendous value."

"The extensive consultation arrangements for the development and expansion of the Landmark programme will be developed to meet the needs of service users and to support the work of other agencies."

# WHERE WE MEET THE CHALLENGE

THIS is the Brixton Challenge area - and for more information, contact the Brixton Challenge office at Unit 221, Brixton Small Business Centre, 448 Brixton Road, SW9 6EJ or telephone 071-826 3200.



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Figure 4. 16: An article (on the top) about the motor trade development in Loughborough Junction (Brixton Challenge, 1993: 4)

## 4.6. Commercialisation

It is difficult to avoid mentioning the Brixton Market when discussing the spatial background of Brixton's economy. Even before the last century, street markets had

already provided the particular landscape of Brixton, such as those developments outside of the rail station on Atlantic Road during the 1870s (Piper, 1996: 59). In the beginning of the 1920s, although those stalls, particularly in both Brixton and Pope Market, were removed by the local authority because of their crowds, the demand of citizens eventually allowed a new market to open on Electric Avenue in 1949. A writer, Ken Dixon, brilliantly described the memory of his childhood in Brixton during this early period:

**I remember the tram lines being removed because I had to go with my dear mother and grandfather to help load the prams up several times. The Brixton Road was a hive of activity with people taking these road blocks home to burn. They were squashed into all sorts of things—pockets, hats, even coats were removed and loaded up with these things, anything to get as many as you could! And never mind the dirt, that washed out! I doubt if the like has ever been seen again. (Dixon, 1994: 8)**

It is also notable that Brixton has had indoor markets. Their long history started at the beginning of the last century (see also the following chapter about Brixton Village). Among them, the *Reliance Arcade* on Brixton Road was opened as the first indoor market in Brixton, linking the former mews of Electric Lane in 1929. Two years later, this was followed by the *Market Low*, before the third indoor market, the *Granville Arcade*, was built by Granville Grossman in 1937. Since then, arcades have provided a set-up for traders in the form of small pop-up shops, which also meant that many of the shop-keepers were no longer local residents of Brixton (Piper, 1996: 61). I discuss the Brixton Market further in the chapter, ‘Brixton

Village and its regeneration by the *Space Maker Agency*.’

Throughout its history, there has also been the arrival of mass products in Brixton, such as the store of *Quin & Axtens*, which was rebuilt between Ferndale and Stockwell Roads, and the first branch of *British Home Store* on Brixton Road during the 1920s. This was followed by a *Marks and Spencer*, which has remained in the same location until the present day. However, most of the stores were located in old-fashioned buildings, such as those of a Victorian style; these stores seemed to have difficulties in expanding their business, unlike other areas in the following period (Piper, 1996: 81-82).

There was also new development of the business area after this period. For instance, the garden on the corner of Brixton Road and Coldharbour Lane was converted to a yard in the mid-1930s, where *Woolworths*, *Barclays Bank* and the *Prince of Wales* were opened (see also the chapter on Coldharbour Lane). These new districts have significantly influenced the main economy of Brixton, transforming it from old areas of markets to a new area with main roads.

However, even in this situation, the new shopping areas, such as in Brixton Central, have gradually had problems with their sustainability, because of the increase in traffic and the lack of parking. This situation was also the same for the Brixton markets, where most of the car parks were closed in the later period. Meanwhile, Brixton has been facing the second phase of those big stores’ arrival in the surrounding areas. Many Victorian or Edwardian villas, as well as shops on Acre Lane, were replaced with mega-stores, such as Tesco and Lidl. Tesco, previously located on Pope Road, Brixton Central, moved to Acre Lane in 1986

(*Answers.com*, 2011), where mainly local stores, such as those owned by Afro-Caribbeans, had previously existed (see Figure 4.17). Lidl, a food and liquor chain franchised throughout Europe, was also opened a few blocks further north of Tesco, replacing the previous factory, in the last decade.

Through these developments of the macro-scale economy in the surrounding areas, the shopping districts in Brixton Central have also been restructured through differentiation and uniqueness. For instance, this year, in 2011, *Starbucks* just recently opened their first store in Brixton, next to the entrance of the tube station (see Figure 4.18). This area in front of the tube station has been used as a space for many activities throughout the community for a long time (see also the interview with Moses in the following chapter about Railton Road).



Figure 4. 17: A big *Tesco* was opened in 1986 with their big car park, which has influenced not only the local shops around Acre Lane, but also those in the other parts of Brixton. (Okada, 2009; see also the chapter on Coldharbour Lane)



Figure 4. 18: *Starbucks* finally opened just next to the entrance of the Brixton tube station, where street performers have been located since the beginning of its history. (Okada, 2011)

#### 4.7. Entertainment

The history of entertainment in Brixton is not short, and even before the World Wars, the areas surrounding Brixton had been used to a number of theatres through the early settlement of the middle class since the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Furthermore, the First World War's strike and depression did not affect the lifestyle of the Brixton communities to the extent of the hardship endured by the majority of London's population (Thorndycraft, 1976: 5).

By the beginning of the last century, those from the middle class in Brixton continued to frequent theatres, cinemas, and music halls, consuming other

cultures from the high class shopping centre in the early period of Brixton (Thorndycraft, 1976: 5). Between 1910 and 1915, more than 9 cinemas were opened in Brixton, including the *Brixton Theatre*, currently known as the *Ritzy Cinema*. In the later period, these cinemas were expanded along the development of sound, which included *Astoria* in 1929. This theatre on Stockwell Road later became the *Brixton Academy* (currently *O2 Academy*), the most well-known venue in Brixton, contributing to the music roots of Brixton that have been sustained since the 1920s.

There was also another background to the cultural richness of Brixton. Even after the middle class left, and the social structure changed to those of less affluent classes, the cultural richness of Brixton continued through those skilled workers, such as craftsmen, and their contributions. As I mentioned earlier, this might be caused by the geographical and historical location of Brixton, which has been culturally isolated from other areas (see the housing policy of Brixton in the last section).

For instance, there were many printers along Shakespeare, Milton and Spencer Roads, on the west side of Railton Road, which were named after famous poets, and collectively called '*Poet's Corner*'. Since then, this area has been gradually developed by the middle class intellectuals, such as writers, teachers and other professional workers, as well as the housing associations and the local authority in the mid-90s (Butler and Robinson, 2001; see also both housing and industry sections of this chapter).

Meanwhile, the downgrading of these facilities by the wars and the change in

social structure have interestingly sustained the cultural richness of Brixton's 'outside', such as through public performances and the arts. In particular, public spaces in Brixton Central, including the streets and tube station, became centres for those people who have distinguished the uniqueness of Brixton from other areas (see also the chapter on Brixton Central Square).

Furthermore, the growth of the Afro-Caribbean community since the post-war period has alternatively developed their entertainment places in Brixton. The area affected by bombing left many people homeless, or with houses in a dilapidated state; this was followed by the influx of Afro-Caribbean and other immigrants, who brought a change of culture to Brixton. Elegant stores in the pre-war period were replaced by 'bargain shops', like *Quids In* and *Demonds Hip City*, and other reggae music shops for the Afro-Caribbean community, giving a new alternative sphere to the cultural roots of Brixton. Among them, it is notable that these facilities for the post-war migrants were widely scattered throughout the whole of Brixton (*Brown*, 1983: 10). For instance, in this period, the *Atlantic*, *Coach and Horses*, *Mingles* and *Angels* were for Afro-Caribbean men, and the latter two venues were located in the middle of both Railton Road and Coldharbour Lane. In the same areas, *Mingles* also replaced the *George*, the white working class pub, which became a centre of the Brixton Riot in 1981. This famous venue for reggae music from the 1980s-90s was owned by Lloyd Leon, the ex-mayor of Lambeth and the former manager of the *Atlantic*, another cultural symbol of the Afro-Caribbean community, during the same period (see also the section on public space in this chapter).

The cultural developments by the post-war migrants also triggered

commercialization, through their closure and symbolization for new venues. Since the late '90s, the development of culture by Afro-Caribbeans has declined alongside their population and the gentrification after the Brixton Riot. Many facilities were emptied due to illegal licenses, occupation or drug deals, while some of them were revived as new venues for more commercial use. For instance, according to Mavrommatis (2003: 155), *Cooltan's Art* and its closure in 1995 was a significant turning point in the culture of Brixton; it has been transformed from an original to a secondary symbol through gentrification. This squatted factory in Effra Road became one of the most popular places for rave parties at the beginning of the '90s, unlike other new venues that were geared towards the commercialization of Brixton culture.

As well as *Cooltan*, many other cultural roots of Brixton were replaced by trendy clubs and bars for the middle class, since the mid-1990s. After the drug eviction by the local police, the *Atlantic* was replaced with the *Dogstar*, which became a famous club for yuppies in 1995. Meanwhile, the *Coach and Horses*, just next to it on Coldharbour Lane, was also taken over by the *Living Room*, from the same owner as the *Atlantic*, during that period (see the discussion on these venues and the peak of gentrification in Chapter Six).

Meanwhile, more historical buildings of Brixton were also targets of gentrification during this period. The *Brixton Academy*, the former *Astoria Cinema*, was a typical case in the early period (1983). Moreover, this venue was also refurbished by the *Brixton Challenge*, which I will address in the following section of this chapter. Another example of this was the *Fridge*, formerly the *Palladium Cinema*, on

Brixton Road, also supported by the *Brixton Challenge's* fund. The *Brixton Theatre*, the oldest cinema in South London, was also taken over by *Ritzy*, which became a cinema complex and bars, using one of the largest grants awarded in this regeneration (Piper, 1996: 93).

These new venues, through the restructuring of historic architecture, were continuous even after the *Brixton Challenge*. The first fire station in Brixton, *Bon Marche*, and Nursery Road, were revived as the Brixton Enterprise Centre in 1995, which included *Plan B*, currently one of the most popular clubs in Brixton. St. Matthew's, which I address further in the following chapter, was also taken over by *Brix*, which has used this building for multiple uses since the *Brixton Challenge* in the 1990s. The ground floor of the church is currently used as a club, the *Mass*, which was one of the most popular clubs in the '90s, while the basement floor has been used as a trendy lounge, *Bugbar* (currently *Babalou*).

#### **4.8. The history of regeneration in Brixton since the post-war period**

Generally speaking, the regeneration of Brixton can be said to be the history of its failure. As mentioned earlier, Brixton used to be a relatively developed area before the post-war period, compared to the other inner city areas of London, which suffered more serious destruction of their infrastructure throughout the two World Wars. This can be seen in Electric Avenue, Brixton Market, which was the first street that was provided with electric lights in England. However, this situation, in turn, resulted in the decline of the economy in Brixton, where the lack of prominent business interrupted its place as the centre of London, while other business areas of London were industrialized. This is the reason why the business

areas of Brixton have still sustained a classical style, as we can see in most of the markets having an Edwardian style (Piper, 1996: 82).

Meanwhile, the informality of these business areas became a hub for Afro-Caribbean and African communities and their needs, where their social and cultural enterprises have also been developed during the post-war period (see also the sections on public space and enterprise in this chapter). During the 1970s, many unlicensed drinking clubs and meeting places for gambling or drugs were opened in informal markets, such as Railton Road, which later gave the reputation of Brixton as being the home for an informal and illegal economy (Piper, 1996: 93).

Among these situations, until the beginning of the 1990s, many macro-scale developments were attempted in Brixton to compete with other inner cities of London, while most of them were eventually declined. One of those plans was the *Brixton Central Action Plan*, which has been implemented for four years throughout the '70s-'80s, though the extent of rebuilding was scaled down and not revised quickly enough to incorporate changing market conditions.

Moreover, the development of transportation during the same period also contributed to an outward flow of people. For instance, the opening of the long-awaited Tube Link in 1971 seemed to only make it easier for local people to get to the West End, rather than bringing more shoppers to Brixton (Piper, 1996: 83). Furthermore, the provisional plans for other new transportation were also later declined, which further encouraged the economic isolation of Brixton alongside the departure of the existing communities. The east-west links of the railway were

diminished by the closure of East Brixton Station in 1976, and in the same period, the planning of a motorway by Brixton Town Centre was dominated by ideas to cross Brixton from east to west with elevated or ring highways (Piper, 1996: 83) (see also Figure 4.19). Of these, a tangible result was the Barrier Block, Southwyck House (see the housing section of this chapter). The new road that was planned to be screened from Moorland Road was cancelled in the same month, when the construction of this estate was started.

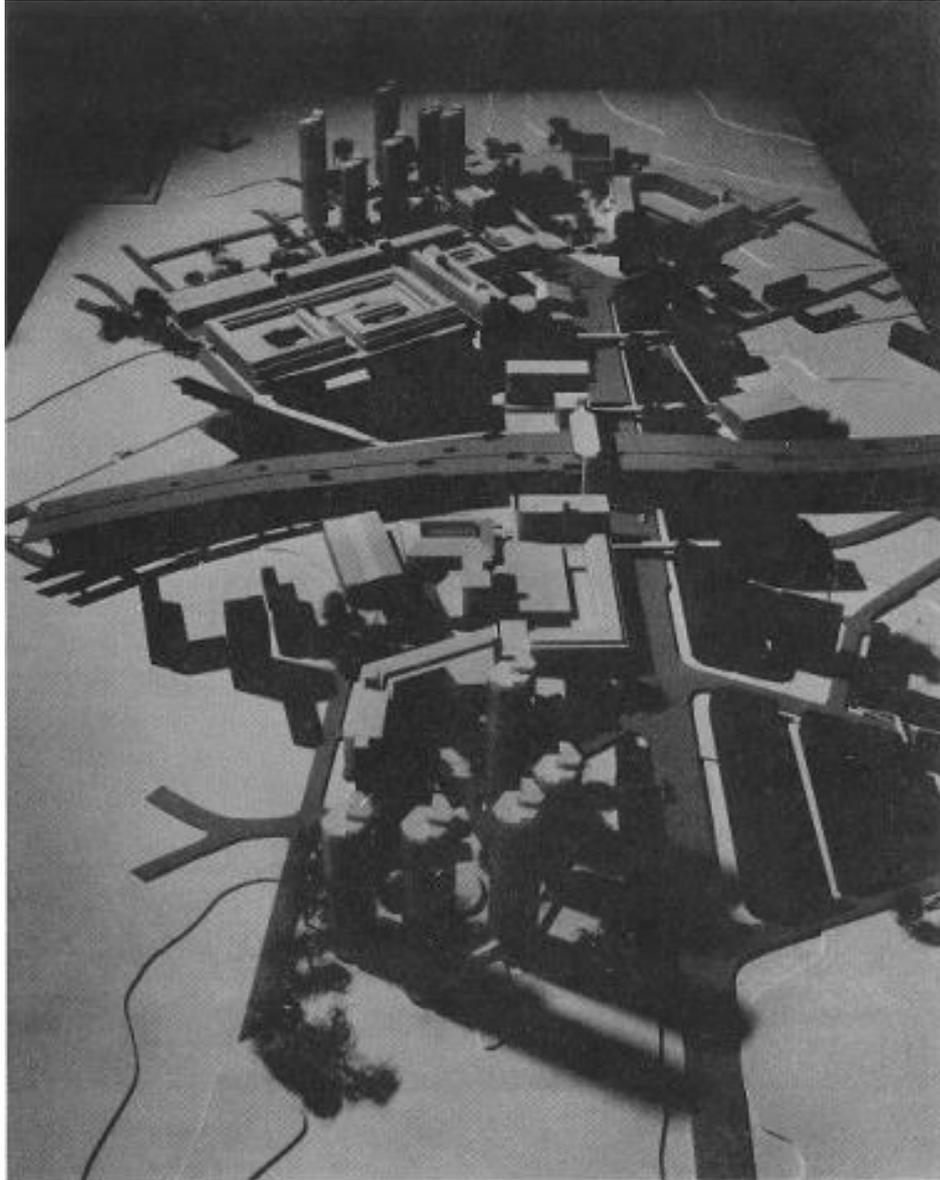


Figure 4. 19: The Brixton Central Action Plan was one of the redevelopment proposals between 1967 and 1969 (Jeremy, 1982). The future landscape of Brixton during the post-war period was often depicted using a bird's-eye view, showing such structures as skyscrapers equivalent to the other inner areas of London.

These situations encouraged the central government and local authority to 'rescale' their urban planning. For example, in 1977, the government approached Brixton as a limited target for their *Inner Area Programmes* (Piper, 1996: 87), while they restricted investments by Lambeth, depending on the regeneration of

Brixton only through physical improvement. As mentioned previously, the physical isolation from other areas already developed the uniqueness of Brixton in this period, which has consequently shifted the authorities' approach from a larger to a smaller scale.

Furthermore, the Brixton Riot in 1981 and the damage to infrastructure also encouraged this new form of development by both the government and local council. By the middle of the 1990s, their policy had already turned from 'painfully assembling large clearance area' into 'marketing individual sites' (Piper, 1996: 92). Consequently, many buildings of Central Brixton in prosperous times became restructured as new business districts. These regeneration plans particularly contained a variety of new venues for entertainment, leisure and arts, since the late '80s, where they also created the cultural diversity of Brixton through a cosmopolitan atmosphere. The central government and Lambeth sought for more business opportunities to provide more investment for the renewal of areas, and for these reasons, the *Brixton Challenge* from 1993-1998 became the first turning point in the micro-scale of economic restructuring, which developed new facilities, such as in Brixton Central and Coldharbour Lane. The original proposal of the *Brixton Challenge* was accepted in April 1993, which was a limited 5-year program that incorporated the use of public funds and other investments, not only from the council but also from independent companies that were created for this project (Piper, 1996: 88-89).

On the other hand, these intense investments in micro-spaces resulted in the regeneration of Brixton for business, rather than as a social infrastructure through

a built environment. Whereas other urban projects, such as the Inner Area Programmes in the previous period, contained the whole of the north of Lambeth as their effective area, the boundary of the *Brixton Challenge* was more tightly drawn, including the Town Centre, as well as the post estate agents on its north and east boundaries (see Figures 4.20 and 4.21).

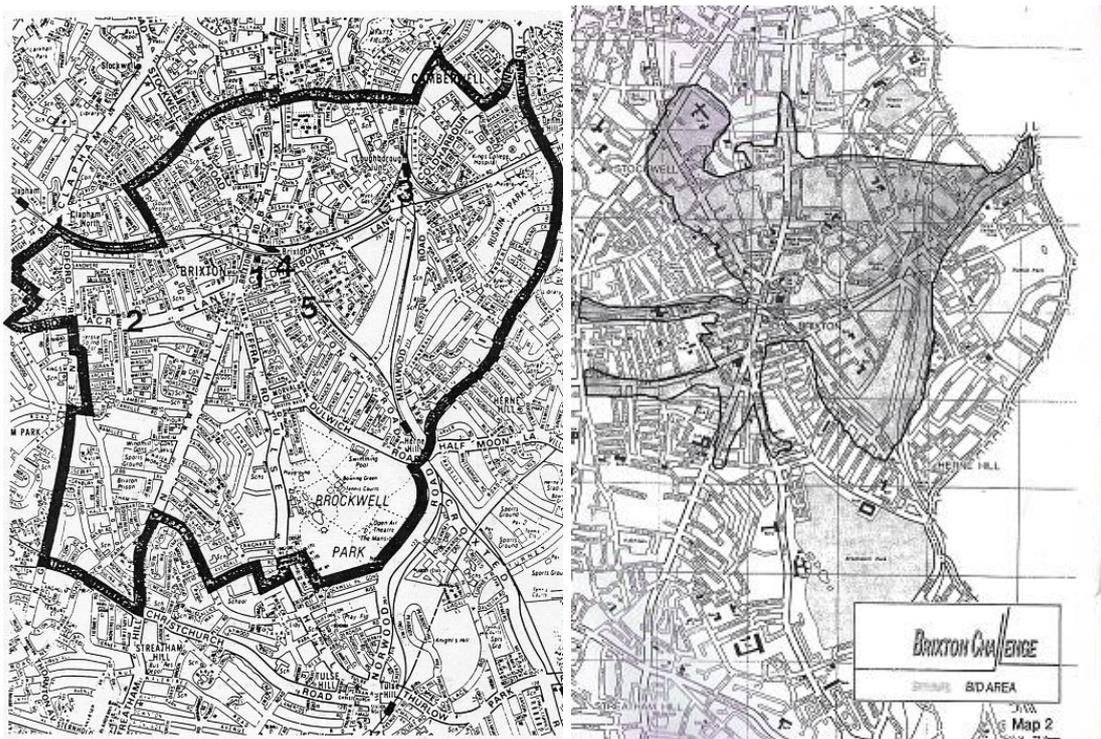


Figure 4. 20 and Figure 4. 21: The area for the Inner Area Programme in the 1970s (Hollanby, 1978) (on the left) and the *Brixton Challenge* in the 1980s (Brixton Challenge: United Colour of Brixton, 1996) (on the right). As we can see, the areas for regeneration became much smaller (the border on the left photo was drawn by the author).

These micro-scaled regenerations also consequently encouraged the gentrification of Brixton in the later period. In other inner city areas of London, the government already tried to regenerate de-industrialized areas, as we can see in the Enterprise Zones in the '80s. Brixton, however, did not have such an industrial zone, where

these commercial interests could be newly developed (Piper, 1996: 88). Meanwhile, unlike other inner cities of London, where high streets are under threat for mass marketing, Brixton could still sustain an Edwardian style in the central district, providing a uniqueness that those other areas have lost.

After the *Brixton Challenge* in the '90s, the regeneration of Brixton has been encouraged through further exploration of micro-spaces and independently associated projects. In addition, after the decline of many venues due to the *Brixton City Challenge*, most regeneration projects during this millennium were intervened upon by third parties either directly or indirectly, rather than being solely initiatives of the government or local authority. This tendency was also followed by other regeneration projects in Brixton Central, most of which were private, short-term projects. I address these latter cases in the sixth chapter, regarding the regeneration of Brixton Village, one of Brixton Markets since the middle of 2009.

As well as past cases involving cultural heritage, the regeneration of Central Brixton is currently also significant in terms of public space, with more attention being given to it. In the last few years, Lambeth council, local police and an architect group, the *Gross Max*, have launched the refurbishment of Brixton Central Square, to connect the Tate Garden and Windrush Square, and to close Effra Road between them. By implementing a larger public space, they are trying to develop much easier access for all residents, as well as representing a metropolitan atmosphere through the local black migrant history.

Meanwhile, the renovation of the public spaces also facilitates ‘much easier access to surveillance’. It is significant that the borough police commander, Dick Quinn, was selected to be one of the panel, which implies that this project was not only for the local community (through their easier access), but also for the outside visitor (through a multicultural atmosphere) and the local authority (through policing). I further address the issues regarding the regeneration of Brixton Central Square in the seventh chapter, ‘*The regeneration of Brixton Central Square: from trajectory to path*’.

## Chapter Five

### The separation of place from space: the Brixton Riot and the gentrification of Railton Road

#### 5-1. Railton Road before the Brixton Riot: the 'other' space for becoming

Compared to other social and cultural centres, such as Coldharbour Lane, Railton Road has been completely changed since the '80s, because of the Brixton Riot (1981) and the gentrification that followed. The street stretches between Hearn Hill and Brixton Central, where it meets Atlantic Road and Coldharbour Lane at the corner. In the 1970s-80s, the middle of Railton Road was famously known as the *Frontline*, particularly for the Afro-Caribbean communities, not only in Brixton but also in the other parts of London and the UK. Throughout the entire street, there were many shops and street vendors selling Caribbean food, as well as many illegal products, including drugs. An interviewee, Keith, of Jamaican descent, told me about this glorious memory of Railton Road in the '70s:

*Well, Railton Road was very busy...It was like a market. So, people came in from wherever, you know? Because all people on Railton Road... They always came for something. (Keith, the owner of the Harmony, an Afro-Caribbean pub on Railton Road)*

As Keith mentioned above, this street used to serve as an economic centre for the Afro-Caribbean communities, since the post-war period when they started to settle down in Brixton. According to another interviewee, Sam, who is also Jamaican and a long-time resident of Railton Road, these migrants could find accommodation in

only limited areas even within Brixton, including both Somerleyton and Geneva Roads nearby, where tenancies were also occupied by other Afro-Caribbeans as well as the Irish (Patterson 1963; see also the fourth chapter of this dissertation). Railton Road was typically known as a 'run down, impoverished road without any distinguished features' (Mackie, 1981: 2).

Railton Road, particularly the centre of this street, had been called the *Frontline* since the '60s-'70s by Afro-Caribbeans from London and elsewhere, since it was a social and cultural meeting point, as Sam described below:

*Because of this road around the George (a pub in the middle of Railton Road), black people hung out when they came to meet friends. They came from Manchester, Liverpool and Bristol. They headed to Frontline to see other friends, and they met together...So, they called it 'Frontline'. (Sam, a.k.a. 'Sam's Wheel', the owner of a long-running cycle shop on Railton Road)*

As Michael Keith (2005: 70-71) argued, before the Brixton Riot, the meaning of *Frontline* was controversially different for different people; it was a signifier representing both subjective and objective features of typical inner cities in the modern period. Although many Afro-Caribbeans recognized the area as housing economic, social and cultural centres, its image to other groups was different, being seen as a derogated area that is illegally occupied by unemployed blacks (Keith, 2005: 70). In particular, the latter view was further exaggerated by a series of media representations of the riot, such as with the sentence, 'The Revolutionary Communist Tendency...has its closely guarded headquarters here' (Mackie, 1981:

2).

Meanwhile, before the Brixton Riot, this duality of Railton Road was also structured by its spatial practice, both within and beyond this street. This dual spatiality in the urban periphery is alluded to by Henri Lefebvre (1991), whose *representational space* mediates the contradiction between space of representation and spatial practice in modern space. This space is:

**... dominated — and hence passively experienced (*subi*) or subjected—space which the imagination (verbal but especially non-verbal) seeks to change and appropriate. It overlays (*recouvre*) physical space, making symbolic use of objects. (Lefebvre, 1991: 39)**

This sentence expands the meaning of the *Frontline* from ‘where the enemies are facing each other’ to ‘work that will have an effect’ (Hornby et. al., 2011).

The image of the *Frontline* both positively and negatively invited Afro-Caribbeans from other areas and enabled them to seek a new identity beyond this street, which would be more represented through time-space, dynamically distinguishing itself from the past and future (Derrida, 1982: 3-67). This separation of temporariness through the otherness of space was also relevant to the idea of Derrida (1982: 34), who claimed that space possibly separates from itself as ‘the presence of time’ in modernity. Likewise, the *Frontline*, negatively imagined as ‘enemies facing each other’, becomes positive as a time-space for people to do ‘work that will have an effect.’

An interval must separate the present from what it is not in order for the present to be itself...In constituting itself, in dividing itself dynamically, this interval is what might be called *spacing*, the becoming-space of time or the becoming-time of space (*temporarization*). (Derrida, 1982:13)

Unlike many critics of the negative effects of space, such as time through its compression (Giddens, 1990: 17-21, Harvey, 1990: 260-307; Massey 1994: 147), Derrida interestingly introduced this 'otherness of space' through time for 'becoming', where the past embedded by any point could be transformed into the irreducible present through movement. By welcomingly engaging colonial discourse and reconnecting them as 'others', those Afro-Caribbean migrants were able to have time-space, not for them, therefore would be for restructuring (hooks, 1990: 144-153). This idea is quite similar to what hooks previously called 'radical openness' (hooks, 1990 144-153; Soja 1996: 97-100), as seen in her introduction to the book, *Feminist Theory: From Margin to Centre*:

To be margin is to be part of the whole but outside the main body...Our survival depended on an ongoing public awareness of the separation between margin and centre and ongoing private acknowledgement that we were a necessary, vital part of the whole. The sense of wholeness, impressed upon our consciousness by the structure of our daily lives, provided us with an oppositional world-view—a mode of seeing unknown to most of our oppressors, that sustained us, aided us in our struggles to transcend poverty and despair, strengthened our sense of self and our solidarity. (1984 ix; 1990: 149 and Soja,

1996: 99)

Nonetheless, social conflict and the aftermath of the riot could turn back this situation to the previous period, 're'-embedding this street through the surrounding areas, where its imaginary spatiality was re-inscribed on a further micro-scale. In the next section, I would like to focus more on the situation of Railton Road before the Brixton Riot, in relation to the pre-gentrification of those surrounding areas.

## **5.2. Railton Road during the riot period: from space to place for others**

As described in the last section, Railton Road in the 1970s was a social and cultural symbol for the post-war Afro-Caribbean migrants not only in Brixton, but throughout the whole of the UK, which enabled their imaginary space to be represented into a way that endured in a way into future from both within and beyond this street.

However, the Brixton Riot in 1981 was a turning point in this *Frontline* and the time-space was particularly re-inscribed through a series of media representations of the social and cultural roots of Afro-Caribbeans, as well as racial tensions between blacks and whites (Burgess, 1985: 201-206). It was true that, even before the riot, Railton Road was already known as having racial tensions between these two groups. In particular, the *George* (Figure 5.1.), the pub in the middle of Railton Road, had a reputation for racial prejudice against black people, and became one of the targets of the Brixton Riot.



Figure 5. 1: The *George Public House* in 1975. Along the front of this building is the pub, *George*, before it was burnt by the Brixton Riot in 1981. (Art-Wood Photography, 1975)

*At the George, there was a lot of prejudice, and black people could not come in...If black people were coming here, they had to go behind a queue whenever...White people usually got served fast, and black people had to bring our own glass. (Keith: the owner of the black pub, Harmony, on Railton Road, which was formerly the George before the riot)*

Nonetheless, unlike the circumstances surrounding the *George*, many other interviewees at least agreed that the racial relations 'within' Railton Road were relatively peaceful, and most troubles were caused by people outside of this area. Another interviewee, Sam, explained how the issue brought by racial prejudice did

not come from within but came from outside of this street. He repeated an example of how this street became fragmented through police intervention from the outside:

*In those days, there was prejudice in the older generations. But, young whites and blacks...they had grown up in the same area and went to the same school. And then, there was a problem... When white and black boys were going to the same school, and walking on the road together, the police came and stopped only black boys. You know, if you searched blacks, you have to search whites as well...And more of these things caused the riot. (Sam, the owner of the wheel shop on Railton Road)*

Following this hypothesis, despite media representations, it is presumed that the riot actually did not occur between Afro-Caribbeans and native white communities. One example from the *Daily Telegraph* controversially shows that racial tensions already caused the disruption of the community even before the riot, by exaggerating the image of Railton Road as one of black resistance, using the phrase: 'their voice to defend their human dignity' (Nevin, 1981: 2). The homogenous imagination of Railton Road was encouraged over distance, where the Brixton Riot 'imposed a generated identity on disparate groups, muddles one happening with another, lumps opposed individuals together on the basis of superficial resemblances, and assumes that discernible emotions and attitudes were the same thing as the motivation behind events' (Phillips and Trevor, 1988: 160).

Railton Road was re-transformed into an area of 'enemies facing each other',

inviting such people as Afro-Caribbean youths in other riot areas, where the street was consequently dominated by juvenile delinquency and police operations, which presumably triggered the main stage of the riot in 1981. Finally, the *Frontline*, its vernacular over the space, was transformed, representing the outside of this street as the inside of reality.

**[The Brixton Riot] makes relationships worse between blacks, their white neighbourhoods and the police. And it set back the task of creating a multi-racial society. The Brixton Riot provided no solutions. It just encourages those who don't want one. (Davis, et al. 1981: 2)**

When the riot started in the middle of April, this racial tension out of the *Frontline* ironically described an inside phenomenon, represented by phrases such as 'alternative life in Railton Road' (Mackie, 1981: 2). This already fixed the usage of the *Frontline* as describing the tension between blacks and whites, rather than their 'doing work together that will have an important effect.'

**[T]he words 'Front Line', as far as most people understand it, came about from...a film that was done by the BBC in 1965 when they said that Railton Road was the front line of confrontation between blacks and whites in the Brixton area and...that is why it is called the *Frontline*. (Plowman n.d. cited in Keith, 2005: 70)**

Yi-Fu Tuan (1977: 54) argued how human beings require their movement through

both place and space: between the former as attachment and constraint, and the latter as venture and freedom. In doing so, he also introduced how space becomes felt as place, when it is familiar through experience, although it is continuously restructured on the latter's temporality. Nonetheless, in the case of Railton Road, the distinctive spatiality between place and space had become opposed, where place became less attached in space through a series of representations by police and media. Consequently, this dis-embedding (Giddens, 1990: 21-29) of place from space isolated this street through the image of the *Frontline*, where the transition of the community was no longer exchanged between the Afro-Caribbeans and other residents. Railton Road itself was also isolated from the surrounding areas, which consequently triggered the later gentrification of this street. I would like to discuss this further in the next section.

### **5-3. Railton Road in the surrounding areas during the riot period: the place being for other space**

As I described in the last section, the social background for the Brixton Riot was more associated with the racial tension between blacks and whites through the image constructed of this limited place, rather than the reality on the street. Meanwhile, another article from the *Guardian* (Mackie, 1981: 2; Burgess, 1985: 210) shows racial tension between black and white residents in the surrounding areas, which were occupied more by the middle class and were relatively peaceful. For instance, areas such as Shakespeare, Milton, and Spencer Roads have historically been occupied by left-wing intellectuals, and those Afro-Caribbeans and whites show a distinctive feature of being one community (the *Guardian*, 1981: 2; see also the fourth chapter of this dissertation).

On the other hand, a substantial proportion of the Railton Road working class Afro-Caribbean community was contradictorily exaggerated through its sub-cultural sphere, isolating this street further, even from other parts of Brixton. Railton Road was represented as 'a mugging street by threatening black youths' (Lindsey, 1981: 2) for those residents in the surrounding areas, typically referred to as 'a myth of modern inner city, as illegality or lack of moral standards' (Burgess, 1985: 208).

Through his argument for 'residuals and marginality' (Harvey, 1996:103), Harvey cautions us against the spatial thought of the modern periphery, where 'metaphorical place into windowless space' is supposedly sufficient unto itself, because it internalizes the effect from the outside. In other words, in those urban peripheries, the concept of place is so easily traced out by the image of the whole city rather than by itself, which consequently covers them with emptiness, endlessly represented in the relationship to the centre. This is typically seen in inner cities, particularly for migrants, where their acknowledgement is often the counterparts of suburbs through media representation, such as TV and newspapers.

Like Harvey's awareness, Railton Road was transformed into windowless place, re-enclosed by direct contradiction through the arrival of the white middle class in the surroundings. In the same article of the *Guardian*, the image of Railton Road was typically represented by one woman's voice, through her middle class residential area in the surroundings:

In Railton Road matters are different. One white woman who lives in a street off Railton Road, said yesterday: “You have to be street-wise. My boyfriend was mugged in Railton Road on Christmas Eve, and I think he didn’t know how to handle it. I will just cross the road (Railton Road) if I see these black youth, say, who look a bit threatening.” (Lindsey, 1981: 2)

In the woman’s quote above, Railton Road was a metaphorical place for her surroundings, but without any connection as a whole. On the other hand, under the circumstances, the *Frontline* no longer contained its time-space for both the inner and outer Afro-Caribbean communities, where the surrounding white middle class fixed the image of Railton Road. Once more, unlike Harvey’s notion, this metaphorical place never covered this street as a whole spatiality, instead isolating it from the same area in contradiction.

As I argued in the last chapter, Foucault’s heterotopia is place as a limited space, where imagination can be reflected into reality, but also traced to its imagination as the whole spatiality for becoming. In doing so, Foucault never denies that this micro-space must exist as infinity in the surroundings, where imaginations can be kept through the whole space.

Brothels and colonies are two extreme types of heterotopia, and if we think, after all, that the boat is a floating piece of space, a place without a place, that exists by itself, that is closed in on itself and at the same time is given over to the infinity of the sea and that, from port to port, from tack to tack, from brothel to brothel. (Foucault, 1986: 27)

Therefore, for Foucault, heterotopia doesn't seem to be any fixed spaces through their isolation imposed from the surroundings. Rather, in this heterotopia, everything can be described without any representation through the infinity of the surrounding space. In this sense, the surrounding space, such as the infinity of the sea, was also important, where things can be later traced to 'a floating piece of space' without their abstraction.

By contrast, the case of Railton Road showed that the gentrification of surrounding areas directly distinguished heterotopia from this infinity as other space for the white middle class, rather than as their restructuring of images through a whole space. In this process, Railton Road became, rather than the place as infinite for space, the place as limited for space. This is another side of Foucault's *heterotopia*, how colonialism was inscribed through their imaginations in limited spaces, which were confirmed as reality for other spaces.

**[W]hen the early Pacific explorers were seeking the Southern Continent, the guidance of this image caused them selectively to sight twigs and leaves in the ocean and low clouds on the horizon. This image caused a closure from these ambiguous cues, and unequivocal sightings of a large land mass were reported. (Ley, 1974: 254)**

Above, Ley's words, 'ocean and low clouds on the horizon' have interestingly shown the opposite meaning of *heterotopia* by Foucault, which sustains abstract, rather than absolute space. In doing so, the images are directly imposed into this limited space rather than through the surrounding space as infinite. Consequently,

the representation of this space is never kept as marginal space in sea or ocean where their uncertainty could be sustained. Although these images may be reflected into the centre space as reality with surrounding spaces, they are never exchanged with the imagination as a whole through restructuring. Furthermore, in contrast to heterotopia, the transgression of these images to the surrounding spaces is only through social norms, where even their representational status is hardly sustained. In consequence, images are further encouraged to be sustained in micro-space as 'quasi' real, which can even force negative effects that were never adapted. In particular, these colonial discourses are currently inherent in inner cities; the representation of social disorder further encourages their isolation, as mentioned prior to this section. Such a case can be seen in Railton Road, where the stage for the riot was set up in the relationship to the surrounding gentrified areas.

**Railton Road offers a street culture which reflects life in the 'ghetto'. It is the place where 'black' youth, not only local but from many parts, live on the proceeds of social security—and crime. (Burgess, 1985: 217)**

Before the riot in 1981, Railton Road was a space for otherness, which in turn enabled the restructuring of the negativity of their space through images into the reality of the inside street. In doing so, the connection to the other parts of Brixton became important, because the image of Railton Road mediates those surroundings, rather than being imposed as reality. Through this process, the image of Railton Road becomes 'a part' (but not the whole) of reality, being restructured as 'other' space beyond neither the image nor reality of this street.

**The ship is the heterotopia *par excellence*. In civilizations without boats, dreams dry up, espionage takes the place of adventure, and the police take the place of pirates. (Foucault, 1986: 27)**

The gentrification of the surrounding areas before the riot was already made by the isolation of Railton Road, keeping it in their ocean through espionage, where police could take over in place of pirates. This is another story of heterotopia as metaphorical place in windowless space, as Harvey quite similarly introduced.

Under this hypothesis, it is doubtful whether those Afro-Caribbean delinquents were brought to the area before or during the Brixton Riot, because the surrounding's image of Railton Road was already occupied by assumptions of their being muggers and drug dealers. As we saw in the *Guardian*, even if those Afro-Caribbean youths did not want to congregate, the assumption of social disorder enclosed them, such as through police investigations (see Figure 5.2). This espionage, both within and beyond the street, was no longer restructured by its spatiality, only sustaining its imaginations outside of the real. Finally, this psychological isolation of the *Frontline* justified the surrounding areas as proper residential areas, finally justifying the later gentrification of Railton Road. In terms of this, I would like to discuss further in the next section.



Figure 5.2: The two policemen stand at the junction of Shakespeare and Mayall Road, both of which are next to Railton Road. (Department of Town Planning, 1975)

#### 5.4. Railton Road after the Brixton Riot: the place becoming a part of 'other spaces'

As I've argued throughout the last section, in the period of the Brixton Riot, the image of Railton Road was fixed into the surrounding areas, where its features, both within and beyond this street, became restructured for the middle class by gentrification. This caused the street to become the main stage of the riot, where Afro-Caribbeans from other spaces consequently congregated, due to the exaggeration of the image of their delinquency from outside of this street.

Nonetheless, after the 1980s, Railton Road also became a target for gentrification

like the surrounding areas. Because of the damage of the riot, this street gave more opportunities to the local authority and estate agents to justify the refurbishment of the area (Butler, 2003: 2155-2158 and the fourth chapter of this dissertation). Consequently, the price of all properties dramatically rose, 'ironically' making Railton Road more racially mixed, due to the preferential treatments by the local authority, which caused the departure of the post-war migrants and the arrival of the white middle class. Keith, the owner of *Harmony*, explained this situation below:

*Well, they refurbished the whole suites...Then people moved out, new people came in. The local authority mixed people together, you know, rather than a lot of black people here...They wanted not too many black people in the area; they wanted to break up. So, brought more whites to mix the area... (Keith, the owner of *Harmony* on Railton Road)*

As seen in this quotation, unlike the surrounding areas, the gentrification of Railton Road was not aimed at forcing out the Afro-Caribbean residents; instead, for the riot, this street became symbolic, which brought another perspective of gentrification. Many college students and young professionals arrived in the area; meanwhile, this popularity soon caused a dramatic rise in property prices, forcing the previous tenants of Afro-Caribbeans to move out. Currently, the proportion of Afro-Caribbeans living along Railton Road is less than 10%, compared to 80% of the white middle class, such as the British and those from other European countries (approx.; through the whole interviews in Railton Road).

Another interviewee, Moses, the owner of a vintage furniture shop, explained how this snowball effect happened with minor changes to these properties, made by Lambeth or estate agents, which nevertheless brought about a significant change in the social structure of Railton Road:

*After the riot, the area and a lot of people were damaged...So, the local authority justified moving out...They had to move out to the outer edges of London, which were priced really really cheaply. So a lot of artists immediately moved to this area, because they had got the price cheap, and subsequently, had got priced up...And the people who had grown up in this area could be forced to live in the area slightly outside. (Moses, the owner of a vintage furniture shop on Railton Road)*

As the above quote shows, the middle class's flow was unstoppable here, due to the gap between the property prices of Brixton and other inner city areas of London. As Smith (1982: 145) notably pointed out, gentrification can never be considered without the relationship to suburbanization; it is like a long-term see-saw game through a whole urban economy. Unlike those suburbs that were developed equally, the success of gentrified areas depends on another see-saw game within and between the gentrified and non-gentrified areas (Smith, 1996: 85). Consequently, this uneven development on dual scales benefits the middle class, in both equal (between suburbs and gentrified areas) and unequal relationships (non-gentrified areas and gentrified areas).

[T]his process of differentiation, counterposed as it is by equalization, is

**responsible for the opposition of developed versus underdeveloped regions and nations and for the opposition of suburb and inner city. (Smith, 1982: 144)**

To Smith, the current equalization of properties between suburbs and inner cities is encouraged through the uneven development in the former, which has given other opportunities for this see-saw game, where the rise of property prices in gentrified areas is able to guarantee geographic benefit for suburbanites, still in the same direction but on a different scale. While the middle class in inner cities seek this uneven development on a micro-scale, non-gentrified areas soon become the other side of the see-saw moving up, which repeatedly differentiates inner cities as the opposite side of equal suburbs.

**At different spatial scales, capital moves geographically for different but parallel reasons, and it is this parallelism of purpose and structure that engenders a similar spatial unevenness at different scales. (Smith, 1996: 77)**

As we've seen above, unevenness on those different scales has given gentrified areas an opportunity for indirectly reconnecting to non-gentrified areas. Once the middle class in suburbs move to inner cities, these new gentrifiers are concentrated in particular areas, contradicting themselves from the other parts of inner cities. It is natural that once some streets are gentrified, other surrounding areas are joined to this 'land value valley' (Smith, 1982: 146) by not only the equality to those gentrified areas, but also the inequality from other inner city areas. In the case of Railton Road, this land value valley was already set up in the surroundings when the Brixton Riot triggered the see-saw to go up on their side, further lifting up

another see-saw in the suburbs, through even development during the same period (Figure 5.3: see also the third chapter of this dissertation, literature review).

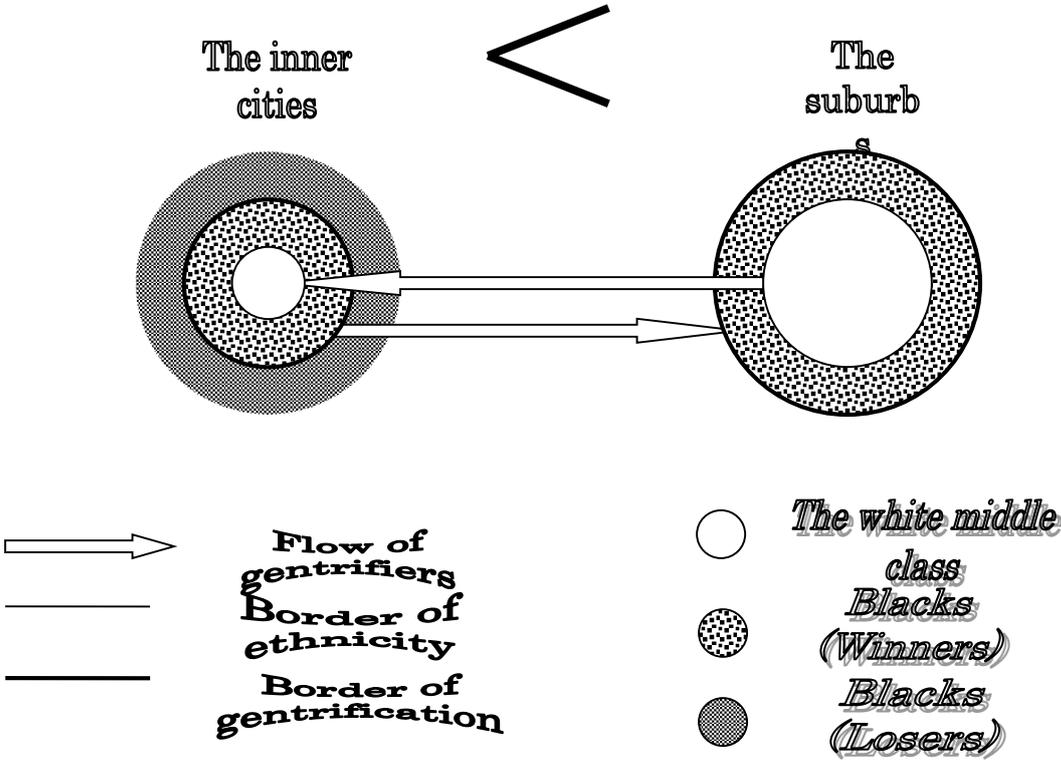


Figure 5.3: A dual spatial unevenness between inner cities and suburbs through gentrification. Although the flow of the middle class can bring about unevenness in inner cities, this also enables those in economically equal suburbs to pursue opportunities which would otherwise be limited in inner cities.

How can Brixton be ignored for much longer when there’s so much pressure, and the rest of the inner city is already gentrified?....It would only take Atlantic being turned into a wine bar, and people who hang out on the *Frontline* would have to adapt or move. (Grant, 1990: 61)

Shakespeare, Milton and Spencer Roads were further gentrified parallel to

Railton Road in the mid-90s (Butler and Robson, 2003). Supported by the *Brixton Challenge* fund, the residents here, through new estate agents, were very different from those in the earlier period, when the area was occupied by the more racially mixed lower middle class.

Due to this gentrification of Brixton throughout the whole area, many Afro-Caribbeans on Railton Road moved further south, to such areas as Croydon, where they are currently concentrated in a less developed area between those suburbs and inner cities. As a result, a number of shops and street vendors disappeared along Railton Road, except a few that are left as historical symbols nearby on Atlantic Road in Central Brixton (see Figure 5.4).



**Figure 5.4:** The southern side of Atlantic Road, which used to be on the edge of the *Frontline*. Many shops are still open (left) next to the gentrified areas (right). (Okada, 2009)



Figure 5.5: The middle of Railton Road. There is no longer the ‘front’, either on Railton Road or in Brixton. Many shops on the ground floor are waiting to be refurbished into new flats. (Okada, 2009)

Keith’s *Harmony* was one of these remaining venues; however, he explained why other businesses followed the disappearance of the Afro-Caribbean community (Figure 5.5):

*Reason? Well, business is bad, and yeah...I mean some closed long time ago and still closed, some just closed, you know. Because there is not a lot of blacks... It’s not many whites who gonna go into black person’s place. (Keith: the owner of the Harmony on Railton Road)*

Thus, contrary to the hopes of many Afro-Caribbeans, the Brixton Riot in 1981 ironically changed the social structure of Railton Road not for themselves, but for outsiders coming in. After the riot, the *George* was replaced with *Mingles* due to substantial damage in 1981. The new venue was owned by ex-borough mayor,

Lloyd Leon, of Jamaican descent, who opened this first designer club in Brixton, 'as the sort of place that black people deserved' (Grant, 1990: 58). Unlike what is seen with this replacement, most of the pre-existing businesses on Railton Road were forcibly closed after the riot because of surcharges for the illegal rates of their tenancies. The rapid decline of those other local venues influenced *Mingles*, which was also closed in 1988, after many complaints by the new white neighbourhood. Afterwards, *Mingles* was taken over by *Harmony*, which was owned by my interviewee, Keith:

*Yes, it was. It's formerly called Mingles. It had 'stigma'...Stigma over the years...It had bad reputation...Because it was raided...Police raided for drugs... (Lloyd, the owner of Mingles) had stigma when he was here, yeah... business went down...He wasn't doing good, so he sold to me... (Keith: the owner of Harmony on Railton Road)*

Interestingly, Keith also noted that most of his customers were not from Brixton, but were those who had heard of the reputation of *Mingles* as being a famous venue for 'black' entertainment, without knowing any history of the *Frontline*:

*The customers, some are the same, some not....I have new customers every year, and new people, new faces. Yeah, those customers come here now; they don't even know about the Frontline... Because don't forget some of them are 25, that was before the riot, you know... They weren't born yet; they don't even know. They probably hear, but that's it...But they come here, because it's a black entertainment place, you know? It's 30 years ago, now, they don't come here*

*because there was the riot. Because here is well-known from Mingles, people still call this space Mingles. Mingles was famous for the black people... (Keith: the owner of the Harmony on Railton Road)*

Keith's answers show that customers came to *Harmony* because of the reputation of *Mingles*, when the heritage of Afro-Caribbean migrants was lost through the disappearance of those customers around this area. Since then, *Mingles* became thought of as a black venue. Alongside customers from outside of this area, a new venue, the *Harmony*, further encouraged the abstraction of this place (see Figure 5.6). The transformation of the *George* to *Mingles*, and *Mingles* to *Harmony*, no longer indicates the emergence of Afro-Caribbean culture here, guaranteeing a proper residential area for the rise of the white middle class.



Figure 5.6: The *Harmony* (left) was formerly called *Mingles*. The other parts of the former *George* building (right-back) was mostly replaced by flats after the riot in

1981. (Okada, 2009; see also Figure 5.1)

### 5.5. Railton Road and the gentrification of Brixton: the place being 'in' other space

As I explained through the last section, since 1981, Railton Road also became a target for gentrification through its equalization among the surrounding areas, making the street more socially linked to the outside, rather than the surrounding areas. This situation has been especially encouraged by the dis-embedding of Afro-Caribbean heritage, such as the *Frontline*, generalizing them more as a part of black culture.

In this situation, it is also important how this transformation of Railton Road is also realized through the other parts of Brixton, not only through the surrounding areas, as mentioned earlier, but also through the other recently gentrified areas. Under these circumstances, the rise of Brixton Central through gentrification had been strongly linked to the social structure of Railton Road, which was also later triggered throughout the whole of Brixton. Particularly, the contradiction between the two areas was encouraged, where Railton Road became more socially gentrified while the centre was more culturally gentrified. Through this separation between the centre and periphery, Brixton became more divided for different purposes by different gentrifications (see also the next chapter about Coldharbour Lane), though sharing the same past.

Unlike the case of Railton Road, Coldharbour Lane, another main street in Brixton Central, was sustained as the social and cultural symbol of the Afro-Caribbean communities, even after the riot in 1981. However, as I discuss in the

following chapter, this continuity of Coldharbour Lane does not simply mean that the social structure of this street is the same as before, particularly because of its relationship to Railton Road after the riot. Railton Road also used to be a social and cultural centre for Afro-Caribbeans, despite its location being relatively far from Brixton Central. However, through gentrification, its cultural significance became separate from the society in the centre.

In particular, the Afro-Caribbean culture that emerged from this street benefits the gentrifiers, who seek a new cultural capital that had been lost in the suburbs. Through the dynamic division of labour, the middle class in the suburbs tend to lose their distinctive cultural identity, in contrast to their counterparts in the inner cities who maintain their cultural identities through social diversity. Among them, their distinction within the same class becomes important (Butler, 1997: 14-34; Butler and Robison, 2003: 33-48), which possibly emerges from their interaction with other social groups, such as international migrants in the post-war period.

Regarding this new cultural capital through the space for 'others', Jager (1986) argued that the Victorian houses for the working class in Melbourne became re-invented for the middle class, where the latter exists in the cultural richness of the former, but the lack of economic capital is shared by both groups. By abstracting themselves in the cultural capital of others, the new economic capital for gentrifiers can be differentiated as a secondary model of those in suburbs.

**Failing to approximate fully to the former (working class) cultural model, that is, lacking sufficient economic capital to distance themselves fully from economic**

imperatives, and yet possessing sufficient cultural capital to ape that bourgeois cultural ethos, the new middle classes are forced back upon the employment of a second cultural model – that of work, investment and saving, the Victorian work ethic. (Jager, 1986: 83)

Following this theory, the transformation of cultural capital for Afro-Caribbeans between Railton Road and Coldharbour Lane shows not only its disappearance in the former, but also the abstraction into economic capital (Bourdieu, 1985: 726) in the latter. As mentioned before, those businesses that operated before the Brixton Riot currently exist only on the side of Brixton Central, an area that currently does not show any distinction from the nearby Coldharbour Lane (see Figure 5.4). The shops in this area represent neither the current Railton Road nor Coldharbour Lane, but the former *Frontline* that is near the tube station. An interviewee, Moses, explained to me the transformation of the *Frontline* through different times and different spaces, when I asked regarding the centre of the *Frontline* in the late '70s:

*Yeah, there was dominantly West Indies population. In Railton Road, there were lots of dealing, like dozens of drugs...And there used to be a lot of people standing outside nearly up to this station (Herne Hill)...There were quite hardcore activities, mainly in the middle, and the circumstance was up to the end of. (Railton Road). (Moses: the owner of BLEU on Railton Road)*

On the other hand, when I asked him about the current cultural centre of the Afro-Caribbean population, he explained it as follows:

*I think the most symbolic thing in Brixton is the underground station. You know, when season gets more warm, people sharing outside. People around the station, there are mediums (of communication) surrounding the station... Yeah, it's (a symbol of Brixton) moved to 'usual' underground station. When you come upstairs, you do have somebody sharing this (and) sharing that (see Figure 5.7)... Someone is trying selling this. It's very symbolic of Brixton; the station is very unique... When you are there on a hot day in June, so much going on... At the same time, what happens is, you may get (the same things) in Oxford Circus and in Camden Town. (Moses: the owner of BLEU on Railton Road)*



Figure 5.7: Reverberating place? One of the current scenes at the tube station. These cultural 'pockets', as Moses called, currently exist in Central Brixton, though you may see the same scenes in other stations in London. (Okada, 2010; see also the fourth chapter of this dissertation)

Through his answers, it is also presumed that the transformation of Afro-Caribbean culture should have followed this dis-embedding of the other parts of Brixton in the centre, through normalization, as can be seen in front of the tube station. As Moses mentioned, the centralization of symbolic places, such as for Afro-Caribbeans, consequently made their culture no different from those of Oxford Circus or other parts of Central London. This reverberation of places (Beauregard 1989: 218) between periphery and centre standardized the cultural capital of Brixton, abstracting the distinction from those for economic capital.

**The economy is a space economy whose workings involve linkages across places and whose consequences reverberate throughout those places, raising (albeit temporarily) certain regions along the growth curve and relegating other regions (again temporarily) to the path of the decline. (Beauregard, 1989: 218)**

It is presumed that this reverberation of place by Beauregard should also agree with Smith and the see-saw game of uneven development (see the 4th section of this chapter), which currently happens in Brixton, transforming places for Afro-Caribbeans for the other parts of Brixton, through not only equalization but also abstraction.

## **5-6. Conclusion**

According to Mavrommatis (2003: 189; Massey, 1994: 4), through gentrification, Brixton Central currently can be divided into two areas: fixed spaces through homogenizing of pasts, and fluid spaces through representing them as multiple presents. Through the distinction, collective spaces for the former become

theatricalised, representing its time-space as cultural diversity.

Controversially, the history of gentrification along Railton Road tells us that there was also fluid spaces in the periphery of Brixton a few decades ago, which also contained collective spaces that could be represented as not only outside but also inside, as seen in the middle location of the *Frontline*.

Instead, the Brixton Riot in 1981 turned this dual spatiality of Railton Road in the opposite direction, where particular places became fixed as having a homogenous past, through the fluidity of the surroundings, not for Afro-Caribbeans, but for the white middle class. In these circumstances, the *Frontline*, the centre of Railton Road, no longer emerged through any restructuring of the images of those areas, as the white middle class typically fixed the image as that of an imaginary ghetto, triggering the riot afterwards. Since then, the former *Frontline* became empty even for Afro-Caribbeans. The street was finally absorbed into the surrounding areas through their equalization, but also differentiation for macro-economy.

Currently, Brixton Central at least has fluid space alternatively, with time-space that can be represented in fixed space, like the former *Frontline*. This time-space becomes symbolic, which tends to trace out those surrounding areas in the present centre as the past, for more upper class people. Through this circumstance, it is typical that the Brixton centre, like Coldharbour Lane, is currently represented as the past *Frontline*, by transforming their cultural capital into a part of the economics for the new middle class, blurring the distinction between them. In turn,

the rest of Brixton, such as the Afro-Caribbean culture along the current Railton Road, also became standardized in limited space as their subcultural existence. As Ley (2003: 2540) described in Bourdieu's sense, the same occupational continuum of the middle class is repeatedly identified here, transforming the high cultural and low economic capital of this inner city into a position of lower cultural capital but high economic capital.

Through these exchanges of different capitals between the centre and periphery, the gentrification of Brixton could be easily traced out as a whole and compared to those in the early period. In the next chapter, I would like to focus more on the gentrification in Central Brixton, and particularly continue to discuss the case of gentrification in Coldharbour Lane. Since the '90s, the gentrification of this street was encouraged through economic initiatives, particularly for the built environment by the *Brixton Challenge* in 1993-98. By examining these case studies in Brixton centre, the comparison to those in the early period as well as the location should become much clearer.

## Chapter Six

### The gentrification of Coldharbour Lane: the transformation of Brixton into place

*"No, no....Brixton has never been gentrified. One time, Brixton was going to be approached by gentrification. It was; it's not..."* – (Robert, the owner of the *Juice Bar* on Coldharbour Lane)

Since the mid-'90s, it's been clear that the gentrification of Brixton can most clearly be seen along Coldharbour Lane, although it is true that the rate of gentrification has declined in the last few years. In this chapter, I examine how the gentrification along this street has been encouraged since the 1980s, as well as the reason it has recently declined. Through interviews with people working on Coldharbour Lane one gets a sense that the gentrification, which was accomplished through an economic 'see-saw' game, was intentional through the development of a built environment by the government, the local authority, estate agents and entertainment companies. This has also influenced the transformation of Coldharbour Lane, where gentrification interrupted its social structure, which was thriving on local activities that represented the Black Diaspora and multiculturalism. However, Coldharbour Lane as an aesthetic place has disappeared, making this street empty and isolated from the other parts of Brixton. In this situation, the gentrification of Coldharbour Lane has still been linked to those in other areas of Brixton, but interestingly through disconnection, rather than connection.

To examine this further, I discuss how Coldharbour Lane has transformed its time-space from one for the local community into one of cultural capital in Brixton. First of all, I will introduce the historical background of Coldharbour Lane through its time-space, especially those of Afro-Caribbean communities during the '80s, as well as the start of the transformation into cultural capital for the white middle class. In the following section, I focus on the gentrification of Coldharbour Lane (through means of a built environment, such as the *Brixton Challenge*) which has served as a symbolic place for the black culture and multiculturalism of Brixton. In the last section, I present the decline of gentrification along this street over the last few years, which began to emerge as an empty space that became socially isolated from other areas, as the result of the transformation of symbolic place in Brixton. These three arguments will address the upsurge and decline of gentrification on Coldharbour Lane, and the overall effects on the transformation of places and spaces in Brixton.

### **6.1. The gentrification of Coldharbour Lane between the 1980s-1990s: the historical background and its transformation of place**

Compared to Railton Road, Coldharbour Lane is longer, and one of the main roads in Brixton, which reaches over a mile from Camberwell Green to Brixton Central. I particularly focus on the part of the road from Brixton Central to Loughborough Junction, at the middle of which is the end of the Borough of Lambeth. This area of Coldharbour Lane also belongs more to Brixton, rather than Camberwell, and is narrower than the other parts of this street. By focusing on these areas, the situation of gentrification in Coldharbour Lane should be clearly explained.

As I briefly mentioned in the last chapter, after the riot in 1981, the social and cultural symbolic streets, such as Railton Road, were removed from the peripheries to the centre of Brixton. Among them, Coldharbour Lane had significantly become one of these new symbolic streets of Brixton, where the local Afro-Caribbean people congregated socially. Moreover, alongside the transformation of Railton Road from a commercial to a residential street, Coldharbour Lane also became an economic symbol of Brixton; it was a place where vendors and shops catering to the Afro-Caribbean community were re-accumulated, a situation that also occurred on Atlantic Road and in the Brixton Market during the same period. Since then, many local pubs for the older generations of post-war migrants on Coldharbour Lane have been replaced, which was the case with the *Atlantic<sup>i</sup>*, *Coach and Horses<sup>ii</sup>*, and *Angel<sup>iii</sup>* (see also the fourth chapter of this thesis); these were the most popular pubs for Afro-Caribbean people, and were located from the middle (Loughborough Junction) to the end (Brixton Central) of Coldharbour Lane. As with Railton Road, various types of venues - such as record, hair, and beauty shops - were also here for the Afro-Caribbean community from Brixton and beyond.

However, we should also be aware that Coldharbour Lane was one of the most important streets for the Afro-Caribbean community, even before the riot, as Thueman, a secretary of the *Brixton Social Club<sup>iv</sup>*, explained. He notably describes how this street has been a symbol of Brixton for many years, though the symbolism has changed through its demographic change.

*Shuheï: At the moment, Coldharbour Lane is the most symbolic street in Brixton?*

*Thueman: Yes, it is the most symbolic street. If, for instance, say, you go to the West End and ask anybody about Brixton, they will associate it with Coldharbour Lane. Because obviously, it is one of the top borough streets in Brixton and most streets go to Coldharbour Lane. You find record shops, barbers, hair shops, more and more stuff. You know a lot of things are going on along Coldharbour Lane. People came to the market, so they came to Coldharbour Lane and Brixton.*

*Shuhe: And do you think, even 25 years ago, was Coldharbour Lane a commercial or residential street?*

*Thueman: Yes, it was more commercial rather than residential. Because most of Coldharbour Lane was a market at that stage. The market is currently on Atlantic Road, (but) it used to belong to Coldharbour Lane at that time ....But now, it has shifted, because Coldharbour Lane becomes such a major street....You know, there is so much traffic and people going up and down... So, they decided to shift the market to that side.*

As Thueman described above, the landscape of Coldharbour Lane, during the post-war period, had more of an informal style, like Railton Road and Atlantic Road. However, the location as a centre became a target for demolition in the later period (Figure 6.1), and despite minor damages from the Brixton Riot, the street became one of the main roads in Brixton Central.

<p><b>Proposal 29</b> <b>Coldharbour/Electric Lanes</b> <b>Corner Site</b></p> <p>487 TO REBUILD THE SHOP AT 428/430 COLDHARBOUR LANE AND 23 ELECTRIC LANE.</p> <p>488 The shop should be built on two storeys and should resemble the previous building as closely as possible.</p> <p><b>JUSTIFICATION</b></p> <p>489 The shop on this site was burnt down during the riots in 1981. The site is now a disused eyesore.</p> <p><b>IMPLEMENTATION</b></p> <p>490 The site is in private ownership and this 'Category B' development will be implemented privately.</p> <p><b>PROGRAMME</b></p> <p>491 The proposal should be undertaken as soon as possible.</p>	<p><b>Proposal 30</b> <b>Coldharbour Lane/Rushcroft Road</b> <b>Corner Site</b></p> <p>492 TO REBUILD THE FORMER BUILDING AT 407 COLDHARBOUR LANE FOR A SHOP AND HOUSING.</p> <p>493 The building should comprise three storeys. The ground floor should contain a shop. The upper floors should contain residential accommodation.</p> <p><b>JUSTIFICATION</b></p> <p>494 The previous building on this site was seriously damaged by fire during the riots of 1981 and was subsequently demolished. The site is now an eyesore.</p> <p><b>IMPLEMENTATION</b></p> <p>495 The site is in private ownership, and this 'Category B' development will be implemented privately.</p> <p><b>PROGRAMME</b></p> <p>496 The proposal should be undertaken as soon as possible.</p>
 <p><i>The unsightly remains of Scotty's boutique.</i></p>	 <p><i>The building on this site was destroyed during the 1981 riots. It will be re-built for a shop and housing.</i></p>

Figure 6.1: An official proposal for the demolition of housings on Coldharbour Lane. Both pictures show the rundown image of this street in the early '80s. (Brown, 1983: 52)

Consequently, a number of structural changes, including the traffic, had transformed Coldharbour Lane from a 'street' to a major 'road', which ironically made this area popular not for the local community, but for those outside of Brixton (see also the section about the history of regeneration in the fourth chapter). At the same time, economic prospects for the local community was undermined by this

change, in part due to the market being reduced to one side of Brixton Central and being shifted to Atlantic Road. These changes encouraged an outward connection of this street to beyond Brixton, rather than an inward connection within Brixton. This transformation of the street also disrupted the social and cultural activities of the local communities, which had been deeply linked to those markets.

Thus, this structural change has significantly influenced Coldharbour Lane as a symbol of Brixton; as a social and cultural capital for the local community, Brixton became differently inscribed as a place for the white middle class. Consequently, Coldharbour Lane, as the former symbol of Brixton, which had evolved as a street through historically, was reduced to only being a way to Brixton Central, where the local communities, such as the Afro-Caribbean population, were no longer a majority.

Knox, who currently works at a liquor store on Coldharbour Lane, described how this symbolic transformation changed the multiculturalism of this street. The culture, which was based on the Afro-Caribbean community, was transformed for the white middle class since their arrival in the late '90s.

*Shuhei: What kinds of people (were) in Coldharbour Lane a long time ago, like 30 years ago?*

*Knox: There was a lot of difference from what there is now...I suppose a lot of people had associated Coldharbour Lane and Railton Road with drugs, right? I know, 30 years ago, if I was there, I would buy drugs...and you*

*know that pub was the Atlantic...A lot of black people used to be there...There were a lot of record shops, the Coxtan Record shop, the Demons Hip City v over there...But now, I suppose it is more peaceful....And yeah, just it changes now, you know? 30 years ago...I suppose you would probably notice there were more Jamaicans, and obviously, you've got English people. But there was a proportion of Jamaicans...*

*Shuhe: How about 20 or 10 years ago?*

*Knox: I suppose there were still Jamaicans, but I don't know, you would notice other people... A lot of Somalis, Ethiopians, and more Africans came in...*

*Shuhe: When did more (of the) white middle class move to Coldharbour Lane?*

*Knox: 13 years ago...That pub opened. It changed from the Atlantic to the Dogstar<sup>wi</sup>. I suppose a lot of white people came here for that club and it was very popular...A lot of white people came down here for parties.*

As Knox explained above, although Coldharbour Lane has been a centre of Brixton throughout the last three decades, the social landscape of this street was constantly re-inscribed from one group to another, sustaining the Afro-Caribbean population as the overall majority. This is the reason why Coldharbour Lane has been thought of as a cosmopolitan area with multicultural communities for a long time.

On the other hand, Knox also described how this transition of the communities has been caused more by class differences than race in the last decade. The arrival of the white middle class drastically changed the social demography of this street, compared to the previous two decades which saw more connection between the lower classes. It also triggered the transformation of Coldharbour Lane into a more commercial street, rather than a residential area, where the local people used to spend most of their time. The replacement of the *Atlantic* with the *Dogstar* in 1995 (Figures 6.2 and 6.3) was an important turning point because this long-term, well-known pub for the local Afro-Caribbean population had accommodated not only the customers, but also ‘others’ through their reputable sound system and drug deals.



Figure 6.2 and Figure 6.3: The *Atlantic* (on the left) used to be the most popular pub for Afro-Caribbeans since its opening in the late ‘70s. Its replacement by *Dogstar* in the mid-‘90s was a turning point in the gentrification of Coldharbour Lane, alongside the *Brixton City Challenge* which started in the same period.

(Brown, 1983: 16; Okada, 2005)

Likewise, many other pubs along Coldharbour Lane were the places where their social and cultural identities emerged; although most local venues were closed in the same decade. Among them, the *Angel* was also replaced by the *Living Room* (Figure 6.4), which was managed by the same entertainment company as the *Dogstar*, and both were predominantly patronised by white middle class customers.

Moreover, some of the other venues (not only for the Afro-Caribbean community, but also for Jews, the Irish, and the local working class) tactically transformed their appearances for the white middle class customers. In the beginning of this millennium, the *Prince of Wales*, a pub for the white working class at the top of Coldharbour Lane, briefly changed its name to *Harlem* to suit the Black Diaspora image of this street (Figure 6.5). Although its original name soon returned, the transformation of social clientele to a predominantly white middle class population at this pub was successfully achieved and is even sustained today. These diverse changes of the local venues fragmented Coldharbour Lane through class division, rather than cultural richness accumulated through past history.



Figure 6.4: The *Living Room* in 2005. This club was formerly the *Coach and Horses*, the local pub for the Afro-Caribbean community. As you can see, the club was successfully transformed, but still reflected the image of the Black Diaspora by sustaining a limited number of the local customers. (Except for the man shown in this picture, most of the customers inside the club were from the white middle class. (Okada, 2005)



Figure 6.5: In the middle of the last decade, the *Prince of Wales*, at the end of Coldharbour Lane, changed its name to *Harlem*, alongside the gentrification of Coldharbour Lane in relation to the Black Diaspora. (Okada, 2005)

Robert, the owner of the *Juice Bar*, explained this situation of the last decade,

which had transformed the diversity of Coldharbour Lane into a time-space for capital:

*Shuhei: And do you think the gentrification of Brixton encouraged class difference like poor or rich?*

*Robert: Oh yeah, of course, it has increased the division of the community...Here was a class fluttering between working and black working classes, right, in terms of culture and arts... But now, the rent and house prices increased, and we have a situation where the white middle class are residents here, and they want to brighten their own culture and arts, and they go to the West End and the East End...and they go to Clapham...A lot of people don't go to school here, and quite intimidated by black people. They find the enclaves that they can go to, which separates (them) from the indigenous black people and the working class here...So, you get pockets of different people, keeping separate. So, there was one time, I saw that what was done in Coldharbour Lane was for everybody, and now (it's for) nobody. The lots of black people who used to live in Brixton... moved out of Brixton to go to Croydon. So now, (what) we've got in Brixton is a 'skunk-left Brixton, but the smell hangs around'...That's what we have in Brixton.*

As he mentioned above, the gentrification in the last decade brought more white middle class people to Brixton, particularly from those surrounding areas, due to property investment by estate agents (Butler, 2001: 2155-2158). Consequently, the

previous communities, such as the Afro-Caribbean community or the working class, were forced out; they were alienated from their previous, prominent existence, which had a broad interaction with the past.

Furthermore, it is notable that this transformation of social structure along Coldharbour Lane in the late '90s should be distinguished from the gentrification of the previous period, which saw fewer white people and more of the lower class. For instance, when the *Atlantic* was replaced by *Dogstar*, in the beginning of the '90s, other parts of this street still showed signs of the former social structure, predominantly the presence of working class people. Nevertheless, once the white middle class moved into particular places, Coldharbour Lane was easily centralized due to their social-economic value, through connections to other areas (Gale, 2010). Signo, a staff member of a reggae shop on Coldharbour Lane, interestingly shows his confrontation with the current dissatisfaction of this street, which is different from those in the early stages, due to the arrival of the white middle class:

*Shuhei: Do you think there are any changes in the social structure of Coldharbour Lane, like ethnicity, class or gender?*

*Signo: Probably, they tried to make more upper class, but bring more (ordinary) people. The '90s, yuppies were trying to bring in at that time. This time, they try to remove...a lot of local people - black people, poor people. Obviously, in a way, the council takes the centre of London as what Brixton would like to be. Not straightaway, but they want make their*

*market, and I suppose they want to rid of all kinds of stuff, you know, for a bigger corporation.... It's so expensive for the local person, if they live in Brixton right now...But, they decided, they gonna try to buy a house somewhere outside Brixton....What you see with even people in Croydon, you know, people used to be in this kind of area. So, you (they)'ve got 'keeping up' and 'keeping up' and 'moving up' and 'moving up'.*

As Signo described above, a sudden change in Coldharbour Lane since the end of the '90s had dis-embedded the social structure in favour of the white middle class, making this street slip away from its fabric, which had evolved in the past. As mentioned earlier, another interviewee, Robert, also started his bookshop here during the same period, for black communities that were not only from Brixton, but also from the outside. Answering another of my questions, he stated that the local communities along Coldharbour Lane no longer exist in any sense, since he started the business.

*Shuhei: Do you think the whole of Coldharbour Lane became (a street) for people from outside of Brixton, or is (it) still for people from within?*

*Robert: No, no. People from outside are coming to Coldharbour Lane. Lots of black people (who) used to go (to Coldharbour Lane) don't exist no more...First of all, you said that Brixton has community. What is community...right?*

*Shuhei: Because most people come from the outside....*

*Robert: Yeah, not community. Basically, what we'd describe is different people sharing the same space. You have the working class white people who mostly hung out in this space. And you've got the middle class white people, who benefited from the property boom. Now, they (were) rent to the outsiders who come in.*

As Robert pointed out above, the gentrification over the last decade had not brought a sense of community (even for the white middle class); rather, there are multicultural communities here. Although there were still diverse communities, including Afro-Caribbeans, their existence was merely one of 'remaining' rather than 'sustaining', which enforced a separation from the white middle class. In particular, this had been encouraged through the built environment, such as the *Brixton Challenge*, since the late '90s, which remarkably transformed the street into a place for the white middle class. I would like to discuss this further in the next section.

## **6.2. The gentrification of Coldharbour Lane and the *Brixton Challenge* in the late '90s: the transformation of place from 'between' to the margins**

As I mentioned at the end of the last section, since the late '90s, gentrification has replaced the pre-existing local community of Coldharbour Lane, which had emerged predominantly from the activities of working class Afro-Caribbean and other minority groups. This situation significantly transformed the social structure of Coldharbour Lane into one of class divisions through spatial temporariness for the white middle class. This consequently influenced the communities of Coldharbour Lane, transforming it into a place that is socially fragmented rather

than culturally accumulated through the local activities of the past.

Among them, the *Brixton City Challenge* from 1993-1998 contributed the most significant change in the social structure of Coldharbour Lane since the mid-‘80s. In the late ‘80s, the urban regeneration of Brixton Central became gradually focused on its economic development; Coldharbour Lane was one of the areas whose infrastructure was influenced by these public schemes, rather than through improvement by existing entrepreneurs (see also the section in the third chapter). Many clubs, cafés, a cinema, as well as art galleries, opened during this period. However, most of these venues were funded by new investors, who benefited from this project through the local authority and the government. The interviewee, Robert, also pointed out this impact of the *Brixton Challenge* during the mid-‘90s, when I asked him about the peak of the gentrification of Coldharbour Lane:

*Shuhei: Although you told me the gentrification wasn't successful, when did it try to become gentrified?*

*Robert: I think the Brixton Challenge...The government handed out a huge amount of money to Brixton to grab it, and it was able to gentrify Brixton. Basically, they did it on a match funding basis... meaning that, if you have £1,000 and if you fill a form, you can get a match fund like £10,000. But a lot of black people have disposable income in the bank, so they were asking for things like £2,000 or £3,000 ... right? Dog Star, Ritzy Cinema and Fridge obviously had several funds, so they could borrow funds like £20,000 or £60,000. They were a minority in the communities. So actually,*

*the grass roots people got 'peanuts'. They did not have such amounts of money for match funds, because they didn't have forms filled in, which is highly complicated, so wider classes came into Brixton.*

As he mentioned above, a sizable number of the current enterprises on Coldharbour Lane were opened or refurbished during this period, having grants from the *Brixton City Challenge*; this included the *Ritzy Cinema*, *Fridge* and *Dogstar* (see also the section on enterprise). By now, these structures have become cultural symbols of Brixton, though the other local enterprises<sup>vii</sup> before this regeneration no longer exist. Since the mid-'90s, local businesses between landmarks developed by the *Brixton Challenge* have been in decline, which has kept Coldharbour Lane as a transitional area, but no longer evolving as a whole.

As we see in this process, the strategy of the *Brixton Challenge* was focused on Brixton Central (Figure 6.6.), and also preferably focused on places, through new or improved infrastructures, which consequently forced the existing entrepreneurs into marginalized positions. This could be proven by the *Brixton Challenge Action Plan*. Its original scheme, in 1996, was particularly focused on the business area in the centre (see Figure 6.7). The *Strategic Objective 2: Encourage New Retail and Commerce* (Brixton Challenge: United Colours of Brixton, 1996: 13) particularly stressed that the economic investment in the town centre should make its social impact on the whole of Brixton as stated below:

**This strategy includes the Central Site development around the London Underground Station; The Commercial Terrace Improvement Programme**

(CTIP); and the Town Centre Regeneration Programme (TCRP)...The Central Site Encourage Development will have a tremendous impact on the surrounding area, with the potential of considerable additionality to the area and the programme. (ibid)

Consequently, nearly a third of the investment of the *Brixton Challenge* was spent on this *Strategic Objective 2* rather than the first objective, *The Improvement of Access to Jobs through Education and Quality Training*, and the fourth objective, *Encourage small business development*, both of which accounted for less than 10% of the total project (Figure 6. 6). However, the *Brixton City Challenge* had only a limited impact on the local businesses, as Rahman, a director of the organization, told a newspaper:

A great deal of energy has been spent arguing over the development of the central area of Brixton, which includes renovations to the tube station and market. The City Challenge has concentrated on this area, arguing that once it is done, it will be a trigger to other improvements, a launching point for investment in the whole Brixton area. But it has failed to attract the promised private investors - London Underground, P&O, British Rail, Railtrack, and others - so that it has decided to put £13m of City Challenge money into this scheme, rather than the original £7m- £8m. And that is money that will not go to expand small business growth or developmental work for voluntary organisations....[T]hat (the expansion of small business growth or development work for voluntary organisations) will not be done by pouring millions of pounds of public money into one central area of Brixton. (Rawman, 1995)

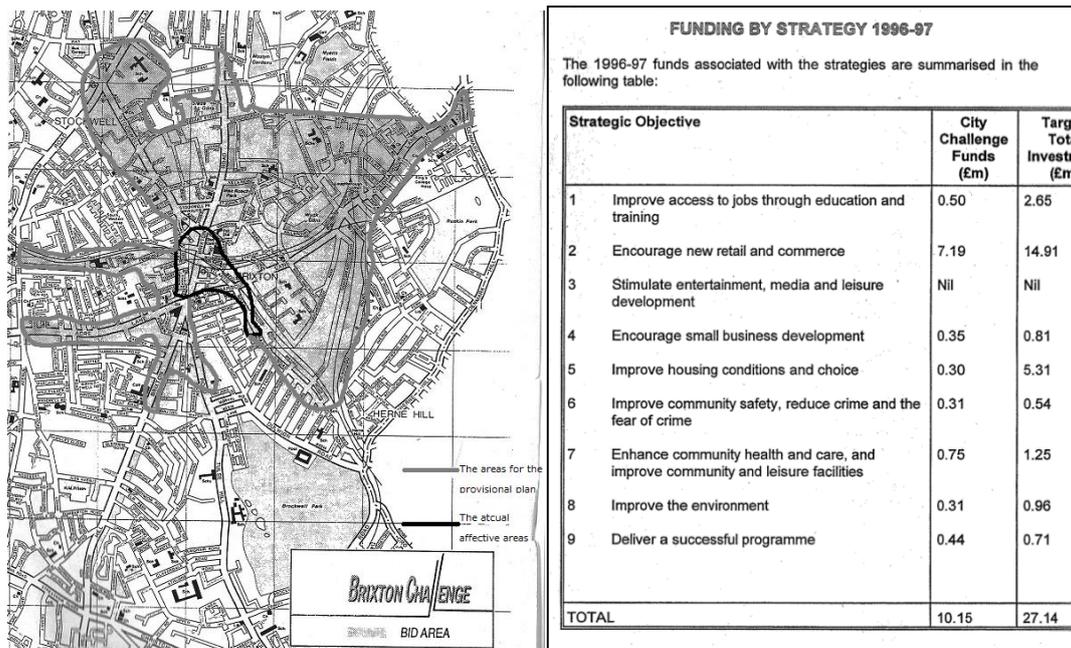


Figure 6.6 and Figure 6.7: The map on the left shows the area planned for the *Brixton City Challenge* from 1993-1998 (Brixton Challenge: United Colours of Brixton, 1996: Appendix). A grey circle shows how the provisional plan includes the outer area, such as the whole of Railton Road, Acre Lane and Coldharbour Lane. However, as we can see by the black circle, the actual investment was only limited to the business area of Brixton Central. Meanwhile, *The Brixton Challenge: Funding by Strategy from 1996-1997* (Brixton Challenge: United Colours of Brixton, 1996: 6), on the right, shows how actual investment was achieved for the encouragement of new retail and commerce (Strategic Objective #2) rather than for other strategic objectives, such as the improvement of job access through education and training (Strategic Objective #1).

Under these circumstances, it is understandable that the *Dogstar*, having one of the highest grants from the *Brixton Challenge*, was a target for the local Afro-Caribbean population in the riot in 1995 (George, n.d.: 2; Mavrommatis, 2003: 155). Furthermore, a large amount of money was also spent on the cultural

representation of the Black Diaspora, which presumably was a part of the strategy for the gentrification of Coldharbour Lane. Through these processes, Coldharbour Lane became the most symbolic street. However, this was a different kind of symbol that was unlike Railton Road in the past. As mentioned earlier, Robert also opened a bookshop during this period, when this street became economically powerful, distinguished as a cultural capital of Brixton. Conversely, this situation was different from Railton Road, where cultures of the past still remain among the current economy with the white middle class.

Robert strongly denied the existence of the Afro-Caribbean community along the current Coldharbour Lane, stating that the new generations were more economically motivated, rather than culturally. Rather, he emphasized that this street has become more of a mosaic for these newcomers, where community no longer exists in emptiness, sustaining the old generations, but through the image of the Black Diaspora created by the *Brixton Challenge*. This was clearly described in Robert's experience of Coldharbour Lane, when he changed the bookshop to the *Juice Bar*, differentiating it from the *Atlantic*, which had been the most famously known pub for the local Afro-Caribbean community:

*Shuhei: Do you think Coldharbour Lane has become a symbolic place for Brixton?*

*Robert: Yes, it used to be Electric Avenue, but now, Coldharbour Lane becomes symbolic in a double sense...Because of jobs, and it's also symbolic in terms of a lot of Caribbean people having been motivated.*

*Shuhei: Did you start this place as a jazz bar?*

*Robert: No, we started it as a bookshop.*

*Shuhei: But this bar is no longer used as a bookshop, right?*

*Robert: No...The reason why is that the demography of Brixton has changed dramatically... the other reason is a lot of communities of black people moved out of Brixton. Therefore, people no more want to buy books and no longer live in Brixton...You see the gentrification...The whole of Brixton is trying... challenged to be developed by the government, agencies challenged and pushed by the local authorities. Now in Brick Lane, the gentrification occurred naturally and it's organic, right? This is a problem, because they are forcing something...Right, one wants true gentrification or they want to recall for a really 'White Brixton'. They want to get rid of black people and keep white people here....so this is cleansing under the guise of gentrification. That is what's happening in Brixton. They (white people) don't want to be gentrified....because they could do (cleansing).*

According to Taylor (1992: 114-118; 2002: 88-98), the black middle class in American cities have always confronted their differences in gentrified areas, where the transition from insiders to outsiders takes place. These black newcomers in inner cities rather paved a way for the white middle class, who have followed the gentrification of their wealthy predecessors (Schaffer and Smith, 1986: 359; Lee,

Slate and Wyly, 2008: 111). This idea is also supported by Schaffer and Smith's research in Harlem, where the beginning of gentrification by upwardly mobile blacks triggered the arrival of white upper middle classes in the same area (Schaffer and Smith, 1986: 359; Smith, 1996: 159-161).

**The inescapable conclusion is that unless Harlem defies all the empirical trends, the process might well begin as black gentrification, but any wholesale rehabilitation of Central Harlem would necessarily involve a considerable influx of middle- and upper -class whites. (Schaffer and Smith, 1986: 359; Lee, Slater and Wyly, 2008: 111)**

Like this case, the gentrification of Coldharbour Lane by younger generations has never encouraged the upward shift of the whole community, but it has rather encouraged the fragmentation between the local Afro-Caribbeans and the white middle class. Furthermore, the gentrification of Coldharbour Lane by the government, local authority and estate agents also transformed this street from 'belonging' to 'not belonging' for Afro-Caribbean communities, where the social and cultural capital thriving through their history were completely replaced with economic capital for the white middle class. By the '90s, Coldharbour Lane was culturally accumulated by different social groups, rather than people who were well disposed toward each other.

When we go back to an argument by Taylor, this migration of middle class blacks into gentrified areas blurred the distinction between black communities from the past and present into a negativity of space (Derrida, 1982: 42; Bergson, 1911: 9-10).

Ironically, this fragmentation of the community has easily distributed the cultural representation of the Black Diaspora through gentrification, where those who are well adapted are successful, and the others are not. In turn, through this image of Coldharbour Lane, the Afro-Caribbean community became differentiated but never interacted with.

Ironically, Robert's comment reflects his section of Coldharbour Lane, where most of the customers are currently whites, unlike the former *Atlantic*, which he called an ethno pub attracting the local Afro-Caribbeans.

The negativity of space was notably claimed by Bergson in the beginning of the last century, through its emphatic victory over his time as 'duration' (Bergson, 1911). According to him, although each moment of time must be always sustained through its succession, in modernity, the different times tend to be isolated through their dispositions in time-space.

**[T]he flow of time might assume an infinite rapidity, the entire past, present, and future of material objects or of isolated systems might be spread out all at once in space, without there being anything to change either in the formulae of scientist or even in the languages of common sense. (Bergson, 1911: 9-10)**

Likewise, through economic temporal spatiality, time in Coldharbour Lane has become infinite rapidity, where only material objects or their isolated systems are spread out in space at the end of time. As Derrida similarly claimed, time should be separated, becoming negativity of points in space; it must be a succession of

'now' throughout the past, present and future. Here, Derrida's critique of Heidegger shows how abstraction between time and space make time-space as a container to inscribe the present as the 'differentiated' past and future.

**Heidegger underlines that in this way space is only thought of as time. Space is time to the extent that space is determined on the basis of the (first or last) negativity of the point. (Derrida, 1982: 43)**

The quotation above reminds us how current urban cosmopolitanism, through gentrification, consists of these negativities of points in the perpetual incoherence of time-space with time. This was also the awareness of those geographers such as Massey (1994: 146-156), who conceived of time as the negativity of point for her global place. In doing so, she never neglects a point - that a sense of place shouldn't be merely a container for different components of space without time - through its conceptualization as time-space.

**If places can be conceptualized in terms of the social interactions which they tie together, then it is also the case that these interactions themselves are not motionless things, frozen in time. They are process. (Massey, 1994: 155)**

Nevertheless, in the case of Coldharbour Lane, its multiplicity of place has substantially emerged through the different elements from the outside, where they were already fragmented within each other, as negativity of points in frozen time.

Meanwhile, we are also able to see the positive side of time-space in Heidegger's work, where the multiplicity of place can be differently approached. Notably,

Heidegger reclaimed time-space through place, referring to the term, *bridge*, which was also seen in Simmel's work in an opposite way (Heidegger, 1971: 154 -155; Simmel, 1950; Harvey, 1996: 268) (see also the third chapter of this dissertation). According to Simmel, human activities in modern space can be explained by both connection (*bridges*) and separation (*doors*), differentiated into a particular unity in their continuity, while they also exist in the infinity of space as a whole. To put it another way, he cynically recognized that these small portions of space only have their own unity through time-space, but no longer accumulate as a whole. By contrast, Heidegger gives another perspective of *bridges* for the same time-space through the accumulation of the whole space.

**The location is not already there before the bridge is. Before the bridge stands, there are of course many spots along the stream that can be occupied by something. One of them proves to be a location, and does so because of the bridge. Thus bridge does not first come to a location to stand in it; rather a location comes into existence by virtue of a bridge. (Heidegger, 1971: 154 cited in Harvey, 1996: 268)**

Thus, for Heidegger, *bridge* does not exist in a container, where time-space holds each single unity without any incorporation of others. Rather, his *bridge* can be plotted between these independent collectives, by setting out the time-space to connect them as a whole. In this sense, Heidegger's *bridge* can emerge from anywhere, which never becomes enclosed by time-space, but breaks out of it.

This also proves a considerable misunderstanding of *bridge*, namely that time-

space has been widely accepted as a piece of space disconnected from the surroundings. Under the recognition of its separation from the whole space, Heidegger's time-space had been conceived of as another geometry, where the other parts of macro-space are dis-embedded and recollected in proximity. For a long time, this misunderstanding of Heidegger's *bridge* as micro-space has interwoven with his idea of *Dasein*, where time-space emerges as a whole space, rather than 'another part' of space:

**[*Dasein*] does not fill up a bit of space as a Real Thing or item of equipment would, so that the boundaries dividing it from the surrounding space would themselves just define that space spatiality. '*Dasein* takes space in.' ...It is by no means just present-at-hand at the position in space which its body fills up. (Malpas, 2006:128-129 cited in Heidegger, 1962: 70; 1996: 368)**

Through this citation, one can see how his time-space has been misconceived as micro-space through its enclosure from other spaces, rather than his intention of opening through its connection to them.

Coldharbour Lane became a micro-space enclosed in a *location*, before it became connected via a *bridge* (see also the third chapter). Although this street became a multicultural place after its gentrification, the arrival of the white middle class caused a distinction between the replaced local Afro-Caribbean community and the new generations of Afro-Caribbeans, which was conceived of as one 'space spatiality' (Malpas, 2006: 128-129), despite remaining disconnected in reality. The current cosmopolitanism of Coldharbour Lane merely exists as symbolic without

time-space, blurring the Afro-Caribbean community between long term and recent generations, between those who were 'left' and those who are 'coming'. Ironically, this street currently comes to resemble the *bridge* in Simmel, in which *location* was enclosed by *doors*, before it stands for the connection of the whole space (see also the literature review, the third chapter of this dissertation).

Luis, the owner of *414*, a long-running reggae club, interestingly described the gentrification of Coldharbour Lane as causing the decline of another micro-space in Brixton:

*Shuhei: Do you think, at the moment, compared to before the Brixton Riot...Coldharbour Lane has become a symbol of Brixton?*

*Luis: No, Coldharbour Lane 'took over' Railton Road...Railton Road is stopping by the decline of the Frontline and 'came' to Coldharbour Lane... But what came to Coldharbour Lane from Railton Road is, I think, the same...If you live in Brixton, (and) you come to Coldharbour Lane, you see 'who else' is in Brixton.*

Through the transformation of these symbolic streets, the other parts of Brixton also became enclosed as micro-space, apart from their time-space as a whole. A while ago, Coldharbour Lane also had time-space connected to other parts of Brixton. However, for the location as a centre, Coldharbour Lane has been transformed into a symbolic place through the closure of Brixton's time-space. Meanwhile, this is also the reason why Railton Road has been transformed into

residential areas for the white middle class since the riot; where time-space no longer emerged in this marginalized space, it became enclosed at the centre, such as on Coldharbour Lane.

Furthermore, this enclosure of time-space on Coldharbour Lane also caused other symbolic places in Brixton to be without the whole. For instance, Acre Lane, the middle part of Brixton, also became a shopping area for mega-stores (see also the fourth chapter of this dissertation), such as with the arrival of Tesco and Lidl in the last decade, which replaced the previously existing Afro-Caribbeans in the local community. These differentiations of the surroundings also encouraged the symbolic contradiction between the multiplicity of the centre and the homogeneity of the margins, which even removed the time-space of Brixton that was already enclosed in Coldharbour Lane. This contradiction further drew the diverse culture and the white middle class through each space without the connection as a whole.

Among them, Signo interestingly pointed out this re-enclosure of Coldharbour Lane through the different consumption practices of the white middle class in the surrounding areas, which reduced the number of customers in the local shops.

*Shuhei: Do you feel any changes in Coldharbour Lane and Brixton 10 years ago?*

*Or do you have any ideas about difference?*

*Signo: Yeah, the change is not many people come here as much as one time...Due to whatever reasons, fewer people come to shop. One time, (Coldharbour Lane) was a very, very high-concentration area where people come...you*

*know, for shopping or market. But due to car parking, and the fact we've got a big Tesco up road.... A lot of things make difference today.. in general.*

*Shuhei: So, even if they come here, after shopping, they go to another shop? They don't stay here for a long time...*

*Signo: Yeah, because big corporations probably bring more money to the Council in terms of business. So, you know, they gonna get preferable treatment... And what they've done to me is 'everybody else' comes here to look, man... You've got a 'local harbour', you understand?*

As Signo mentioned above, although the cultural multiplicity of Coldharbour Lane hasn't changed even after gentrification, the number of their customers has definitely decreased. Meanwhile, the social connection of the middle class emerged beyond their local communities (Patrick, 2010), coming into such symbolic streets as Coldharbour Lane for culture, Railton Road for residence and Acre Lane for shopping. Consequently, the pre-existing local communities, such as the working class Afro-Caribbeans, were excluded from these different places that were enclosed for the gentrifiers.

Like this situation, the macro spatial differentiation for the white middle class, in turn, forced the existing working class into a further micro-space, in which time-space no longer played the role of a *bridge*, as Heidegger described, but merely played the role of a location, isolating them from the other parts of Brixton. Furthermore, it consequently removed the continuation of their local activities

through the time-space as a whole, replacing each of the micro-spaces with a more classical value of gentrification, as Robert described in terms of 'White Brixton'. I would like to discuss this further in the next section.

### **6.3. The gentrification of Coldharbour Lane and its decline: the transformation of emptiness from one place to another**

**“There was a ‘panic’ of Coldharbour Lane. There was a large change...maybe 8 years ago...There were lots of different types of shops with ‘strong bias’....It’s really a nice place to visit... Mainly it seems to go back to ‘spoiled’...It seems to be (a) very ‘wasted’ view.” - Moses, the owner of BLEU on Railton Road**

As I've mentioned previously, Coldharbour Lane had been the most significant target for gentrification since the mid-'90s, transforming the time-space of Brixton into cultural symbols through its enclosure. Moreover, this enclosure of time-space also differentiated other areas in the surroundings, mainly through homogenizing uses, such as transforming them into residential areas or shopping streets for the white middle class.

However, this situation has significantly changed over the last few years, where a number of clubs and galleries were closed, and vacant venues are still significantly visible even on the Brixton Central side of this road. Among those affected, my interviewee, Moses, also closed his vintage furniture shop four years ago. He interestingly stated that one reason for his moving to Hearn Hill is the economic decline of Coldharbour Lane, which transformed its time-space into

emptiness over the last few years.

*Shuhei: Now, Coldharbour Lane kind of becomes a symbol of Brixton?*

*Moses: That's in the past...*

*Shuhei: It's not now?*

*Moses: Not really...It did at one point. But now, it's kind of going down... Maybe like 8 years ago, there used to be 4 or 5 good night clubs, and all different types of shops on one road, and quite safe... Now, it becomes a quite dangerous place.*

Under the circumstances, it is particularly interesting that one of the reasons for the economic recession in Coldharbour Lane was triggered by its gentrification, which had initially encouraged the cultural representation of the Black Diaspora. As mentioned earlier, although the presence of the Afro-Caribbean community was encouraged by these strategies, such as the *Brixton Challenge* in the mid-'90s, their success was not only limited but also brief, forcing a large proportion of businesses to close or change (Figure 6.8). Through this economic intervention, the social and cultural infrastructure of Coldharbour Lane was completely cut off and was never reconnected.



Figure 6.8: One example of a venue in transition (from above-left: *Coach and Horses* → *Living Room* → *Lobo Fishers* → *Living Bar*). A ‘room’ now returns. A new look at the *Living Room (Living Bar)*, 5 years after the closure of the last one (bottom). (Lambert, 1975; Okada, 2005, 2009, 2010 and 2012)

Robert, the owner of the *Juice Bar*, also explained how the representation of black culture along Coldharbour Lane ironically became a turning point in the replacement of their community in the later period:

*Shuhei: Do you think the gentrification of Brixton is related to Black or African Diaspora? You know there is one pub called the Prince of Wales...I think, three or four years ago, they changed the name to 'Harlem'.*

*Robert: Yeah, and it didn't work. It goes to prove that anything to do with black culture doesn't work, and they realized that black culture exists no more. So, they changed it to Harlem, and it didn't work. They realized they had to pull on the white middle class, and that's what they've done (see also Figure 5.5).*

*Shuhei: So they're happy that it was unsuccessful?*

*Robert: Yeah, they take the white middle class. That's what they said... It's not gentrification. It's a cleansing process that's naturally happening.*

Ironically, Robert's business also followed this process, after the venue was finally closed in 2010. As mentioned earlier, he opened a bookshop for black intellectuals a decade ago, and changed it to a trendy bar later, because of the demographic change of Coldharbour Lane. This was also replaced by a vintage clothing shop, before its closure in 2010. The customers of his first bookshop were not only from Brixton, but also from other European countries. At the moment, Robert is

managing two venues in Dalston (a bar) and Clapham (a vintage clothing shop) - both of which are also gentrified areas - without those grass roots people in Brixton.

Finally, Coldharbour Lane, for the local Afro-Caribbean community, was corrupted through gentrification, which had 're'-integrated the area in favour of the white middle class (Figures 6.9 and 6.10). However, the whole of this street ultimately became a 'no-go' area, which did not bring any economic benefit for either the gentrifiers or the local community. Due to this process, Coldharbour Lane 'temporally' became empty space (Figure 6.11), only giving opportunities to informal markets, drug deals or mugging.



Figure 6.9 and Figure 6.10: After a period of being called the *Harlem*, The *Prince of Wales* (above) is currently back to being the *Prince* (below), a more luxurious version, at the end of Coldharbour Lane. (Editor, 2011; Okada, 2010)





Figure 6. 11: Coldharbour Lane on a weekend. Unlike its peak a decade ago, a large number of the local shops were vacant, and now gentrified restaurants, bars and clubs were also shut down. (Okada, 2010)

*Shuhei: Do you think Coldharbour Lane is also symbolic for the African Diaspora?*

*Robert: No, no. Without a doubt, no. I mean, Coldharbour Lane has been no one's place; I think a lot of drug people are on Coldharbour Lane.*

*Shuhei: So, you mean Coldharbour Lane is symbolic for illegality?*

*Robert: It's also symbolic for the 'notorious' place. Not only just for the black community. What's happening is white communities come to Coldharbour Lane to get drugs.*

*Shuhei: After the gentrification, did crime on Coldharbour Lane increase?*

*Robert: Yeah, it increased without a doubt. Basically, before, blacks used to have*

*were mostly herbal leaf, hash, something like bush, right? But, actually now, after the white middle class came, cocaine and crack... So what's happening is a lot of people outside are coming in for more hardcore drugs.*

Robert's statement above, 'no one's place', was also supported by another interviewee, Luis. She similarly described the current Coldharbour Lane as a street in which social emptiness occurred, similar to what happened before to Railton Road. According to her, this can be traced to the situation of Coldharbour Lane since the riot, and moreover, a similar situation will happen later somewhere else.

*Luis: Because, after '81, the majority of the riot happened on Railton Road. There used to be a lot of shops down ... and the majority of shops is still in disrepair...After the fires, the damage has been done to Railton Road...and it just came to Coldharbour Lane...In the last few years, the (drug) deal or bad things happened in Coldharbour Lane, and (they) tackled, tackled and tackled. And two, three streets down, they've got problem....They push it down, and it 'pops up' somewhere else.*

Although Luis initially denied those incentives and disincentives by local authorities or estate agents, she later agreed that the transformation of emptiness between these symbolic streets were encouraged by them, which consequently justified the regeneration of Brixton, place by place. Among them, for instance, Railton Road has currently become a safe residential area for the white middle class, while Coldharbour Lane became an informal market through its segregation

from Railton Road.

#### 6.4. Conclusion

Throughout the whole of this chapter, I have examined how Coldharbour Lane has transformed the time-space of Brixton into a cultural symbolic space for the white middle class, separating out other areas for gentrification. Although the multiplicity of spatial temporariness was represented through diverse communities along Coldharbour Lane, they have become more fragmented, contrasting with their past connection to the whole of Brixton.

Consequently, the local communities, such as the Afro-Caribbeans, were segregated from each other, being forced to congregate as an excluded group. Under the circumstances, whether or not they could benefit from regenerations like the *Brixton Challenge*, these local people tend to be left here as an informal economy, transformed into 'someone else' and finally to 'no one'. This encourages the current gentrification of Coldharbour Lane through more representation of whiteness, following the unsuccessful attempt to include black cultures in the early period. Previously, a similar situation happened to Railton Road, which is currently a residential area for the white middle class. This presumably will happen again somewhere else in the near future, for another symbolic transformation through the gentrification of Brixton.

To theorise this further, in the next chapter, I would like to argue with regards to the possibility of places becoming the next symbol of Brixton, and the difference from the past. In particular, I would like to focus on the latest case in Brixton

Village, regarding Brixton Market's regeneration on the east side. By more aesthetic ways than those implemented on Railton Road and Coldharbour Lane, the project by the *Space Makers Agency* here has had more similarity to the gentrification of other areas, such as Brick Lane in East London. Their cultural representation was geared more towards the middle class since the very beginning, which removed the pre-existing local shops in a much shorter period. This signifies that the gentrification of Brixton is now moving toward the final stage of its transformation of places and spaces.

## Chapter Seven

### **A space ‘for’ difference or difference ‘within’ space: the regeneration and creative community of the east side of Brixton Village from 2009-2010**

In the last two chapters, I examined how two streets in Brixton have been materially and symbolically transformed into places which are alienated from their communities, and consequently ‘re’-transformed into empty spaces. For instance, the symbolic streets of Brixton in the past, such as Railton Road, have transformed into a new residential area for the white middle class. Meanwhile, Coldharbour Lane, which replaced Railton Road as a symbol of Brixton in the ‘90s, has been alienated by losing its own history in becoming a place of ‘quasi’-cultural diversity and middle class cultural capital. Moreover, this loss of ‘authenticity’ has also been seen in the recent regeneration of Brixton Central, where socially excluded groups from the whole of Brixton have been forced to congregate in this narrow space, and are dis-embedded even within this space.

In this chapter, I explore the new symbolic places of Brixton, rather than the previous ones such as Railton Road, Coldharbour Lane and Brixton Central Square, where their roots of place have already been lost. Here, I introduce Brixton Village, one of the parts of *Brixton Market*, which has become a new symbolic place for Brixton through its regeneration by the *Space Makers Agency*.

## 7.1. The 'emptiness' of Brixton Village: its historical and geographical backgrounds

Since the late 19th century, Brixton Village (formerly the Granville Arcade<sup>viii</sup>) has been composed of Brixton Market with Reliance Arcade<sup>ix</sup> and Market Low<sup>x</sup> since 1937 (Piper, 1996: 61). All the markets were covered by arcades in 1929 (ibid), making them the oldest indoor market in London. Compared to the other two areas of Brixton Market, the character of Brixton Village up to the late 1980s has been marked by its more local shops - such as butchers, fishmongers and greengrocers as well as textile shops (see Figures 7.1 and 7.2). Even now, the west side of Brixton Village mainly consists of meat, fish, vegetable, and fruit shops, as well as African beauty shops, which are mostly adapted to the local community and their daily lives (see Figure 7.3).



Figure 7.1 and Figure 7.2: Granville Arcade before it was renamed 'Brixton Village'.

As we can see, the majority of the customers were from Afro-Caribbean neighbourhoods since the post-war period, who consumed low-cost foods and clothes related to their cultural heritage. (The Department of Town Planning, 1985)



Figure 7.3: The current west side of Brixton Village. As we can see, this side of the market still sustains the same social landscape for the local Afro-Caribbeans. (Okada. 2011)

Bobby, a member of staff at *ETTA's Seafood Kitchen*<sup>xi</sup>, the recently opened fish restaurant, explained this 'glory' of Brixton Village, particularly with regards to the post-war Caribbean migrants.

*Shuhei: What kinds of shops (were there), before you opened on this side of Brixton Village in the past?*

*Bobby: Basically, the whole of the market was mainly selling fish. This side of (Brixton) Market used to be Granville Arcade before it became Brixton*

*Village. It was known internationally, a best place to get fish. And then, a large population of African Caribbean sold African-Caribbean foods. Lots of stores create demands, and there were a few brothers selling beauty. That sort of necessities...*

On the other hand, alongside the decline of the Afro-Caribbean community in Brixton, most of these local shops on the east side, which were further from Brixton Central, were closed by the mid-'90s. This area was also located at the edge of Brixton market itself, which has been most influenced by this demographic change. In addition, most tenancies in the west side of Brixton Village have gradually been transformed into shops such as discount or second-hand clothes shops, pound shops and recycle shops, through the devaluation of the market over the last decade. There was also the growth of some underground shops with cheap rent, such as tattoo shops, second-hand record stores, and Rastafarian shops during this period. These types of informal markets are normally located in economically low value areas, showing the economic decline in the west side of Brixton Village.

By the end of 2009, the decline of the west side of Brixton Village became even more significant, as most of these shops were closed and the tenancies became vacant. On the other hand, this also encouraged Brixton Village to be a 'meeting place' for more 'deviant' groups, particularly for drug deals and drunk behaviour, due to the empty space where they could stay for longer than before (see Figure 7.4). Samah opened the Moroccan restaurant, the *Olive Tree*<sup>xii</sup>, in the beginning of 2010, at the height of the market's emptiness:



Figure 7.4: The space needs to be 'blessed'. A street preacher was walking across the avenues of Brixton Village. A Rastafarian shop, mentioned by Samah (at the back), was also closed later. (Okada, 2008)

*Samah: It was nothing. It's a ghost market.*

*Shuhei: When you came here in February?*

*Samah: Yeah, when (I came here) that shop was here, Rastafarian shop (see Figure 7.4). And that old shop... West Indian foods. But ...about 80% of (the whole) market was empty...The majority of the units, more than 18 units were empty. And now, everything was gone... Yeah it was dangerous. You know, mostly alcoholics, drugs, something like that. Troubles...*

As we can see in his answers, Samah did not even know about the existence of

Brixton Village for nearly 12 years of his life in Brixton. When he came here, he only had an image about Brixton Village as a place of emptiness, where crime and illegal activities still happened, unlike the other parts of Brixton which were much safer. Also, unlike the other parts of Brixton Market, Brixton Village, particularly the east side, was a forgotten space for most people living in Brixton; it was a place where they never even passed through in their daily lives. On the other hand, this situation has given new tenants like Samah cheaper rent for his business, unlike the other parts of Brixton which became more popular.

Moreover, this space became available not only to these small entrepreneurs, but also to the local authority and landlords. The availability of the east side has encouraged them to consider a dynamic regeneration and upscaling through the removal of the existing tenants for the whole of Brixton Village, including the west side. Therefore, the emptiness of the east side justified regenerating the whole of the market, where half of it was still important to the daily lives of the local community. However, this intention was later interrupted by the local campaign against it. So, how would they negotiate the regeneration of Brixton Village between the emptiness and existing community on both sides? I will address this with regards to the *Space Makers Agency* in the next section.

## **7.2. The regeneration of the east side of Brixton Village by the *Space Makers Agency* from 2009-2010**

The devaluation of the east side recently became a serious problem for the local authority and the building owner of Brixton Village, who needed to find a balance between an upscale market and the sustainability of the local community. In this

situation, *London Associated Properties* (LAP)<sup>xiii</sup> entered into discussions with Lambeth Council, which has also been cautious about the recent recession of the east side of Brixton Village. Unlike LAP's intention to replace all the properties in the market, Lambeth supported the sustainability of the local community, where both groups consequently sought another party for the regeneration. Through a series of discussions, Lambeth introduced one social organization to LAP, which was just launched that same summer, 2009. This organization was called the *Space Makers Agency*, a diverse intellectual group that deals with the urban regeneration of the inner cities in the UK and other parts of Europe. According to the website of the *Space Makers Agency*, the main purpose for their organization is to recreate unused or 'underused' spaces of the community through the reconnection of these spaces with their activities. For this purpose, they tried to create three bridges: 1. between local communities, property owners, local authorities, policy-makers and others; 2. between the energy, enthusiasm and deep pragmatism of grassroots projects and the reputation, specialist knowledge and resources of established institutions; 3. between the creative explosion of projects making temporary use of empty space and the long-term future of our local economies and communities (*The Space Makers Agency*, 2011). As we can see in these three bridges, their involvement in the regeneration of the community deeply depended on their role of 'betweenness', as the third party who tried to bridge the contradiction between the benefits to the local communities and the local authority and owners. In terms of the regeneration of Brixton Village, Dougald, the leader of the *Space Makers Agency* explained how they found this first initial project since the organization started in the aftermath of the discussions between Lambeth and the landlord:

*Dougald: The situation when we started the project in Brixton Village was that the owner had a plan to redevelop that (east) side, which would have probably closed down most of business, because they were going to move everybody out. They made a fake promise about the people having a right to return. But how would those businesses survive during the period when they were out of the market? It would be the end of most of the traditional businesses in there. There have been successful local campaigns to stop that, and the owner was set to redraw the plan. And then, the owner approached the Lambeth Council to talk about doing something with a large number of empty shops. There were twenty empty units at that point, so Lambeth introduced us to the owner, and we said to the owner, "If something creative was gonna happen to the empty shops, you should be funding it. Because you would benefit, if you succeed."*

As we can see in this comment, although their projects were aimed at connecting a range of businesses from both the existing and new communities, the concept of regeneration by the *Space Makers Agency* mainly focused on the term 'space', where inactive communities were to be activated. As we can see in the series of phrases introducing the *Space Makers Agency*, they are often introduced as being on a 'mission' to create social space and a sustainable local community, by 'researching the changing ways in which people are using space and develop new ways of thinking about the spaces in which we live, work and play' (*ClearlySo*, 2010). Also, in Brixton Village, they are introduced as an organization that's meant to 'fill the vacant properties' with LAP and Lambeth Council (*Urban 75*, 2010),

where they create both temporary and permanent occupants, in order to find creative, community-oriented and enterprising projects to ‘make use of space’ (*The Space Makers Agency*, 2011). Eleanor, who opened the café bar, *Brick Box*<sup>xiv</sup>, and later joined the *Space Makers Agency*, described their basic concept of space:

*Eleanor: He (Dougald) believes emptiness should be used for positive reasons.*

*Before the recession when people were able to do business more successfully, most of the city centre, nearly all of the shops were occupied. But, in the last two or three years, because of the recession, a lot of people’s gone bankrupt. They were not able to pay rent, so even in a big firm like ‘Woolworth’ was closed down. There is a lot of gaps between the high streets, because small businesses gone bankrupt, but also quite big chains as well. I mean, Bradford, where I am from, has the largest empty shops in the community. That’s one-third of the shops empty in the city centre. So, it’s a serious problem, really... I think it’s about making space rather than trying to do anything with the traditional business. I mean, it’s ‘making the space around those spaces vibrant.’ Because if/when they were more isolated, because part of the market was derogated, I think that’s negative for business, because people have a bad impression about the market. So, I suppose it’s about making the whole area feel more vibrant rather than the pocket business around empty space...*

For this reason, in September 2009, before the *Space Makers Agency* started the regeneration of Brixton Village, they negotiated with LAP to set up a unique rent

system to attract new tenants to this 'empty' space. In October 2009, the first period of this project, rents for these new tenants through the *Space Makers Agency* were set up to be free for the first three months. As Dougald explained below, they also collected the first tenants through a competition, where they could selectively choose the types of business run by the new tenants in order to keep the uniqueness of Brixton Village in line with the existing local shops.

*Dougald: The next thing we said was, rather than filling the shops with artists, what we need was the mixture of temporally creative project, community project, with the business having roots in Brixton. They wanted to use the rent for a period to get the business off the ground. So, we ran an open competition where you can (submit) the best suitable proposal for the market. We set up to three months to use the shops for free. We had an open evening to put out local flyers, also online, and also through Lambeth on contact, and they emailed a lot of people... A hundred people came to the open evening, and at the end of the evening, we said, "You have a week to propose what you would like to do with the shops," and we received 98 proposals. We chose 30 of those proposals, half of which were 'deliberately' temporal projects; the other half had aspirations for the long term. And one of the things we were looking for in a long-term proposal was a business project that was not directly competing with existing traders in the market. So, for example, Cornercopia<sup>xv</sup> and daily cafés, a sort of foods... We were looking at the market using an equal system, so we maximized on bringing in new businesses and new organizations... I wouldn't say it was perfect, but I*

*would say many traders themselves were able to do those relationships in a way which had 'militated' some of the potential difficulties between new and old traders. That was our approach there...*

Using this selection, the first new tenants through the *Space Makers Agency* was composed of such shops as clothing, antique, organic food, sweets, restaurants, cafés, galleries, and art schools. Finally, by the end of November, the 20 vacant properties on the east side were all occupied, with their celebration party for the birth of new Brixton Village (see Figure 7.5). This successful change of Brixton Village was extensively covered by the media, including major outlets such as BBC and *Timeout*. For instance, BBC One's program, *Inside Out* (2010), featured the regeneration by the *Space Makers Agency* as one of the successful stories in 'London's Ghost High Street', and *Timeout* introduced new Brixton Village as 'sprouting', where 'the once derelict and dodgy end of Brixton is wriggling out of its caterpillar state...and the effect is extraordinary'.



Figure 7.5: The east side of Brixton Village ‘before’ and ‘after’ the regeneration by the *Space Makers Agency* from 2009-2010. As we can see, most of the vacant shops (on the left) are occupied by new tenants (on the right), who now celebrate the birth of new Brixton Village. (The *Space Makers Agency*, 2010)

As we can see through such media coverage, including that from the *Space Makers Agency* itself, the regeneration of Brixton Village was represented as a ‘sensational’ story, where one of the markets in downtown suddenly became a vibrant space, attracting people to unexpected and diverse experiences. As Sharon Zukin (2011) argued with reference to New York’s Soho in 1970, these media representations became important for ‘creative districts’, and now, the internet has become an important key, particularly for the governors of these creative communities. However, through these representations, creative districts, such as for artists or writers, become transformed from their production of space to the consumption of space, where people come for reputation rather than for

representation (ibid). In this sense, as we can see in the media comments on Brixton Village, at least, that the urban regeneration of Brixton Village by the *Space Makers Agency* was successful in attracting a broader range of people, who had never been and known this space before. But what about the people who were already inside of this space and had their own businesses? Were they also attracted by this project and these newcomers?

### **7.3. The regeneration of the east side of Brixton Village: creative or utopian?**

Contrary to the media representation, there was a controversy between the imagination and reality of Brixton Village. In particular, in the east side of Brixton Village, the contradiction of the space became much clearer when comparing the shops of the *Space Makers Agency* and the non-*Space Makers Agency* shops. Unlike the new tenants from the *Space Makers Agency*, who didn't need to pay rent for the first three months, the other existing local shops had to pay the entire rent, which even became higher, putting pressure on their businesses after the regeneration. This space of 'fantasy' created by the *Space Makers Agency*, in turn, became a disaster as they confronted reality. Moreover, this utopian space, particularly as represented by the media, did not bring any profits to the businesses that were not from the *Space Makers Agency*, whose customers are mostly from the daily life of Brixton. In particular, this was a disaster for non-*Space Makers* tenants, many of whom also came to this space during the same period as the regeneration. Samah, a non-*Space Makers* tenant, came to the east side of Brixton Village during this period, and criticized the regeneration of Brixton by the *Space Makers Agency*:

*Samah: The Space Makers works with LAP (London Association Properties).*

*When I came, I saw in the newspaper that there was a company (LAP) here, and didn't notice that they'd gotten the Space Makers. And then, after we came, after we've done this one (the 'Olive Tree'), they said, "We are the 'Space Makers". But they hadn't helped us a bit...I'm telling the truth; they've been very bad to us. You know, they've received money from LAP...they've received more than 40,000 pounds for marketing, and they've done nothing.... You haven't seen even one poster around....Yes, they've done it for a few people, their friends, a couple of them. They helped them, they popularised them, but they worked against us.*

*Shuhei: So, after the Space Makers Agency came in, it affected your business negatively, rather than positively...*

*Samah: No, I helped them and they just didn't help me... When I was going to their meeting, I just said to them the idea about being open on Sunday. But they've always been pessimistic. They didn't want to open on Sunday, because the company LAP don't want to spend money on Sunday. So, they worked against the shops, the shop owner's wish...They didn't work with the shop owners... They pocketed 40,000 more pounds in their pockets, and then disappeared.*

*I reminded him (the owner of the market) of the story of the 'Emperor's new clothes'. They made very colourful things for the owners, "We gonna*

*do this, we gonna do that,” and they’ve done nothing...So, I told the owner, and he said, “we don’t know”. Because, you know, ever seen one poster...What they’ve done, they go to the internet, Facebook. Any child can do Facebook... You put an invitation, “Come on everyone. There is a party here, bring a drink to come”. This is not marketing. Publicity means that you have to do a poster, you have to do a map, and you have to direct people here...What kind of survey they’ve done? Nothing...Even if they said, they’ve given a wrong report to LAP all the time. “Yesterday, there were 2,000 people here,” but in the reality, 20 people...*

*Shuhei: Yeah, impossible to come, 2000 people...*

*Samah: Exactly. So, they painted a rosy picture, and the reality is not like that.*

Although some of his comments about the *Space Makers Agency* seemed to be exaggerated (e.g. the number of tenants and people coming to Brixton Village), it is also true, to some extent, with regards to their making of a ‘utopian’ space through the east side of Brixton Village by selecting only tenants who could follow their idea. TV and magazine coverage, and particularly the internet, such as their homepage and *Facebook*, only introduced a limited number of new tenants through the *Space Makers Agency* that could benefit from these media representations (See Figures 7.6 and 7.7).

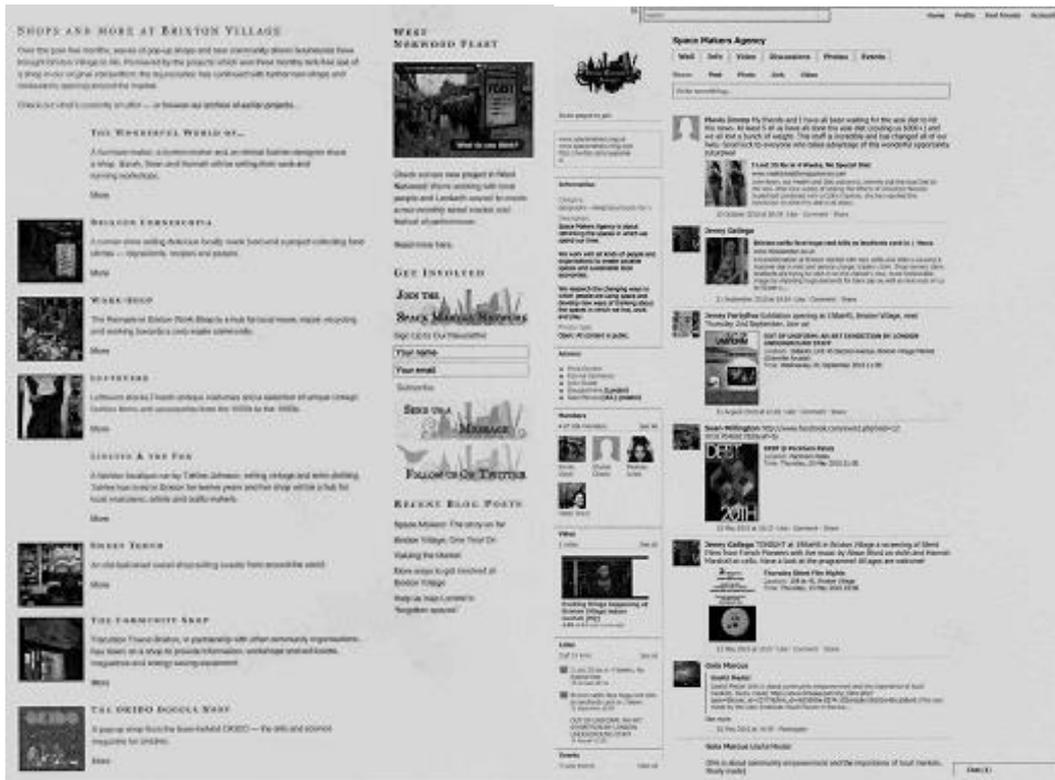


Figure 7.6 and Figure 7.7: Introduction of new shops through the *Space Makers Agency* (on the left) and their *Facebook* page (on the right). Both pages artificially show the new image of Brixton Village. (The *Space Makers Agency*, 2011)

Moreover, it is also notable that the ‘fullness’ of Brixton Village through this aesthetic blooming is significantly linked to their ‘pop-up’ shops, i.e. the short-period tenants, which were launched in the latter period of this project. To avoid the emptiness of Brixton Village in the past, after the selection, they also tried to vary the space ‘between’ these substantial tenants, by offering free rents for one week. After this, some of their first selectees left after the first three months. In the latter period of the project, the contract of their tenants also became shorter up to three weeks, which further encouraged the mobility of the east side (see Figure 7.8).



Figure 7.8: The fullness of space? The art performance in front of a pop-up shop (an artwork shop) on the avenue of the east side of Brixton Village. (Okada, 2010)

For non-*Space Makers* tenants, this mobilization of the space made their situation much worse on the east side of Brixton Village. Burry, a staff member at the *Berry Tree*<sup>xvi</sup>, a clothing shop that opened during the same period as the regeneration, strongly felt the interruption of his business by these pop-up shops, which ‘sprawled’ around the emptiness of the east side of Brixton Village.

*Burry: LAP signed a contract with the Space Makers Agency for six months. So, the Space Makers, they came with ‘silly’ things...because they don’t want money. Those people, they get paid by the Space Makers. Even this man (an unknown staff) down there, the Brick Box. One whole year free... Why? It’s not good, not fair, because that is three units. It’s very big, the biggest unit. And they get an award for a whole year free. They would make money,*

*and they don't have to pay no rent. Something is not right. LAP has already given the money for the year! By the government's initiative, LAP has got money! So, now these people came here, the rent is free ...*

*Shuhei: ...So, that kind of thing, many galleries, cafés or coffee shops influence your business as well?*

*Burry: No influence on the business...Just feel it's not fair to them to come in Brixton Market. No sweat, no rent to pay...So if they don't have no rent to pay, then they wouldn't pay electricity, light. Wouldn't pay water (for) a whole utility, and any money they make goes in their pockets...Well, for me, any money I gain goes to the light bill, electricity, rent, stock. So, it's not fair...*

*Shuhei: Did the Space Makers Agency speak to you?*

*Burry: Yeah, there were two women; I spoke to one or two of them... They came to me, and asked if we would like to join them. Yeah, the Space Makers said to be members or something...*

*Shuhei: ...What did you say to them?*

*Burry: I said no, because I have my own business to look after, and pay rent. And the Space Makers is only for people who can't find space... So, if I couldn't find empty space, I would sign up to join them. I've already got this place*

*for one year now... No need to join to them. But, you know, if there was a concession, there was something that, once you join, you get this or you get that...There was nothing!*

*Shuhei: Nothing... Just a membership?*

*Burry: Just a membership and "If you haven't got no place, we put you into a place for three months free..." We've already got it, so we wouldn't need to join them to become them. Only if they help small businesses...If the Space Makers, they would help small businesses like mine, then fine. But they do not! They only help themselves!*

*Shuhei: Brixton Village opens until 10 o'clock every Thursday...This is also something that the Space Makers Agency negotiated. Because you said you want Brixton Village open until late, so does this benefit you?*

*Burry: It's beneficial for foods. Like the last week, I was here Thursday. They had bands and music, and most only came for foods or restaurants. For me, I said I had to leave at 7 o'clock. Nobody came in; nobody was interested...Only interested in drinking, eating, listening to music, having a nice dance. Nobody came to shop. So, that's why I said, the Space Makers, they bring excellent bands whatever, and they attract only a certain kind of people...for food...everybody eats...I can't eat for selling these (clothes), you know? So, I don't see nobody coming in the shop. They come in, because Brixton Market is open late now on Thursday, Friday, (and) Saturday. Like*

*'food course', you have many different foods to choose from. That's all, just foods, but the rest is not profitable...Last week when I finished here, and then I went there (the west side)...Most people have left on that side as well; when the shutters were open. So, you know, this scheme of Thursday nights, it only benefits food, not clothes...You know, the other woman (Carol, the owner of the Berry Tree), she went to the meeting, she spoke up...*

*Shuhei: Was what she said like what you said?*

*Burry: What she said was...that the Space Makers came in, and we were not informed about that. We were not informed about whom the Space Makers told to come, if it would benefit our business or not. They flew 'crazy people' in...There is one woman doing like Chinese massage. She was there...No, she was over there; she moved there, and then she's gone there...I just think people who do this kind of trade, like massage, physiotherapy, that sort of thing. Do they work? Do they hand whatever? I think they should have some certificate, because anybody can come, 'Oh, I'm keen. I can do it'...You know, you gonna get ill. You gonna go there, probably you feel worse...She does have a qualification really. Or (if they have) a certificate, so you're taking a big chance, and you pay for it. You pay her money, and you mess up...*

As Burry described, it was a painful time for the tenants who were not endorsed by the *Space Makers* to see these free tenants, such as those of the pop-up shops,

who did not need to pay rent, and could spend the grant money on whatever they wanted. This economic gap between the two groups grew even larger; the utopian image of Brixton Village had been exaggerated, creating a cultural gap between the imaginary and the reality of this space (Figure 7.9 and 7.10). For instance, as Burry described, the cultural and social activities of those amateur artists on the east side of Brixton Village did not bring any benefits to the non-*Space Makers* tenants, who needed to spend the money mostly on daily living expenses, such as the rent, bills and council tax. For non-*Space Makers* tenants, only certain businesses that came after the regeneration benefitted from this new artistic image, and could afford to pay such high rents.

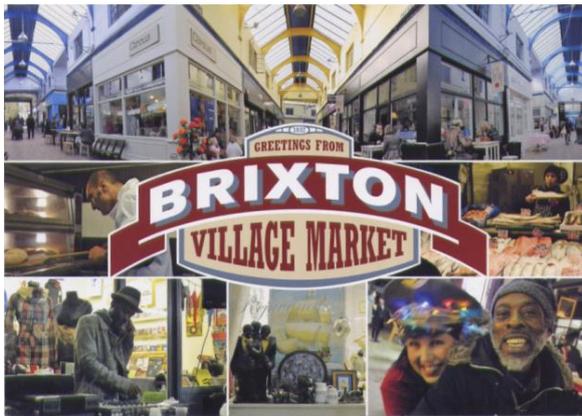


Figure 7.9 and Figure 7.10: Space for greeting or for 'hiking'? Greeting Card of Brixton Village (2010) (on the left); news article about the rise of the rent in Brixton Market (*The South London Press*, 2010) (on the right).

As we can see in this situation, the regeneration of the east side of Brixton Village

was controversial due to tensions between the tenants from the *Space Makers Agency* and those who were not from the agency. The regeneration - such as through the media, free rent, pop-up shops - had underlined the contradiction in this space, which only benefited the former side, leaving the other side worse off. But how did the *Space Makers Agency* attract the 'creative classes' in Brixton Village in such a short period of time in contrast to the other gentrified areas where the change gradually emerged? I would like to address this issue further in the next section, particularly through an interview with Dougald, the leader of the *Space Makers Agency*.

#### **7.4. The regeneration of Brixton Village: 'Pop-up' space from emptiness to fullness**

As I mentioned in the last section, the regeneration of the east side of Brixton Village, through the creation of an 'artificial' image, brought many complaints from non-*Space Makers* tenants, who were mostly struggling with their daily lives in the lower class community. However, it is also true that this series of artistic representations was very successful in bringing new artists, amusement enterprises and intellectual professionals to Brixton Village in a short period. How did the *Space Makers Agency* use their one-year contracts to attract these people?

According to Zukin (2011), the creative districts in New York have five important elements involved in their recent gentrification. The first is devalued space, such as an old industrialized area, which is a factor that has been important since the 1970s. The second key element is the existence of creative professionals, such as artists and writers in creative districts, which gradually became an important factor since the gentrification of Soho in the 1980s. Third, the production of space

is dependent on the creative class coming from different areas and collaborating.

Also according to Zukin, the last two elements are more important for the creative class involved in newly gentrified areas. Her fourth factor is the importance of the consumption of space rather than the production of space in these creative districts, where more ordinary people are attracted from elsewhere rather than the local area. This is the reason for much of the recent gentrification; the aesthetic of spaces becomes more important than the authenticity. The existence of cafés or galleries becomes more important in newly gentrified areas, not because of the artists or writers, but because of the people coming into these spaces for the aesthetic images. Moreover, a fifth element, media representation, is also related to the distribution of these visitors to newly gentrified areas. Through TV, magazines, newspapers and particularly the internet, new creative districts become more generalized, compared to the past, which was more suited for specific local people. As Zukin (2011) concludes, gentrification has transformed the space from one of 'representation' to a space for 'reputation'.

In the case of Brixton Village, we can interestingly see all five elements in both the present and the past, which can be adapted to the regeneration strategies by the *Space Makers Agency* on the east side. First of all, devalued, 'empty' space on the east side of Brixton Village brought the *Space Makers Agency*, which later encouraged the arrival of intellectual professionals through the open competition for new tenants. This regeneration later served as the meeting point for the creative class, not only from the market itself, but also from the outside, such as through its media representation, which established the reputation of this space

as one of consumption ('coming to') rather than production ('coming from'). Interestingly, this conforms more closely to Zukin's fourth and fifth elements. Many cafés and galleries were also attracted by the regeneration of *Space Makers Agency*, which tried to fill the empty spaces with these pop-up shops on a short rent. The people, for both the production and consumption of space, came to this space during the same period, a scenario which is unlikely in previous gentrified areas, such as in Zukin's Brooklyn, where the former artists' space has been replaced by the consumption of space for ordinary people. In the case of Brixton Village, the meeting place for artists or other intellectuals, created by the free-rent system in the beginning, was soon followed by upscale cafés or galleries. Whether or not it was successful, it is undeniable that this free-rent system contributed to the regeneration of Brixton Village. Despite much criticism from my interviewees, the existence of the pop-up shops sustained the regeneration on the east side and 'seemed' successful, which economically attracted 'other' non-*Space Makers* tenants in the latter period of this project. Dougald, the leader of the *Space Makers Agency*, explained how this filling of empty space by the short-term tenants could possibly have made Brixton Village 'lively' or 'interesting':

*Shuhei: You said you set up the rent, which was free for the first three months.*

*And actually, many shops...after three months, they moved to other shops. Is that called a 'pop-up' shop?*

*Dougald: Yeah, there were a few pop-ups; those were shorter (rents). So, nobody got three-months rent in one shop, and they got to move to another shop for three months for free rent. And if you've got three months of free rent,*

*at the end of the three months, either you came to be a tenant or left. Later in the project, we were no longer able to offer three months for free...We were able to offer the rent up to three weeks in the 'gaps' between the tenants in the shops. So, some of those people had three weeks in one shop, and three weeks in another, and three weeks in another...It was a response to the circumstances. So, initially, when twenty shops were empty, nobody wanted to rent them. We were able to persuade the owner to allow three months rent-free...By five or six months into the project, when there was already a considerably increasing demand for the shops in the market, we were no longer able to provide three months rent-free, because there weren't many shops empty. (What) we negotiated with the owner was more flexible, short-notice, short three weeks pop-up. So, that was the response to the circumstances, as 'things began to move, warm up,' and began to have more demands for the shops...*

*Shuheï: Because I think this kind of pop-up shop isn't always positive. Some people who're not from the Space Makers Agency said... because some people came here, and one week later, they left, and people in these shops, they didn't know about 'newcomers'. Sometimes, other people were confused about pop-up shops, as well. Because they didn't actually pay rent, they just did what they wanted to do, and moved to another place in Brixton Village...*

*Dougald: Yeah, but they were only able to use the space when no one was*

*prepared for that space. Otherwise, the shop is sitting empty...*

*Shuhei: I see, so you wanted to...Just (have) shops as much as possible.*

*Dougald: The idea was to minimize the time that there was any shop completely empty; the market (people) feel is more likely to 'come back to it'...If shops are even empty for two weeks - one business left and another business coming in - during those two weeks, rather than those shops sitting empty with the lights off, somebody comes in and does something, which means that 'something interesting, something new, something surprising going on'. So, the idea was ... to benefit everybody by keeping the market 'lively and interesting' as much as possible. When we were first visiting Brixton Village in August-September 2009, one side of the market really felt dead. There are lots of comments that that was how people felt when they came down there. So, we made sure that there were as many shops as possible now, even if it were only available for a very temporary, pop-up use. To us, it was important to help everybody, because it made the market feel lively, feel like 'somewhere that has good things going on'. So, that was the kind of thinking behind it...*

As Dougald explained above, their intention of regenerating the east side of Brixton Village could be found in its representing the fullness of space as much as possible. This gave them the idea of the extremely short rent, such as the pop-up shops, in the latter term of this project. The fullness of the space attracted people who were coming from further than ever before. Although Samah and Burry, both

non-*Space Makers* tenants, strongly criticized the exaggeration of the advertising, they also recognized how these representations of the space attracted new customers to Brixton Village, such as through the fascination of the middle-class youth. Here, Samah recognizes the popularity of the current Brixton Village through its fullness of space:

*Shuhei: When you came here, this side of Brixton Village became very popular.*

*There are nice restaurants and coffee shops... Why do many people come to?*

*Samah: Yeah, it's 'becoming' now... Because they came in the last year, it was deserted, empty. And they came this year, everything was a new shop; they were surprised. So, people for curiosity... they want to come to find out what new things are here. Also, there are lots of restaurants, fifteen, sixteen restaurants now, cafés, good shops, nice people around here.*

*Shuhei: But don't you think the Space Makers Agency encouraged these kinds of circumstances?*

*Samah: Most of the shops that came here, they came without the Space Makers.*

*They put in their reports to the company, "We brought everyone." Not true...*

Whether the number of the shops brought by the *Space Makers Agency* is true or not, the fullness of the properties in Brixton Village attracted many people who

previously didn't know about Brixton Village. As the interviewee described at the beginning of this session, the contradiction between the emptiness in the past and the fullness of the present successfully attracted many people, such as young artists, who have strong curiosities regarding this 'pop-up' space. Although he strongly disagreed about this contribution by the *Space Makers Agency*, it is true that the pop-up shops later attracted many upscale restaurants and cafés, which could afford to pay the high rent.

As we can see in these situations, the representation of fullness on the east side of Brixton Village by the *Space Makers Agency* had brought many creative people here, where both the production and consumption of spaces emerged almost simultaneously. This dual process enabled the transformation of the space for the middle classes in a surprisingly short period, which is unlikely to be seen in those gentrified areas of the past, where both elements gradually transformed from one to the other in different times and spaces.

This change influenced the people in Brixton Village to view the authenticity of the space not as 'by themselves', but rather 'for themselves'. How did this change in notions of authenticity by the newcomers influence the existing local people, including those on the other (west) side of Brixton Village? At the end of this chapter, I argue how this change in the meaning of authenticity has transformed the space of the whole of Brixton Village. Did their classical authenticity successfully work together with that of the new people after the regeneration? I will examine this further in the next section.

## **7.5. Brixton Village as authentic or aesthetic: the transformation of the community from transition to diversity**

As I mentioned in the last section, the regeneration of Brixton Village by the *Space Makers Agency* transformed space into an area of both production and consumption for creative people. This enabled affluent people to have an upscale use of this space for a limited period, which hasn't been seen before in other gentrified areas.

And now, I would like to go back to Zukin's first three elements, which were classically suggested to be important for creative districts. As I mentioned earlier, she pointed out these three elements: devalued space, the existence of a creative class, and the production of space becoming less important for the present gentrified areas compared to the last two elements - the consumption of space and media. This also informed her notion of authenticity, which has transformed in its meaning from 'genuine' to 'aesthetic'. According to Zukin (2010), the authenticity of the community in these creative districts has currently been transformed into a limited aspect through their homogenous classification, as aesthetic 'diversity'. Among them, the recent gentrified areas, such as Williamsburg or Bushwick in Brooklyn, New York, became rather represented as the space where these people work and live, 'having represented' the space of the working class, blacks or new migrants. In this situation, these new gentrified areas became the space where the affluent class selectively came not for the authenticity of their community, but for the aesthetic of diverse community.

**The new Brooklyn is different. It's a place people *come* to, not a place they come**

from, and where residents don't have a traditional, urban village way of life but are very proud of the 'authenticity' of the neighborhood where they choose to live. Brooklyn's urban imaginary today combines hipsters and new immigrants, lifestyle media and blogs, and both desire to become the next cultural destination and yearning for an urban village that disappeared after World War II. For each generation, though, the idea of Brooklyn's authenticity shows an aspiration to connect the place where people live to a timeless urban experience. (Zukin, 2010: 60)

As Zukin mentioned above, through this new meaning of authenticity, the creative districts have been transformed from a space for 'representation' to a space for 'reputation' (Zukin, 2011). For instance, when the gentrification of New York began in Greenwich in the beginning of the last century, most of the properties were empty, before these artists started to work and live in this area. This development of the de-industrialized area became popular through their activities, followed by the up-scaling in the second half century, when this became significant; as the area grew, more of these existing artists moved in.

In contrast, the recent creative districts, such as Williamsburg and Bushwick in Brooklyn, are more significant as spaces of reputation rather than representation. In particular, these areas used to be represented through public culture by global migrants during the post-war period. These were spaces for the public arts by migrant youths in the street, before artists represented them. Later, the authenticity of this space for the migrants or hipsters became 'present space', where artists, writers and other professionals consume, rather than produce.

Through this spatial transformation, diversity became a useful tool; rather than being the space where they grew up, it became the space where they came together. Prior to this argument, Zukin also concludes with regards to the current meaning of ‘authenticity’ in the postmodern community:

**We can see the ‘authentic’ spaces only from outside them. Mobility gives us the distance to view a neighborhood as connoisseurs, to compare it to an absolute standard for urban experience, to judge its character apart from our personal history or intimate relationships. If we are connected to a neighborhood’s longtime social life, especially if we grew up there, we are likely to recall how it was back in the day; we are less likely, though, to call it authentic. Just thinking of authenticity in this way recalls its usual meaning, according to which an expert objectively evaluates the origins of a piece of art, an antique rug, or any other object we can isolate like a specimen, examine and compare with other examples of its category. In contrast the subjectivity that comes from really living a neighborhood, walking its streets, shopping in local stores, and sending children to local schools, the other kind of authenticity allows us to see an inhabited space in aesthetic terms. Especially when we look at a rundown neighborhood we ask, Is it interesting? Is it gritty? Like the criteria, we use while shopping for consumer products, these standards. (Zukin, 2010: 20)**

According to Florida (2002: 226-227), these districts for the creative class are always found in a place having diversity, where they actively seek ‘alternative appearance’, such as ethnic groups and race, different ages, different sexual orientations, through their cultural behaviours. In doing so, the places that attract

diverse communities also become open spaces for outsiders, where more affluent people from those diverse backgrounds also play a role in the community, not only as their cultural roots but as ‘difference’.

**A Korean Student liked it (the diverse communities in Washington, D.C.), “because there’s a big Korean community,” meaning Korean religious institutions, Korean grocery stores and Korean children for his children to play with. Likewise an Indian student favored it for its large Indian population, an African-American for its large black professional class and gay student for the community around DuPoint Circle. But there’s more at work here than expatriates who only want to be around people like themselves. It’s ‘differences’, not just the sameness, that are benefits. (ibid)**

However, if these upscale new generations used the local community with their aesthetic existence, which have previously shared more homogeneous cultural roots, then how can these spaces become places for diversity inside of the community? By following his argument, we see how the regeneration of Brixton Village by the *Space Makers Agency* has also created an ‘authentic’ space for outsiders coming to this empty space, developing it as a creative and diverse district. On the other hand, through this creation, the existing local shops that were not connected to the *Space Makers Agency*, which were actually not in empty space but embedded space, tended to be replaced as inadequate to this aesthetic requirement. Furthermore, many non-*Space Makers* tenants, who also came for the availability of new business around that period, were soon forced to leave due to their lack of popularity and the high rent.

In late December 2010, just after the *Space Makers Agency* finished the project in Brixton Village, the *Berry Tree* shut down. On January 2011, the *Olive Tree* also put up an advertisement for the sale of its property and its door was finally closed a month later. According to Samah, the rent of this property would soon rise from 1,300 to 1,600 pounds. Although he desired to stay in this market, the growth of the rent that resulted from the increase in the popularity of the place, ironically forced him to leave, despite his 'enemy', the *Space Makers Agency*, no longer existing here.

According to Lees, Slater and Wyly (2008: 148-150; Lees, 2003), gentrification has become a process for affluent people, rather than bohemians from the lower middle class, due to gentrifying areas' economic globalization. Through this change, these creative districts come to have more 'hyper-gentrification' where the space becomes disconnected from the neighbourhoods through their gentrification. However, this internal division gradually causes the change of the whole of these gentrified areas, from the built environment's side, such as by developers, to the authority or estate agents. Through this process, these spaces become more generalized. Zukin (2010) also shows the gentrification area itself now becoming 're-gentrified', where newer built environments re-create social division in these gentrified areas, continuously sustaining the upscale quality of the whole area. Zukin cautions us with regards to this new era of gentrification:

**But, when one neighborhood after another goes upscale and new residents are not just fixing up old houses and lofts but also moving new built luxury condos and mom-and-pop stores are replaced by bank branches, trendy restaurants, and**

brand-name chains, we're looking at more than a single trend of gentrification.... I think that it is really a broad process of re-urbanization, with changes that loosen the grip of old industries and their ways of life and expand the space taken up by white-collar men and women and their preoccupation with shopping and other kinds of consumption; bringing new residents, their tastes, and their concerns into the city's mix; and creating not just economic division but a cultural barrier between rich and poor, young and old. (Zukin, 2010: 7)

In the case of Brixton Village, the *Space Makers'* regeneration of the emptiness of the east side was done so quickly through the gentrification of the built environment, where the community of the creative class 'gathered' rather than naturally emerged. This situation enabled the up-scaling of the space in a short period, by triggering another transformation of this space for the upper class, which was only later attracted by the built environment.

If we return to Coldharbour Lane, my interviewee, Robert, explained how the regeneration of Brixton had occurred through its built environment, unlike those in East London, which to him occurred 'naturally'. This has caused the removal of black enterprise, particularly in Coldharbour Lane, where the black community merely congregates now due to the economic power relationship. However, there was also the fact that the regeneration of Coldharbour Lane, and later Brixton Village, was able to be traced from a successful model of gentrification elsewhere in London, such as that of Brick Lane and many creative districts in New York.

Obviously, this situation has also created divides, such as that between the 'rich

and poor' and young and old, between the west and east sides of Brixton Village. Its disconnection from the east side has made a cultural barrier, and more generalization of Brixton Village occurs by replacing it with the more powerful side. We can see this in the disappearance of the non-*Space Makers* tenants; the long-running shops in the other (west) side of Brixton Village also gradually became replaced by the new, more affluent shops, which were more able to afford the high rent and were more similar to the tenants of the east side. Lauren, of Jamaican descent, is the owner of a pop-up shop, the *Thinking Flower*<sup>xviii</sup>(see Figures 7.11 and 7.12). She already expected this social structural change of Brixton Village in the middle of the project, where the people from her childhood became replaced by shops that excluded their community.

*Shuheï: Do you think the change of Brixton Village on this side (east side) is good for that side (west side)?*

*Lauren: It's very hard for me...I thought they were very upset about this happening. Very, very complicated situation, (regarding) who I am, my culture, what I want to change, my life...Actually, it's a very difficult time for me, yeah. Because I'm a part of change. I'm part of the reasons their rent's been (risen up by) 50%. And they have been backdated....Bills they can't pay. Because their spaces look like 'way out'...*

*Shuheï: But you also contributed to the community through Brixton Village as well...*

*Lauren: I think having a space like this, it's positive...It's filled....It's open to all...And it is equal space...So, everyone is welcome....But, I think some of the spaces are very exclusively priced. They're good for the economy, but they're not good for the community....I feel...because of the nature, history of this place...new shops should be inclusive, accessible products for everybody....*

Like Lauren, an artist who grew up in Camberwell, nearby Brixton, her involvement in the regeneration of the *Space Makers Agency* makes her existence in this local community a controversial one, where she finds her position socially and economically up-scaled; on the other hand, she is partially involved in the decline of the other people in the community.

Therefore, unlike the purpose that the *Space Makers Agency* explained, the reality of the regeneration of Brixton Village has been represented by the contradiction in space-time between the areas where empty properties were highly regenerated to the upscale market, and the areas where the existing shops for the local community became downgraded. She explained her controversial feeling about the current contradiction of Brixton Village, between her long-associated local community on the east side and the space represented by contemporary culture on the west side. Lauren also presumed that, in the future, all the shops on the west side would be replaced by these 'artificial' shops, due to the difficulty of surviving the rise in rent, encouraged by the refurbishment of the east side.



Figures 7.11 and 7.12: Lauren's flower shop, the *Thinking Flower* (above), was also shared with the *Field*, an art workshop. These pop-up shops were closed before the end of the project by the *Space Makers Agency*, and replaced with an organic bakery for the up-scale market. (Okada, 2010 and 2011)

Like this situation, the aesthetic representation on the east side of Brixton Village

has discouraged even the authenticity on the other side. Both aspects become represented through contradiction, but only the economically powerful side can determine the change of Brixton Village. Social division within Brixton Village has certainly been encouraged since the regeneration by the *Space Makers Agency*, where both the lower class local community and artists share this micro-space, not authentically but aesthetically. Its physical location as an indoor market makes it especially easy to create this utopian thought, which includes the reality of the lower class local community on the side, as authenticity.

Before examining creative districts, Zukin (1995: 252) made a similar argument regarding indoor flea markets, both in Brooklyn and Harlem, stating how these spaces since the post-war period have been represented by the contradiction between the restructuring of the spaces by the migrants and the upgrading for the middle class by the local authority. Through this contradiction, the space of the indoor flea market, as a shopping mall for the upper class and street market for the lower class, becomes recreated as a hegemonic space under the new social division through the globalization of this micro-space. Zukin explains the ‘differentiated spatial’ roles of the indoor flea market:

**Indoor flea markets in big cities with large immigrant populations have stalls selling the new merchandise...; those in smaller cities and towns still sell “junk” and collectibles. Other indoor flea markets, specializing in factory outlet shops, may be located in converted shopping malls. Regardless of their specialization, indoor flea markets combine qualities of the bazaar, the traditional flea market, and suburban malls. (ibid)**

As she described above, each specialization of the flea market has had a role in a different macro-space within the city, though all different elements shared the term 'market' under the same umbrella. Among them, each market as a micro-space has been represented by social division, through an aesthetic for both heterogeneity and hegemony, as Zukin also pointed out:

**Since the 1970s, the term *upscale* has indicated more than a shopping culture where money makes difference. It indicates a certain kind of public culture: a racial 'balance' in which each group has its place, a public space that is often secured by uniformed guards, a neutralization of ethnicity by both aestheticism and corporate identities. In the upscaling of shopping spaces we find a vision of the middle class city. (Zukin, 1995: 256)**

Through the differentiations 'within' one shopping space and another, they become public spaces, where their cultural identities are represented through social division. On the other hand, the regeneration of new shopping spaces, such as the case of Brixton Village, can provide a certain vision of this aesthetic, where the up-scaling of these spaces through differentiation can be represented not only for themselves but also others. Among them, the aesthetic of one ethnic group also gives opportunity for others, existing through their differentiation, in the same space.

This is also the case in New York, according to Zukin (ibid), where different ethnic groups, such as Korean shopkeepers, have an upper social position through their existence in black neighbourhoods, or African and Caribbean vendors integrated

as Afro-Americans. Consequently, the aesthetic differentiation of these spaces emerges, which however, exists as diverse and not mixed. This situation encourages third parties to seize the difference as power, where social panic triggers the dominant to control through economic hierarchy. Zukin also pointed out the shopping space after the 70s:

**The proximity of different ethnic groups—their opportunity to occupy the same space and time—has given new urgency to the negotiation of ethnicity by shopping cultures...By the same token, the collapse of physical distance between social classes makes it more crucial for some groups—merchants' groups, the city government, the management of mini malls—to establish explicit, exclusionary rules for the use of shopping spaces. In this way, shopping cultures renegotiate social class in public space. (Zukin, 1995: 256-257)**

As we can see in her description above, the existence of the *Space Makers Agency* as the third party has triggered the making of diversity in this space, which is able to be controlled from outside of this space. The collapse of physical distance between the long-running local shops and their new tenants was successfully managed as cultural diversity by the *Space Makers Agency* but this was replaced by simple economic hierarchy after their departure. The cultural diversity represented on both sides of Brixton Village due to outside control became a social corruption inside. This later enabled more affluent people to come into the whole of Brixton Village. The regeneration of the empty space on the east side brought another regeneration of the whole of Brixton Village by corrupting its distance from the west side, where any authorization was already lost inside of the space.

## 7.6. Conclusion

The regeneration of the east side of Brixton Village from 2009-10 dramatically changed the economic, social and cultural landscapes of this market. Although it is undeniable that the fullness of this space due to the *Space Makers Agency* contributed to its economic and cultural revivals, to some extent, it also later triggered the social demographic change to that of the more affluent class. Furthermore, this spatial project, through the built environment, caused another up-scaling of this market through new tenants in the following period, which even influenced the other side of this market, which was still occupied by the local shops for the less affluent community, after the departure of the *Space Makers Agency*.

Although these processes are the continuation of those regenerated areas in Brixton from the past, it shouldn't be ignored that the circumstances of this spatial transformation for the upscale market came about much more quickly. It caused a more mixed use of space, where the diversity of the community was already set up in the beginning of the process, compared to the cases of Railton Road and even Coldharbour Lane. Meanwhile, this concept of a diverse community tended to justify the contradiction of space through the intervention of the third party, where the economic barrier between the existing community and newcomers became corrupted, and social and cultural confusion was later triggered.

## Chapter Eight

### The regeneration of Brixton Central Square

#### : from trajectories to ‘a path’

Throughout the last three chapters, I’ve tried to examine how the three places of Brixton, both in the past and at present, have transformed into spatial temporariness for gentrifiers. White, middle-class newcomers have brought their own cultures, undermining the meanings of the places for groups such as for the remaining Afro-Caribbeans.

However, in this chapter, I will focus on three public squares in Brixton Central: Tate Garden, St. Matthew’s Peace Garden, and Windrush Square. Although these squares were recently united through their refurbishments, they used to have separate facilities and users. Moreover, these three squares have been predominantly occupied by socially excluded groups, such as rough sleepers<sup>xviii</sup>, the unemployed and the elderly members of ethnic minority groups, as well as street drinkers<sup>xix</sup>, drug dealers and addicts. In fact, many of these people were forced to move away from the other parts of Brixton to the public spaces of Brixton Central, since their meeting places were removed during the recent changes in the social and spatial structure of Brixton. Moreover, the new social structure justified even the regeneration of Brixton Central Square. The socially excluded groups lost their last ‘destination’, which was replaced by space for new populations.

To examine these transformations, I’ve conducted observational research in these

three public spaces between 2008-2010. This empirical research, in particular, represents the different users and their activities before and after the regeneration. These were analysed using behavioural and movement maps for three spaces, according to time, location, and directions. It shows how the regeneration has transformed these public spaces for the local communities into a more up-scaled area for newcomers, through the symbolization of Brixton centre.

To examine these issues, I particularly referenced the empirical research method used in Setha Low's (2000) *On the Plaza*, which explored the different social practices of users in two plazas in San Jose, Costa Rica. She drew several maps of these two public spaces tracing users' movements and their daily activities, which was also informed by the dance ethnologist of her research fellow (Low, 2000: 162). Through her research, although Low separated these maps between movements and behaviours, here, I would like to represent both in one map, where movements significantly impact on activities after regeneration. This was also caused by the lack of time as well as the number of observers (only myself).

Moreover, these maps also consist of distinctions between types of users: 'socially excluded groups' and ordinary people. The former categorization, socially excluded groups, can be alternatively explained by terms such as 'unemployed', 'rough sleepers', 'street drinkers', 'drug users'. They also contain the elderly having ethnic minority status. It should not be denied that there could be some misunderstanding regarding these categorizations through my observation, which may have been influenced by my assumptions. However, the tendencies of these three public spaces should nevertheless be roughly realized, before and after the

regenerations, using these empirical maps.

Furthermore, in terms of ethnicity, race, gender and age, there is more social diversity in Brixton compared to Low's Costa Rica. Therefore, it was more difficult to define the cultural backgrounds in Brixton Central Square, such as between those having different European or African backgrounds. Therefore, I tried to delete such categories from the maps; rather, I represented them only by the two categories of 'Afro-Caribbeans' and 'whites'. In addition, there was presumably the misunderstanding of age, which was also assessed through my own assumptions.

Dividing the type of users and people walking through the three public spaces of Brixton Central, this empirical research interestingly shows how the regeneration transformed a space for socially excluded groups coming from the surrounding areas of Brixton, into one for more affluent people from wider areas. The research also presents the diversion of these public spaces by tactical strategies through their emptiness and symbolization for new Brixton.

According to Brown (2007: 238-239), socially marginalized groups necessarily restructure public spaces through their practices against those inscribed by dominant discourse. They appropriate different public spaces, which enables them to form an alternative sphere thought distinct public practice. Brown discovered this through his research on the gay community of East London, where the groups actively differentiated public spaces - such as the cemetery and public toilets - for 'cruising':

[T]he seasoned cruiser notices how sites, streets, or buildings resonate with particular states of mind, in this case, desire. They can see the potential for utilizing the street, the overgrown cemetery, building site or the public toilet for purposes other than those for which they were designed. (Brown, 2007: 238-239)

This was also found by Low's research into the two urban public spaces in Costa Rica, where both traditional and modern squares were appropriated by the local users as well as tourists, through differentiation inscribed by their difference. Through this process, the structure of the two plazas (Parque Central as Latin American traditional, and Plaza de Cultura as American modernised), both architecturally and socially contrasted, were appropriated for their common identity through their differentiation over different spaces:

These differences (of two plazas) in expression reiterate the historical and physical comparison, that is the separation between an identification with modern North American international culture in the Plaza de la Cultura and the maintenance of a more traditional Costa Rican identity in Parque Central. Taken together, yet separated and bounded by their difference, the two plazas express the contemporary dimensions, contradictions, and tension of Costa Rica. (Low, 2000: 177)

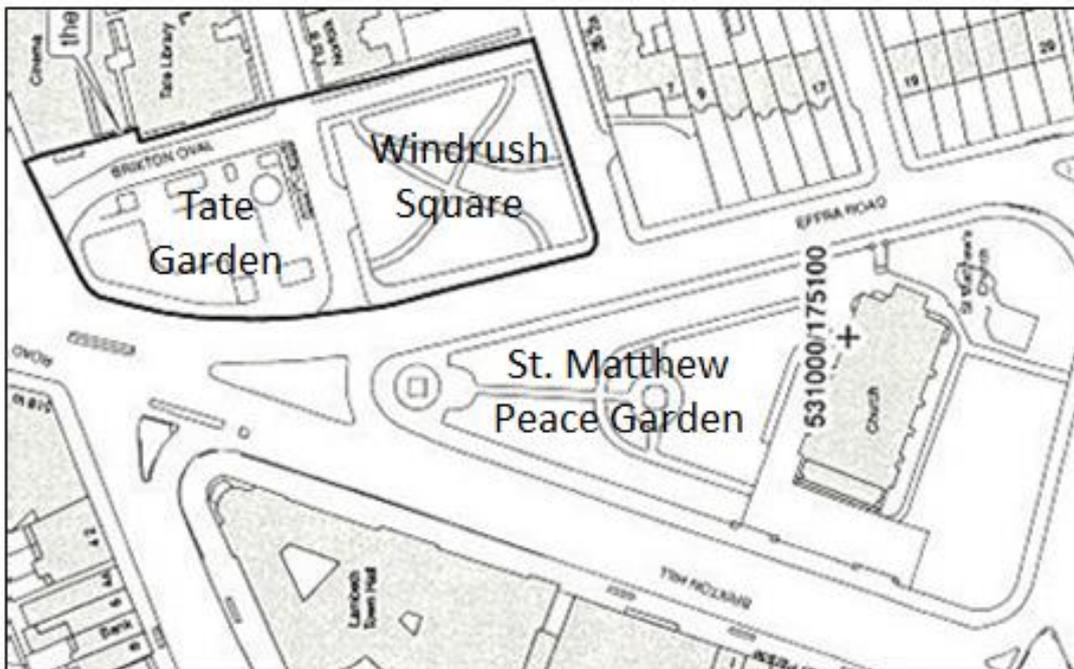
However, the recent regeneration of urban micro-spaces gives marginalized groups less opportunities for spatial autonomy. For instance, the regeneration of such places as open spaces and their emptiness through industrialization have significantly impacted on the detournement by socially excluded groups for the

establishment of their counter publics (Brown, 2007: 239-240). In the next section, I would like to examine these factors further through the case of regeneration in Brixton Central Square.

### **8.1. The history of three public spaces in Brixton Central: the emptiness through Brixton as marginal society**

As I briefly mentioned in the introduction to this chapter, the public spaces of Brixton Central had consisted of three distinctive areas, which were called Tate Garden, St. Matthew's Peace Garden and Windrush Square (Figure 8.1). These public spaces have generally been divided by their facilities and types of users; for instance, Tate Garden has usually been occupied by ordinary users with local events, such as those hosted by local communities during the weekends. Meanwhile, St. Matthew's Peace Garden has been completely dominated by socially excluded groups, such as unemployed people, rough sleepers, street drinkers, drug users and the elderly Afro-Caribbean people, who were mainly from the local communities around Brixton Central. Finally, in terms of the former Windrush Square, this space had been occupied by few users throughout its whole history, since the mid-70s, except for some events related to the archives of Afro-Caribbean migrants<sup>xx</sup>. These three public spaces had been divided by Effra Road and Rushcroft Road before the regeneration at the beginning of 2010. On the other hand, the borders between the three spaces had often been invisible, limiting insight into the socially excluded groups and their movements, which had also encouraged the local authority and police investigations, finally justifying the regeneration of the whole space.

## Brixton Central Square before regeneration



**Figure 8.1: The map of Brixton Central Square before the regeneration (London Borough of Lambeth, 2008; see also Figure 8. 13, the map of Brixton Central Square after the regeneration)**

In this section, I would like to introduce the history of each public space<sup>xxi</sup>, regarding the facilities as well as the users and their social activities. Furthermore, I would also like to offer insight into the regeneration of these public spaces by the local authority and police, as well as an architect group, which started planning in the mid-1990s.

### **8.2. The history of Tate Garden before the renewal of Brixton Central Square**

Historically, Tate Garden has been the most important part of Brixton Central Square, located in front of several symbolic places of Brixton, such as the Ritzy

Cinema and Tate Library. Moreover, among the three public spaces in Brixton Central, Tate Garden also has the longest history as a public space. This garden was used as a pasture for sheep until the late 1880s, before Sir. Henry Tate bought and donated it for public use in 1905 (London Borough of Lambeth, 2010; Wells, 2007b). He also bought the housing in front of this space to establish a library, which is called Tate Library (Piper, 1996: 55). His establishment of these public facilities in Brixton Central was achieved through the success of his business, a sugar industry in the Caribbean Islands during the British colonial period.

As you can see in Figure 8.2, Tate Garden had been composed of typical garden facilities, such as walkways and monuments with vegetation, until the beginning of the last century. In the centre of the garden, a *London Plane Tree* was planted beside the monument of Sir Henry Tate, which has been there for more than 100 years. Several walkways surrounded this big tree and monument, which were also enclosed by trees except for some gates at the edges of the garden. This landscape shows how the use of this space was limited only by its locality, during a time when Brixton was less developed (unlike the last half of the century).

Nonetheless, since the post-war period, the development of traffic and railways has made Brixton a hub in the inner city of London, which also caused changes in the social role of Tate Garden. As you can see in Figure 8.3, this garden became more of an open space during the middle of the last century, through the reduction of trees and flowers, alongside a growth in the number of cars on nearby roads and people passing through to the stations. It became more of a square rather than a garden, a landscape which continues even today.



Figure 8.2 and Figure 8.3: Tate Garden in the beginning (1911) and the middle of the last century (1960). As you can see, many trees and flowers were removed alongside traffic development in front of the garden in the post-war period. It seems to have become a square, rather than a garden. (London Borough of Lambeth, 1911; 1960)

Furthermore, the economic recession in Brixton has encouraged the departure of the upper-middle class and the arrival of post-war migrants since the '70s. This also changed the social structure of this public space, which has been gradually re-valued through its use by alcoholics, homeless people, drug dealers and addicts. This situation has further encouraged the emptiness of Tate Garden, whereby the remaining trees and flowers were also removed to allow for the installation of police surveillance, such as CCTV. As we can see in Figure 8.4, until the middle of this decade, this space symbolized desertion where the flower gardens were covered by sand, and the two public toilets were closed due to popular use by drug users (see Figure 8.5). The fountain and benches were also removed in 2004, which finally completed the concrete flatness of this garden.



**Figure 8.4: Tate Garden before the renewal. As you can see, the garden space has merely been covered by grass (back) or sand (front). (Okada, 2005)**



**Figure 8.5:** A new toilet (centre) stands beside the old toilet (left) in Tate Garden before the renewal. This ‘mobile’ toilet was for weekend evenings only (used for the surrounding night clubs). (Okada, 2005)



**Figure 8.6:** Tate Garden just before the refurbishment. Street drinkers, drug users, and police officers were icons of this public space on weekday afternoons, before its refurbishment. (Okada, 2009)

However, this ‘desertification’ of Tate Garden by the local council and police further discouraged ordinary users from staying there for a long time. Rather, it has encouraged another change of social demography in Tate Garden. It merely became a meeting point for visitors, such as from the railway stations and bus stops, rather than a communal place for the local people who were living around Brixton Central. On the other hand, the domination of socially excluded groups became more visible, which made Tate Garden into a symbolic place for ‘hate’ and ‘stigma’. These people were also encouraged to congregate in this space, as the result of actions such as the removal of drinkers and drug users from the pubs in the surrounding areas, as my interviewee, Knox explains below (see also Figure 8.6).

*Shuhei: I’ve heard, at the moment, (there are) many people around Tate Garden...You know, Tate Garden or St. Matthew’s Peace Garden?*

*Knox: Yeah, Yeah. (There are) A lot of alcoholics....*

*Shuhei: I’ve asked them before. They also.....They went to the Atlantic<sup>xxii</sup>. But when I asked... (They said that) when the Atlantic was closed, they (were) forced to move, like (to) Tate Garden...*

*Knox: Yeah, those guys used to be drinking a lot. There were drinking problems. And as you can see what I mean, most people around here refer to Tate Garden (as) ‘Jurassic Park’ (where people are like ‘dinosaurs’), right? Because you’ve got the white guy’s pub there, (do you know) what I mean*

*by that? But, you know, a lot of guys used to (go) there (the Atlantic). A lot of guys, when they were younger, they used to be there.*

*Shuhei: (Laugh) So they (were) forced to move around there (Tate Garden) like Jurassic Park...*

*Knox: Yeah, that's (what) we (can) only refer to it ....*

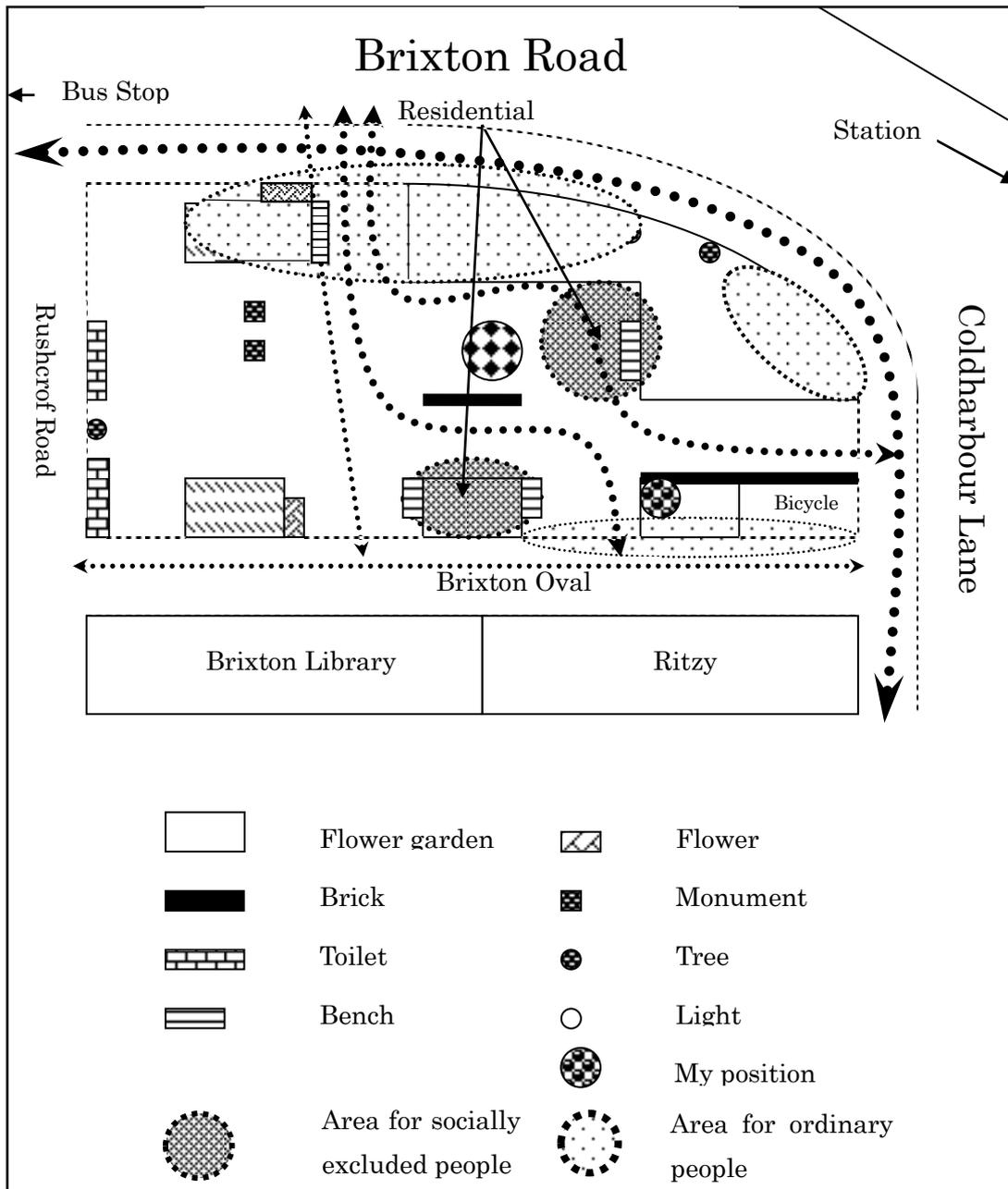
In this instance, before the refurbishment, the social complex at Tate Garden was represented through the different consumption of time and space by users and pedestrians. During the weekdays, ordinary people - such as visitors from the outside of Brixton or employees in Brixton - were meeting, taking lunch and resting individually for a short time. Meanwhile, socially excluded groups - such as the unemployed and street drinkers, rough sleepers, drug dealers and addicts, especially elderly members of ethnic minorities - tended to stay in groups for more than a few hours and even throughout the whole day. On the other hand, on weekends, both ordinary and socially excluded groups tended to stay for longer, even though they occupied different areas according to their different groups.

Here, I would like to introduce how Tate Garden, before its refurbishment (2009-1010), was used by the two types of groups throughout different areas and times. Before the refurbishment, Tate Garden consisted of facilities (see also Figure 8.7): the *London Plane Tree* next to the two monuments in the centre, and several small trees in the garden, covered by grass on the side of Brixton Road. Tate Garden also had three other garden spaces for flowers, along the sides of both Brixton Oval and Effra Road. However, two of these garden spaces had been covered by sand, and

just before the refurbishment, they became covered by grass with some flowers. Furthermore, the two public toilets were closed on the Rushcroft Road side.

### **8. 2.1 Weekends at the Tate Garden before the renewal of Brixton Central Square**

First of all, the social landscape of Tate Garden on weekends could be represented by the number of users. However, the number of people passing through was quite few, especially around 12 o'clock (see Figure 8.7). This situation made the time-space of Tate Garden one of 'pause' rather than 'flow', one in which users were encouraged to stay for a long time. Unlike weekdays, which I will mention later, many of those in the centre of the garden were white British or other European, whose ages were between 20 and 30. They tended to form groups of 3-6 people, chatting or eating lunch on the grass garden, especially on the Effra Road side. Many of them often stayed on the flower garden on the Brixton Oval side before and after visiting the Ritzy Cinema or Brixton Library.



**Figure 8.7: People using and walking through Tate Garden on a weekend before the refurbishment of Brixton Central Square (from 13:30 to 14:30, and from 15:00 to 16:00 on Sunday, the 12th October, 2008)**

There were also Afro-Caribbean youths in Tate Garden on weekends; their existence could be seen on the side of Brixton Oval near the Ritzy Cinema and Brixton Library, although they never seemed to enter the buildings. Around this area, these Afro-Caribbean or African youths talked or played card games with

their friends. In the evenings, especially in the summer, some of these youths would often stop their cars and enjoy music from their car stereos. These activities used to be continuous for more than a few hours, and even until midnight, thanks to the lighting from the Ritzy Cinema. They could stay here for a long time without darkness, though it also encouraged drug deals.

The difference between the socially excluded groups and other users was not as visible inside of Tate Garden on weekends. Some normal users also came to sit down in the inner circle of the garden, and they often sat down in the same space together within their groups. As well as those in the other parts, these ordinary users tended to stay in Tate Garden for longer than on weekdays, for a length of time that was the same as that of socially excluded groups. The number of these groups was also the same as that of socially excluded groups on weekends. However, contact between these two types of groups was rarely seen. Often, only after the socially excluded groups moved, did the groups of ordinary users come into the same area.

Socially excluded groups were not seen as frequently in Tate Garden on weekends, most of which preferably stayed in St. Matthew's Peace Garden nearby. And even if they were in Tate Garden, their time of stay was less than a half hour, and the number of them was fewer than during weekdays (5 or 6 people as a group). Most of them, especially the elderly people of ethnic minority, tended to stay in the centre of the garden, such as on the benches around the *London Plane Tree*. Most of their activities involved chatting to the other members of their groups, such as

street drinkers with beer. They often moved to St. Matthew's Peace Garden to find their friends and would then return to Tate Garden again.

### **8.2.2 Weekdays at the Tate Garden before the renewal of Brixton Central Square**

All types of ordinary users increased during weekday afternoons in Tate Garden. During this period, businessmen and women, people before and after shopping, and workers from Brixton market, came here to eat lunch, wait for someone, chat with their friends, read newspapers and make phone calls. They tended to prefer sitting down on the edge of the largest gardens on the busy Effra Road side (see Figure 8.8), and would leave within about 10 minutes. Fewer people also sat down around the flower gardens near the Ritzy Cinema, or stayed around the space between the toilets and the monument on the side of Brixton Library. However, all of these groups also seldom stayed in the garden for longer than an hour.

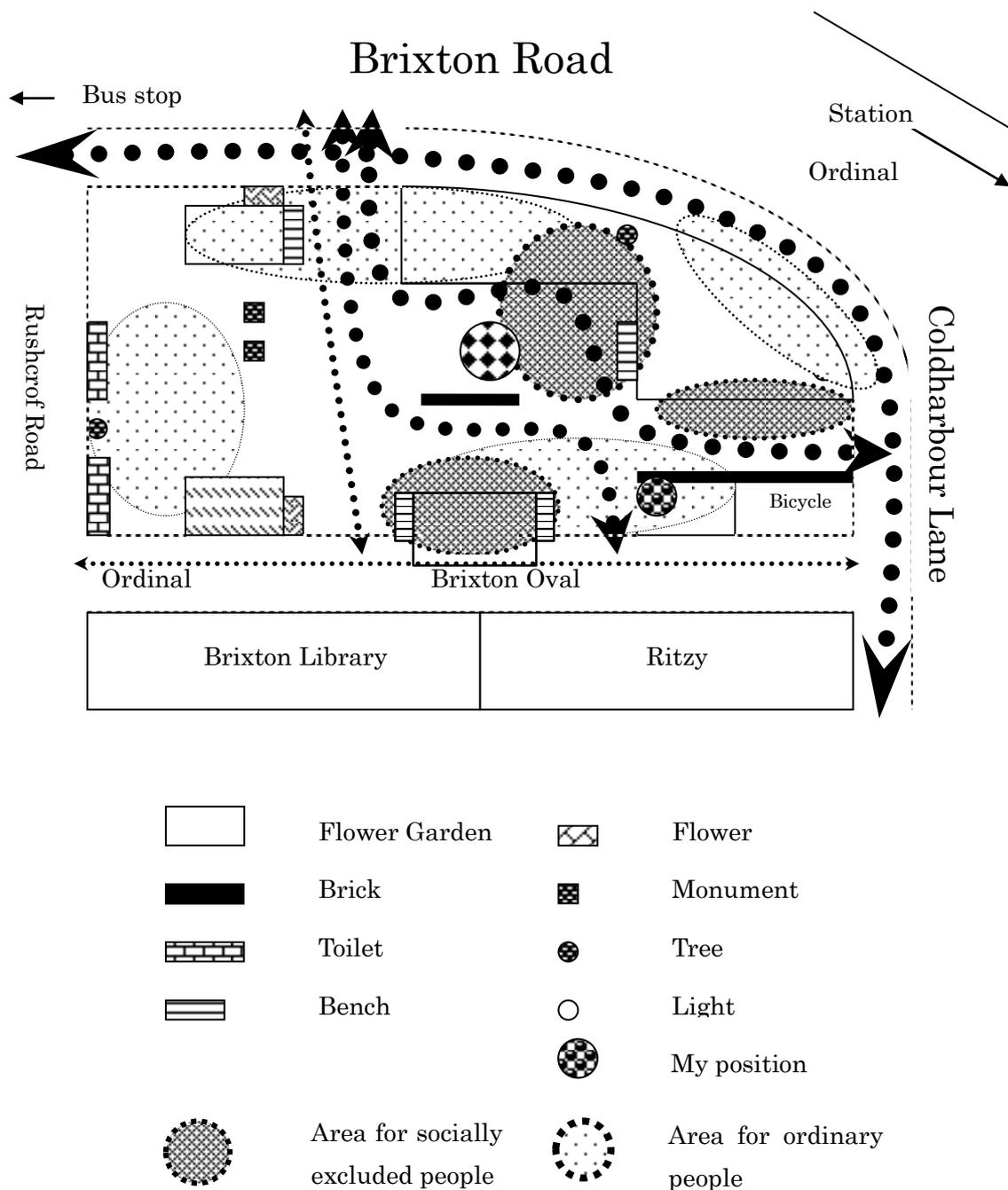


Figure 8.8: People using and walking through Tate Garden on a weekday before the refurbishment of Brixton Central Square (from 13:30 to 14:30, and from 15:00 to 16:00 on Thursday, the 16th October, 2008)

Around this time on weekdays, socially excluded groups were minorities in Tate Garden. There would only be a few or none of these groups during this period. However, if they were present, these groups tended to sit down together along the edge of the gardens around the *London Plane Tree*. They often spoke to each other

with beers in hand, although they would often briefly leave and move to St. Matthew's Peace Garden around this time. Meanwhile, the centre of Tate Garden was also popular for elderly people, such as those of Afro-Caribbean descent, who stayed here for longer (more than one hour). Particularly, in summer, the centre of the garden used to be a good place for them to find shade before its refurbishment.

These socially excluded groups increased after 3 o'clock, when the number of ordinary people became pedestrians rather than users of the garden. Particularly, these ordinary people passed through the inside of Tate Garden, walking from the bus stop on Effra Road to the tube station or Coldharbour Lane, where many of these people had been staying earlier. The number of people who stayed in Tate Garden between 3 PM and 4 PM decreased to half of that between 1:30 PM and 2:30 PM. Those who stayed were mostly Afro-Caribbean people between the ages of 20-30.

In contrast, the number of socially excluded groups grew in Tate Garden between 3 PM and 4 PM. Some members of these groups stayed from the earlier period, and others came after visits to St. Matthew's Peace Garden. They still tended to occupy the same area, the centre space surrounding the *London Plane Tree*, and sat down on the edge of the garden or benches opposite the Brixton Oval between the Ritzy Cinema and Brixton Library. The socially excluded groups often stayed in these areas in the evening after this period.

### **8.2.3. Analysis: Tate Garden before the renewal of Brixton Central Square**

Overall, the users and people walking through Tate Garden show the different social landscapes determined by both date and times<sup>xxiii</sup>. On weekends, Tate Garden had the role of a garden, as its name suggests. The smaller number of people passing through from the surrounding spaces seemed to make the users look at the inside of the space, so we can see the concentration of ordinary users in the centre of the garden, as well as the mixed use of this space by both ordinary and socially excluded groups. Their time of stay in the same areas made the whole of Tate Garden during the weekends appears as unified, which was independent from the surrounding spaces; time is paused rather than connected to them as flow. However, it was also notable that the areas occupied by these two groups rarely crossed each other, and there was a significant segregation within this same spatial temporariness.

On weekdays, however, Tate Garden had the role of a square rather than a garden, where the ordinary people walked through from one place to another place. In this situation, the centre of the garden became an empty space of users, which controversially invited the socially excluded groups into the centre of the garden, as an isolated island within this space. On the other hand, the socially excluded groups were also involved in the flow through this narrow space, due to their frequent movement to other isolated spaces, such as St. Matthew's Peace Garden.

### **8.3. The renewal of Tate Garden and the unification to Windrush Square**

Before the renewal of Brixton Central Square, Tate Garden had been used by both ordinary people and socially excluded people, even though their time and space

consumption were different. In particular, the spatial segregation on weekends and temporal segregation on weekdays had encouraged the stigmatization of the socially excluded groups, due to their dominant presence as well as their long stay in this public space (especially on weekdays). This social re-valuation of Tate Garden during the post-war period was used to justify the regeneration of Brixton Central Square, the first phase of which was launched as part of the *Mayor's 100 Public Spaces Program*<sup>xxiv</sup> in 2002. This plan had been incorporated by Lambeth Council, *Gross Max*, Glasgow's architect group and the local police. The main purpose of this regeneration was the innovation of a new public space in Brixton Central that had much easier access for all residents, as well as the social and cultural representation of a metropolitan atmosphere focusing on Afro-Caribbean migrant history (see Figure 8.9). This plan also included improving access not only for people in the local community, but also for those outside, such as visitors, through an attractive new square and high-profile policing by the local authority. It is evident, in terms of the latter case, that Borough police commander, Dick Quinn, was a member of the panel for this project.

The renewal of Tate Garden was also planned to incorporate nearby public spaces, particularly Windrush Square and St. Matthew's Peace Garden, through the closure of Effra Road and Rushcroft Road (see Figure 8.10). However, this plan was soon replaced by the second provision, in which unification was limited to the area between Tate Garden and Windrush Square, because of the different authorizations of St. Matthew's Peace Garden (the building by St. Matthew's Church and the garden by Lambeth Council) and the other two spaces (by Lambeth Council). On the other hand, the closure of Rushcroft Road was agreed for the

unification of Tate Garden and Windrush Square, the latter of which had been a vacant space covered by grass throughout the whole of its history.



Figure 8.9: One of the images of the new Tate Garden. This significantly shows the importance of Afro-Caribbean heritage to the new garden. (*Gross Max*, 2004)



Figure 8.10: The first provisional plan for the regeneration of Brixton Central Square: Tate Garden (around the *London Plane Tree* on the above left) as well as Windrush Square (the square with several trees in the above centre) and St. Matthew's Peace Garden (the triangular space with several trees in the bottom

**half). Rushcroft Road (between Tate Garden and Windrush Square) and Effra Road (between them and St. Matthew's Church) disappear and become one big square. (*Gross Max*, 2004)**

Finally, this unification of the two spaces started in the middle of 2009 and was completed in the beginning of 2010. During construction, most parts of Tate Garden as well as Windrush Square were closed off by a cage, except for a path made through Brixton Oval between Brixton Library and Ritzy Cinema. During construction, Ritzy Cinema opened a café by placing chairs in this path. The closure of Tate Garden enabled Ritzy to have this 'safe space' for a café, where the customers no longer needed to be close to the deviant groups in the nearby Tate Garden (see Figure 8.11). Before the refurbishment of the garden, Ritzy's café was on the first floor of the balcony, where customers could see these socially excluded groups with a bird's eye view.

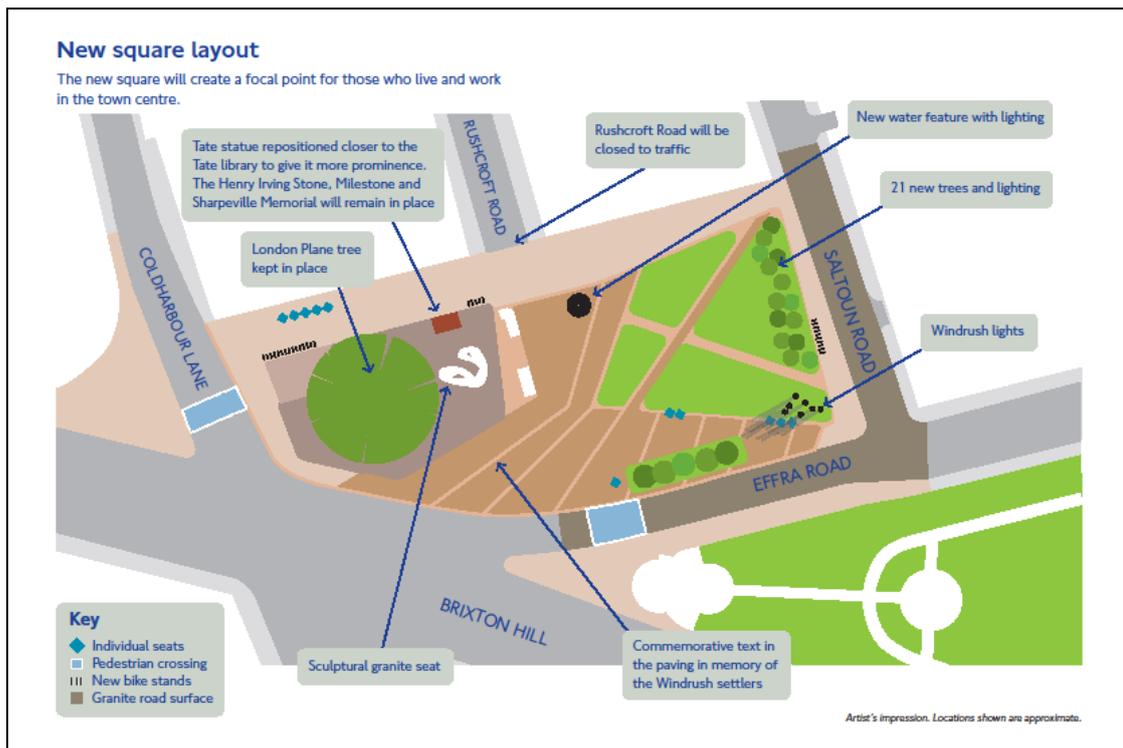
In the middle of January 2010, the renewal of Tate Garden was finally completed with its unification to Windrush Square. In the new Tate Garden, all gardens and trees, except the *London Plane Tree*, were completely removed and replaced with flat concrete (see Figure 8.12). As a result of this change, the distinction between Tate Garden and Windrush Square was no longer marked by any lines, and people could more easily walk through the inside of the garden (see Figure 8.13).



Figure 8.11: Open café of *Ritz* in front of Tate Garden during the construction (Okada, 2010)



Figure 8.12: The whole of the landscape of Tate Garden (from the Effra Road side). It has become a square covered by concrete, and the borders from the outside (including Windrush Square) have been completely removed. (Okada, 2010)



**Figure 8.13: The layout of the new square and facilities. As we can see, there is no longer a distinction between Tate Garden and Windrush Square. (Lambeth, 2008)**

However, the most important change in the new Tate Garden should be the ‘sitting’ spaces. As mentioned previously, all gardens in the past Tate Garden were removed, so people can no longer sit on the edges of these spaces. Instead, several ‘iron’ chairs were placed around the space between Tate Garden and the former pavement of Effra Road, as well as the space surrounding the *London Plane Tree* and the closed toilets (also see Figure 8. 13). These chairs were randomly placed facing in different directions; some chairs were positioned near each other, while others were separated by a certain distance. These chairs were also completely fixed to the flat concrete, so users would not be able to move them to more preferable directions and places (see Figure 8.14). In this new Tate Garden, the only space where people could sit down together is in front of Brixton Library,

where a 'sculptural granite seat' - a structure of grey, curved concrete - was newly installed (see Figure 8.15).



**Figure 8.14: New chairs in Tate Garden. The four legs of each chair are completely fixed to the flat concrete. (Okada, 2010)**



**Figure 8. 15: 'Sculptural granite seat', the new sitting space became the largest space for users in the new Tate Garden. As we can see, it enables the sitters to be close to each other, but facing in different directions. (Okada, 2010)**

In terms of the unification to Windrush Square, the distinction between the two spaces completely disappeared with the closure of Rushcroft Road. The space just behind the closed public toilets became Windrush Square, covered by new concrete (see Figure 8.16). However, the most significant changes in Windrush Square were a new fountain, a water feature with lighting, near the toilets and several new iron chairs in the space between this square and the former pavement of Effra Road (see Figures 8.17 and 8.18). Finally, as well as the physical changes in these two spaces, interestingly, many people now call the whole of the new public space ‘Windrush Square’, a name that used to be less popular than ‘Tate Garden’ before the renewal. This new name was selected by the local communities, since ‘Windrush Square’ obtained the largest number of votes by those who wanted to sustain the cultural heritage of Afro-Caribbean migrants in the post-war period. However, to avoid confusion over its physical distinction from the former Windrush Square (one of the parts of the previous Brixton Central Square), I would still like to refer to the whole of this regenerated area as Brixton Central Square in this dissertation.



**Figure 8.16:** The space behind the toilets in Tate Garden became the edge of part

of Windrush Square due to the closure of Rushcroft Road. (Okada, 2011)

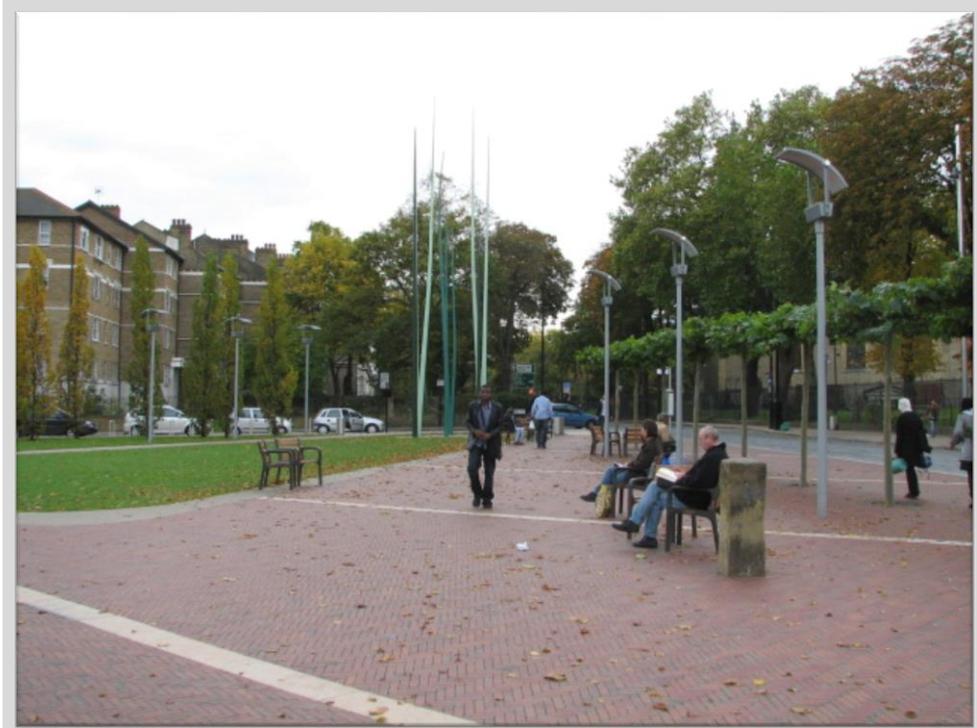
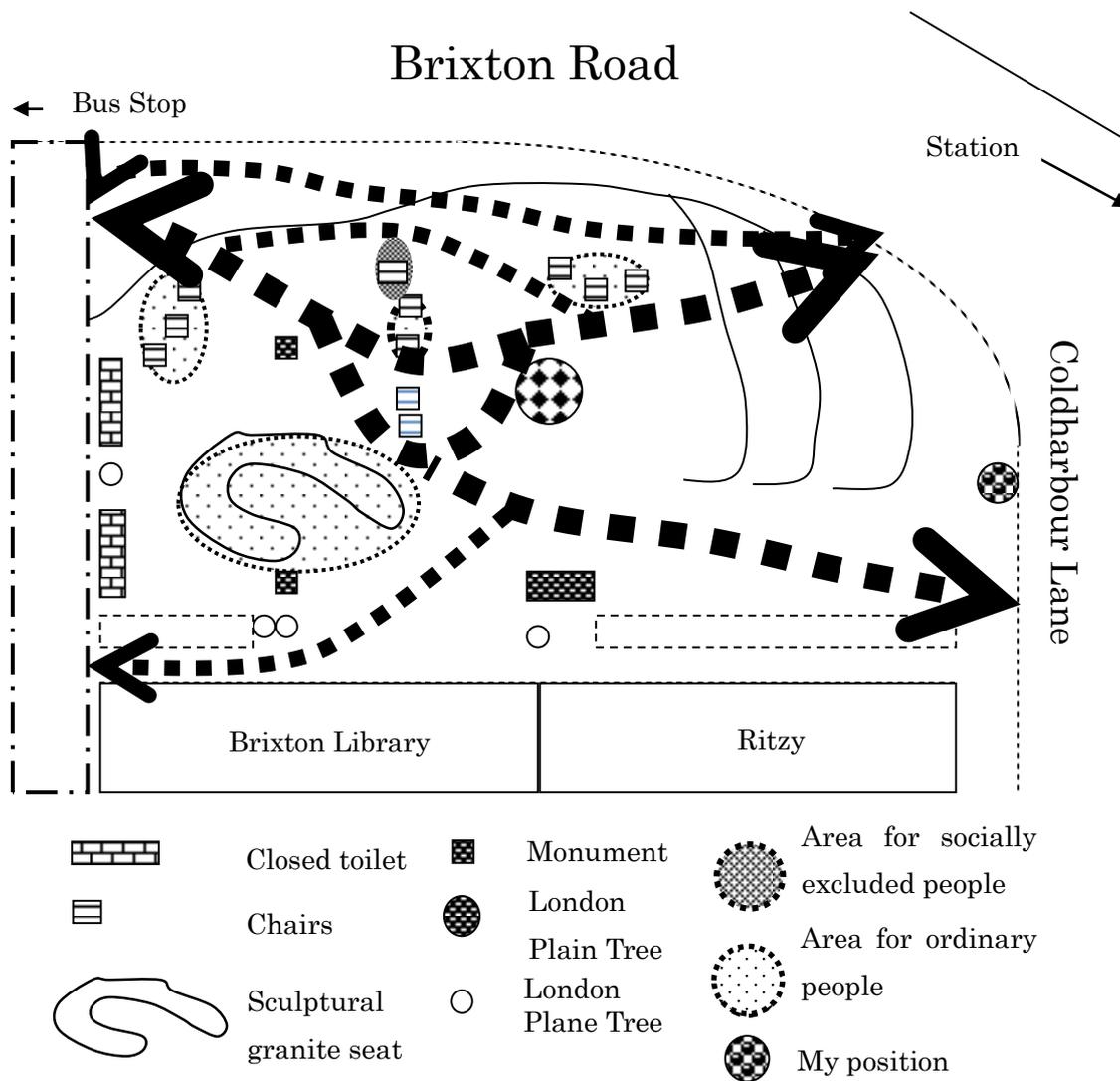


Figure 8.17 and Figure 8.18: The new water feature and chairs of the New Brixton Central Square (formerly Windrush Square) (Okada, 2010)

### 8.3.1 Weekends at the Tate Garden after the renewal of Brixton Central Square

Here, I would like to introduce the map of the new Tate Garden, regarding people's activities and their movements. As I mentioned before, Tate Garden and Windrush Square became unified in the beginning of 2010, and after their refurbishment, people tended to call this big public space, 'Windrush Square'. However, in this section, I would like to focus only on the part which used to be the former Tate Garden. To avoid confusion, I would like to call this part, 'the new Tate Garden'.

Firstly, I introduce the positions as well as the movements of people in this new Tate Garden on Sundays (see Figure 8.19). As with the Tate Garden before the refurbishment, it is also true that the new Tate Garden on Sundays is marked by the movement of people walking through from the surrounding spaces. However, due to the change in its facilities, these people now have much easier access to this space from anywhere, which causes a large influx of people into Tate Garden even on Sundays. As we can see in Figure 8.19, the largest number of these people passed through the centre of Tate Garden; this stands in contrast to the past, when many people walked on the pavement of Effra Road without crossing through Tate Garden. Moreover, in the past, there was only a large influx of people from the bus stop on Effra Road to the tube station and Coldharbour Lane; however, in the new Tate Garden, people walked through from anywhere to anywhere, as we can see in the complex of flows in Figure 8.19. Many of these people pass through the areas between the iron chairs near the *London Plane Tree*, and they are not only coming from the side of the bus stop on Effra Road, but also from Brixton Oval or the other side of the old Windrush Square.



**Figure 8.19: People using and walking through Tate Garden on a weekend after the refurbishment of Brixton Central Square (from 13:30 to 14:30, and from 15:00 to 16:00 on Sunday, the 10th October, 2010)**

Meanwhile, the number of people inside Tate Garden after the refurbishment is still large, even larger than those in the old Tate Garden. However, because of the change of sitting space, they are more often seen on the side of Windrush Square, rather than the centre of the garden. Nearby areas of these new facilities have also become spaces where people walk through, so the distinction between those who are staying and passing has now become more abstract in the new Tate Garden on Sundays.

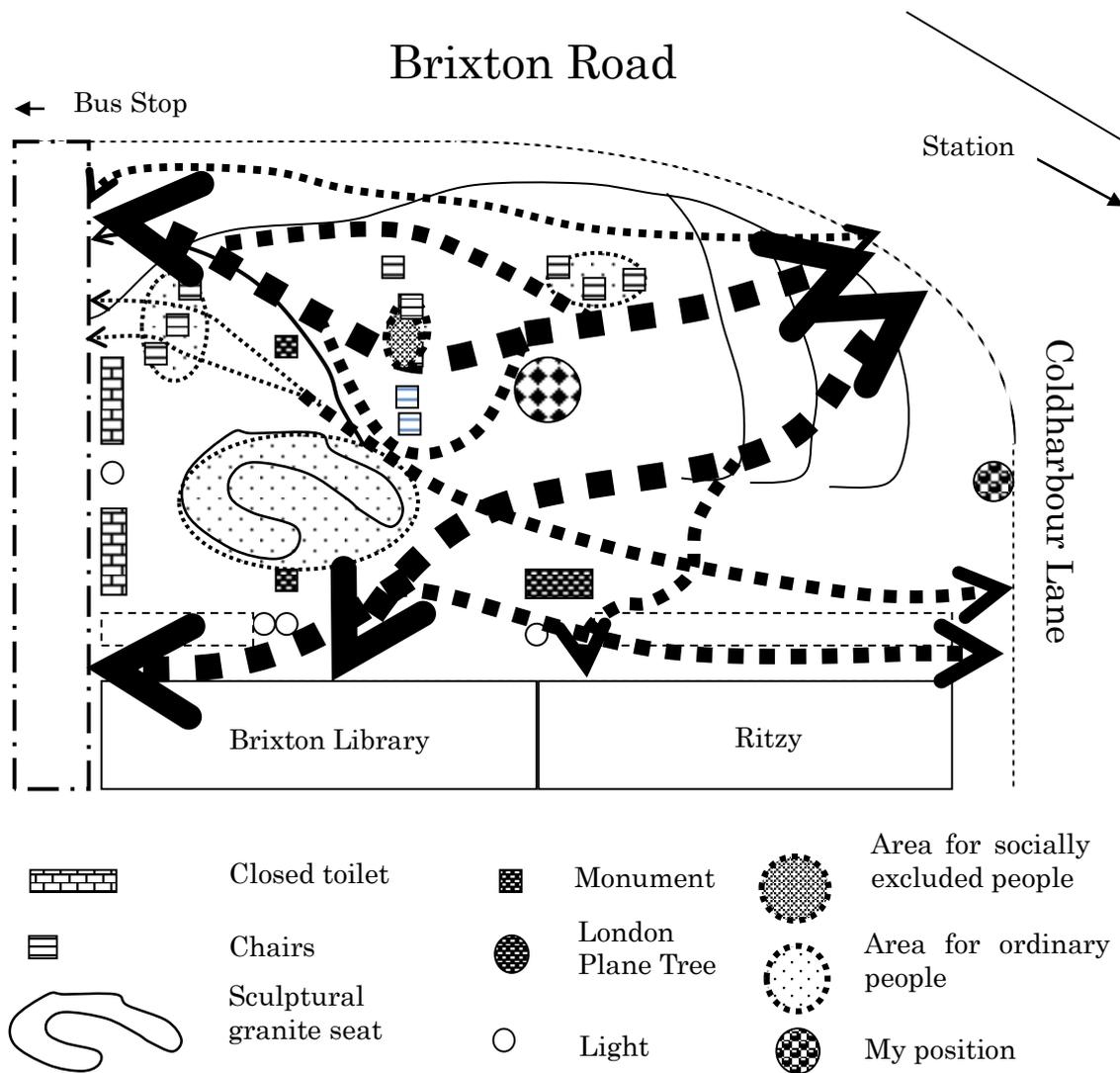
In terms of the type of users staying in these areas, it is significant that other types of users are much more obvious than the socially excluded people. The number of socially excluded users is relatively small compared to those in the old Tate Garden; up to 3 or 4 people often stay in these spaces alone, even on weekdays. In particular, the grey concrete sculpture near Brixton Library became a new spot for ordinary individuals, who shared the space but sat down separately. Other popular places for ordinary people in the new Tate Garden are the five chairs between the long grey concrete sculpture and the *London Plane Tree*. As mentioned previously, the areas between these chairs are also spaces for people who are passing through the garden, so ordinary people in these areas also tend to sit down in the chairs individually or in small groups. These ordinary people in the two popular areas are mainly white and between the ages of 20 and 40. This number is much larger than that of Tate Garden in the past.

In contrast, the number of socially excluded groups in the new Tate Garden has significantly decreased. During each session (13:30-14:30 and 15:00-16:00) on the weekends, only three of these groups could be seen. They sat down in the chairs between the *London Plane Tree* and Effra Road, as well as in two of the five chairs near the grey concrete sculpture (on the Effra Road side). These socially excluded groups were white and Afro-Caribbean, both male and female, between the ages of 20 and 40, and they seemed to be unemployed or street drinkers. One of these socially excluded groups stayed here throughout the whole of the first session (13:30-14:30), though some of the members changed. On the other hand, Afro-Caribbean elderly men and women stayed on the grey concrete sculpture for the

whole of the first hour; they were the only socially excluded group to stay in this area.

### **8.3.2 Weekdays at the Tate Garden after the renewal of Brixton Central Square**

On weekdays, the difference from the past is much greater. In Figure 8.20, we can see that the number of people passing through the new Tate Garden on a weekday is fewer than during the weekend, which shows a marked difference from the old Tate Garden, where there were more people on weekdays. On weekdays, most of the people walking through Tate Garden from the surrounding areas were seen on the side of Effra Road, where its pavement no longer exists, through its distinction from the garden. Due to the changes, many people can now pass around the edge of Tate Garden. As I mentioned earlier, the new chairs were placed down in this area after the refurbishment. However, people passed through even between these chairs. The majority of these flows were from the bus stop to the station side of Effra Road as well as to Coldharbour Lane.



**Figure 8. 20: People using and walking through Tate Garden on a weekday after the refurbishment of Brixton Central Square (from 13:30 to 14:30, and from 15:00 to 16:00 on Thursday, the 14th October, 2010)**

However, the most significant change in the flow of people walking through Tate Garden could be seen from the station side to the Ritzy Cinema and Brixton Library. They tended to leave Tate Garden straightaway, before and after the cinema and library on weekdays. Meanwhile, compared to weekends, the number of ordinary people staying in the garden was much fewer. They tended to sit down in marginalized positions in Tate Garden, which was the same as during the weekdays before the refurbishment. Most of them would sit down on the grey

concrete sculpture or the chairs near Effra Road. In particular, the most popular chairs for these ordinary people are those near the toilets on the side of Windrush Square, as well as between the *London Plane Tree* and Effra Road. Their times of stay were 10-20 minutes on the grey concrete sculpture and on the chairs.

Moreover, the number of people staying in the new Tate Garden was significantly fewer than those on weekends. In particular, socially excluded groups were rarely seen on weekdays in Tate Garden, when they only stayed in small separate groups of 3~4 people. This change may have been caused by ordinary people passing through the Tate Garden around the chairs on the Effra Road side on weekdays. These socially excluded groups were only seen in the centre of five chairs between Brixton Road and the sculptural granite seat, and they were Afro-Caribbean males aged 30-40.

The reason for the reduction in socially excluded groups seems to be linked to the pedestrians in the centre of Tate Garden. Unlike weekends, the majority of passengers in this new space are more represented by their 'thick' line from the bus stop on Effra Road to Brixton tube station and Coldharbour Lane. Although there is no longer a physical distinction between the pavement of Effra Road and the inside of Tate Garden, there is a new interruption for these pedestrians in the form of the eight chairs around the *London Plane Tree*. In particular, the five chairs positioned between the big tree and the monument became a 'wall' for these pedestrians. However, even in this case, most of them chose the path between these two and three chairs, which is presumably the shortest way. Although it is one of

the narrowest spaces between Effra Road and the *London Plane Tree*, they tended to quickly pass through here to get to both sides of Tate Garden.

This strong flow consequently interrupted socially excluded groups staying in these five parallel chairs, though the area is still their most preferable position in the new Tate Garden. On the other hand, due to the extreme concentration of pedestrians between the five chairs, these pedestrians no longer care about the existence of socially excluded groups, unlike in the past when they avoided passing through the centre of the old Tate Garden. Consequently, the new Tate Garden provided ordinary people with an opportunity to move as 'crowds' (Sennett, 1977), where different groups can be accessed in the same space without any struggle with the difference of their identity.

The larger society has shaped these expectations in an ideological as well as a practical way. It has done so through the image of crowds. For these images have come to be distinct in people's minds from images of community; in fact, community and crowd seem now to be antithetical. The bourgeois man in a crowd developed in the last century a shield of silence around himself. He did so out of fear. This fear was to some extent a matter of class, but it was not only that. A more undifferentiated anxiety about not knowing what to expect, about being violated in public, led him to try to isolate himself through silence when in this public milieu. Unlike his *ancien régime* counterpart, who also knew the anxiety of crowd of life, he did not try to control and order his sociability in public; rather he tried to erase it, so that the bourgeois on the street was in a crowd but not of it. (Sennett, 1977: 298-299)

Much like this description above, the crowds of ordinary pedestrians in the new Tate Garden implies their existence here as not part of, but outside of this space. By being pedestrians, they are no longer aware of socially excluded groups as others, whose existence is made by the surrounding crowds through new narrow paths invented by the planners. Notably, these paths are contrasted to trajectories such as those introduced by de Certeau (1984: 33) as the practice of urban space through people's everyday lives, where geometric places become represented by their 'tag-line' (Crang, 2000: 150) through temporal movement in space.

**In order to give an account of these practices, I have resorted to the category of "trajectory". It was intended to suggest a temporal movement through space, that is a diachronic succession of points through, which it passes, and not the figure that these points form on space that is supposed to be synchronic or achronic. (de Certeau, 1984: 35)**

However, de Certeau never neglects to notify us that, even for these trajectories, their aspect is limited in time-space, which is soon followed by objects, and mapped as directions and points in space.

**[T]his 'representation' (by trajectory) is insufficient, precisely because trajectory is drawn, and time and movement are thus reduced to a line that can be seized as a whole by the eye and read in a single moment, as one projects onto a map the path taken by someone walking through the city. (de Certeau, 1984: 35)**

Interestingly, unlike de Certeau's trajectory in time-space, the people's passages in the new Tate Garden were invisibly settled down by these trajectories before they were made users' practices. In this sense, these tag-lines emerging from pedestrians in the new Tate Garden are closer to paths, which geometrically traced their practice of this space, rather than trajectories for practice through the whole of this space by them. Notably, through the following chapter in the same book, de Certeau similarly distinguished between these two types of peoples' movements in particular urban spaces. Although in the beginning, trajectories by footsteps in these spaces are represented as an individual's movements through daily activities, they soon become paths which are also followed by footsteps, but no longer emerge from their spatial practice:

It is true that the operations of walking on can be traced on city maps in such a way as to transcribe their paths (here well-trodden, there very faint) and their trajectories (going this way not that). But these thick to thin curves only refer, like words, to the absence of what has passed by. Surveys of routes miss what was: the act itself of passing by. The operation of walking, wandering, or "window shopping", that is, the activity of passers-by, is transformed into points that draw a totalizing and visible line on the map. They allow us to grasp only a relic set in the nowhen of surface projection. Itself visible, it has the effect of making invisible the operation that made it possible. These fixations constitute procedures for forgetting. The trace left behind is substituted for the practice. It exhibits the (vocations) property that the geographical system has of being able to transform action into legibility, but in doing so it causes a way of being in the world to be forgotten. (de Certeau, 1984: 97)

Thus, the thick curves drawn by pedestrians in the new Tate Garden were paths, which are, however, purposefully traced by the local authority and planners without those forgotten trajectory paths. Although these passages seem to be made by people's footsteps at first glance, they are invisibly made by the new facilities of the new Tate Garden, such as the positions of new chairs limiting the direction of people's movements. The thick lines purposefully made by pedestrians in the centre of this garden are interestingly a more developed version of what de Certeau found as forgotten trajectories through the paths of modern urban space.

### **8.3.3. The analysis: Tate Garden after the renewal of Brixton Central Square**

As we can see in the difference of activities and movements, the refurbishment of Tate Garden has significantly changed the social and cultural structure of this space between the past and present. The stopping of people's flows from the surrounding spaces during the weekends has also stopped the flow of the people within the former Tate Garden, where ordinary people used to stay for a long time and also coexist with the socially excluded groups within the garden. On the other hand, the dominance of socially excluded groups seemed to be significant in the centre, while ordinary users occupied marginal positions at the edge of the garden. This situation enabled the two groups to be segregated, a situation which was sustained for a long time.

Meanwhile, in the past Tate Garden, people's flows from the surrounding space on weekdays made this space more fluid, especially in the case where ordinary people stayed for shorter periods of time. This evidence was significantly seen in their behavioural map on weekdays. On the other hand, the emptiness of this space

caused by the flow of people walking through had encouraged socially excluded groups to stay in the centre of the garden for a long time, which typically made them a symbol of 'hate' in the past Tate Garden.

By contrast, after the refurbishment, this tendency has completely gone in the opposite direction. In the weekends, ordinary people dominated the whole of the new Tate Garden, where they sat on the sculptural granite seat and chairs and stayed for longer. Meanwhile, even during the weekends, the socially excluded groups tended to occupy the marginal positions and stay for shorter periods.

On weekdays, the centre of the new garden surprisingly became empty of both ordinary and socially excluded groups, due to the people passing through this area. The bench and chairs in the marginal spaces were merely occupied temporarily, where both groups would sit down in the same areas, but only very briefly.

Overall, the flow of people passing through the centre has 'successfully' marginalized socially excluded groups throughout the whole of this space. Occupied by people walking through, this space came to be dominated by its transitory nature. The occupation of socially empty space by mobility has successfully stopped the congregation of deviant groups, who were now dispersed in the marginal spaces of the new Tate Garden on both weekdays and weekends. This has also been caused by the change in the structure of the garden, such as the replacement of the benches and gardens in the centre, and the placement of new chairs on more marginalized sides, such as Effra Road and Windrush Square. Consequently, ordinary people, who tend to occupy these spaces for shorter periods,

prefer to use the new facilities, as is typically seen in the use of the sculptural seat by ordinary groups before and after going to the Ritzy Cinema and Brixton Library. This concrete bench is not comfortable for socially excluded groups, especially for the elderly of ethnic groups, who often have physical problems. Furthermore, customers can more easily access these two buildings by passing through the inside of the garden through the emptiness of the centre, where there is no sitting space for these socially excluded groups.

William Whyte investigated public spaces in New York a few decades ago. The richness of his ethnographic research suggested how their designs interrupted urban public spaces, which used to be appropriately used by diverse users through their interaction. It is interesting that he similarly noted the importance of chairs in these public spaces, which gave mobility by users' free choices. However, when those chairs are fixed, social distance by diverse users in public spaces are kept, as if they were strangers:

**Fixed individual seats deny choice. They may be good to look at, and in the forms of stools, metal love seats, granite cubes, and the like, they make interesting decorative elements. That is their primary function. For sitting, however, they are inflexible and socially uncomfortable. Social distance between people is a subtle dimension, ever changing. But the distances of fixed seats do not change and that is why they are rarely quite right for anybody. Love seats may be all right for lovers, but they are close for acquaintances and much too close for strangers. Loners tend to take them over, propping their feet on the other seat so no one else will sit on it. (Whyte, 1988: 121)**

However, in the case of Brixton Central Square, spatial mobility was interestingly encouraged by ordinary pedestrians, keeping their social distance from socially excluded groups, as well as the latter group maintaining distance between themselves. In other words, the crowds made by the former group forcibly surrounded the socially excluded groups, encouraging the latter to congregate although they didn't know each other. As mentioned earlier, Sennett was also aware of the importance of this crowd in public space in the modern period:

**Modern images of crowds have consequences for modern ideas of community. In the more simplified environment there will be order, because individuals know other individuals, and each knows his territorial place. Your neighborhoods will know if you got spontaneous, whereas in a crowd no one knows you. In other words, community has a surveillance function. But how could it also be a place where people are open and free with each other? (Sennett, 1977: 300)**

Whyte also examined the importance of benches in the public spaces of New York, where users are able to meet strangers with appropriate social distance like in Sennett's medieval period (Sennett, 1977). The spaces between people on benches mediated their interaction; otherwise, they tended to be disturbed and appreciate more social order in these public spaces.

**When there are few people around, the comfortable distance between strangers is fairly wide. If you are one of few people sitting, and a stranger comes and sits on your bench instead of an empty one, there can be a strong feeling of intrusion. It's like sitting in an empty theatre and having someone come and take a seat**

close to yours...As space fills up, social distance contracts, one does not need strangers sitting closer by. They have to do, so it is in order. Crowding, in a sense, can make crowding more tolerable. (Whyte, 1988: 116-117)

By contrast, in the case of new Tate Garden, the sculptural seat, the sitting space of the curved concrete, magically enables users to sit down beside each other with physical closeness, while being socially separate. Ordinary people can sit down nearby even if there are only a few people, without any interaction with socially excluded groups (see Figure 8. 20).

Mike Davis (1998: 224) cynically found such crowds in the public space of Los Angeles, which were purposefully re-created through its social urban landscape, where the people's interaction must be thought to be avoidant through the fear of others:

[T]he neo-military syntax of contemporary architecture insinuates violence and conjures imaginary dangers. In many instances the semiotics of so-called 'defensible space'. Today's upscale, pseudo-public—sumptuary malls, office centres, culture acropolises, and so on—are full of invisible signs warning off underclass 'Other'. Although architectural critics are usually oblivious to how the built environment contributes to segregation, pariah groups—whether poor Latino families, young Black men, elderly homeless white females—read the meaning immediately...Photographs of the old Downtown in its prime show a mixed crowd of Anglo, Black and Latino pedestrians of different ages and classes. The contemporary Downtown 'renaissance' is designed to make such

**heterogeneity virtually impossible. It is intended not just to ‘kill the street’ as Kalpan fears, but to ‘kill the crowd’... (Davis, 1998: 226-231)**

This could also be seen in the new sitting spaces as well as the pedestrians in the new Tate Garden. But what about the other public spaces in Brixton Central Square? Have they changed as the new Tate Garden did in the same period? Or are they still the same as they were before the regeneration? Next, I would like to examine how the changes in Tate Garden have influenced the other side of Brixton Central Square, St. Matthew’s Peace Church.

#### **8.4. St. Matthew’s Peace Garden and the unification of Brixton Central Square**

As I mentioned before, the refurbishment of Tate Garden has significantly transformed this space in the past into a symbolic space of hate against socially excluded groups. In Tate Garden before the refurbishment, these socially excluded groups existed in the centre of the space among the flow of people from the surrounding spaces, which has isolated this space as ‘empty’. This situation has changed a lot, even on weekdays, due to the segregation between socially excluded groups and ordinary groups through the different consumption of time. Moreover, after the refurbishment, the change in the structure of Tate Garden has also changed the emptiness of the centre by centralizing the flow of people walking through, such as by the removal of the gardens and benches. Although socially excluded groups can now sit down in the new sitting space, their existence becomes marginalized in these new facilities, as well as by the preferable design of this space for ordinary people.

However, it is clear that these changes in social structure in Tate Garden are also linked to the other parts of Brixton Central Square through their refurbishment. In this section, I would like to discuss the change of St. Matthew's Peace Garden before and after the refurbishment of Brixton Central Square. As I mentioned in the beginning of this chapter, compared with Tate Garden, the refurbishment of St. Matthew's Peace Garden only involved a minor structural change. Nonetheless, these minor changes of St. Matthew's Peace Garden have significantly changed the social structure of this garden, which used to be occupied more by socially excluded groups. This change is also linked to their mobilization throughout the whole of Brixton Central Square, where they are enclosed as a minority in every part of the space. By comparing these changes through observation in St. Matthew's Peace Garden, both in the past and present, I would like to examine the transformation of Brixton Central Square in a much broader view.

St. Matthew's Peace Garden is located on the northwest side of Tate Garden. It opened to the public in the 1950s (see Figure 8.21), about 50 years after the birth of Tate Garden. Previously, this garden was erected by Henry Budd a year following the consecration of the church in 1824, as the burial place of his father and others of the family. This public place, as well as the church, had been enclosed by Effra Road, Brixton Road and St. Matthew's Road, the former two of which are main roads in Brixton Central, leading to Tulse Hill and Brixton Hill. Consequently, there has always been traffic in the surroundings, which separate this space, isolating it from spaces such as Tate Garden and Windrush Square. This has also been encouraged by the lack of pavement on any side of this space, which has made it difficult for people to access St. Matthew's Peace Garden.



**Figure 8.21: St. Matthew's Peace Garden in 1954. Before the 1950s, this space in front of St. Matthew's Church above had been used as a graveyard. (London Borough of Lambeth, 1954)**

Alongside this geographical background, throughout its whole history of half a century, St. Matthew's Peace Garden has been described as more of a garden compared to the Tate Garden before their refurbishment. St. Matthew's Peace Garden used to have several big trees on both the Effra Road and Brixton Road sides, and in the centre of the garden there used to be a fountain surrounded by four benches (see Figures 8.23 and 8.24). Moreover, around the fountain, there were two paths leading from the entrances from both Tulse Hill and Brixton Hill to that of the tube station side. There were also two other paths in the outer circle

of the fountain with four other benches in the centre, as well those around the monument near the entrance to the side of Brixton tube station.

Due to its geographical location and layout, this public space had been occupied more by socially excluded groups, even compared to Tate Garden, before the refurbishment of Brixton Central Square in 2009-10. Its facilities as a garden but poor connection to the outside had attracted many unemployed and rough sleepers, along with street drinkers, drug dealers and addicts, as well as the elderly of ethnic minority groups, who stayed for a long time and frequently.

Moreover, as mentioned before, until the summer of 2004, Tate Garden also used to have many garden facilities, such as a fountain, benches, and toilets, as we currently see in St. Matthew's Peace Garden. The replacement of these facilities was due to the long stay of undesirable users and their activities; however, the emptiness of Tate Garden became rather comfortable for certain socially excluded groups, who could openly conduct their activities in the centre. Meanwhile, it also influenced the decrease of other socially excluded groups in this public space - such as street drinkers, rough sleepers and retirees - who were more likely to seek out public spaces such as gardens (even compared to ordinary users), and thus moved to St. Matthew's Peace Garden.

Because of this situation, most users in St. Matthew's Peace Garden since the mid-2000s were also dominated by deviant groups, such as street drinkers, rough sleepers and the elderly, as well as a few drug dealers and addicts who also found new opportunities for their trades. All of these groups were mostly dominated by

males of African descent, such as Afro-Caribbeans, Nigerians, South Africans and Ethiopians. There were also a few females from these cultural backgrounds, as well as those who were white. Nearly half of these users spent more than an hour in St. Matthew's Peace Garden, and they often visited more than once a day. Thus, it would be better to say that many of them spent a whole day in St. Matthew's Peace Garden before the refurbishment. Most of the users in St. Matthew's Peace Garden during this period seemed to be welcomed, rather than forced, to stay there. It can be said that the garden existed as an 'oasis', rather than as a 'cave', for them. For these socially excluded groups, St. Matthew's Peace Garden was a public space that protected them, especially after the removal of many of the same facilities in Tate Garden.

#### **8.4.1. St. Matthew's Peace Garden before the unification of Brixton Central Square**

Figures 8.22 and 8.23 present the people's flow and positions in St. Matthew's Peace Garden on both a weekend and weekday, before the regeneration of Brixton Central Square. At first glance, we can see the similarity of the people's positions and movements on both days; this is in contrast to those of Tate Garden, which shows a more significant difference between weekend and weekday patterns. On both days, most people staying in St. Matthew's Peace Garden positioned benches in both the inner and outer circles around the fountain. However, the important difference between these two days is interesting, in that more people were on these benches, especially in the outer circle, on the weekday rather than the weekend. The reason for this difference from Tate Garden was due to the greater domination of these areas by socially excluded groups, who tend to come to these public spaces regardless of time and date. Particularly, when the regeneration started in Tate

Garden and Windrush Square at the end of 2009, this situation was further encouraged by the people's flows through these public spaces in the enclosure (Figure 8.24).

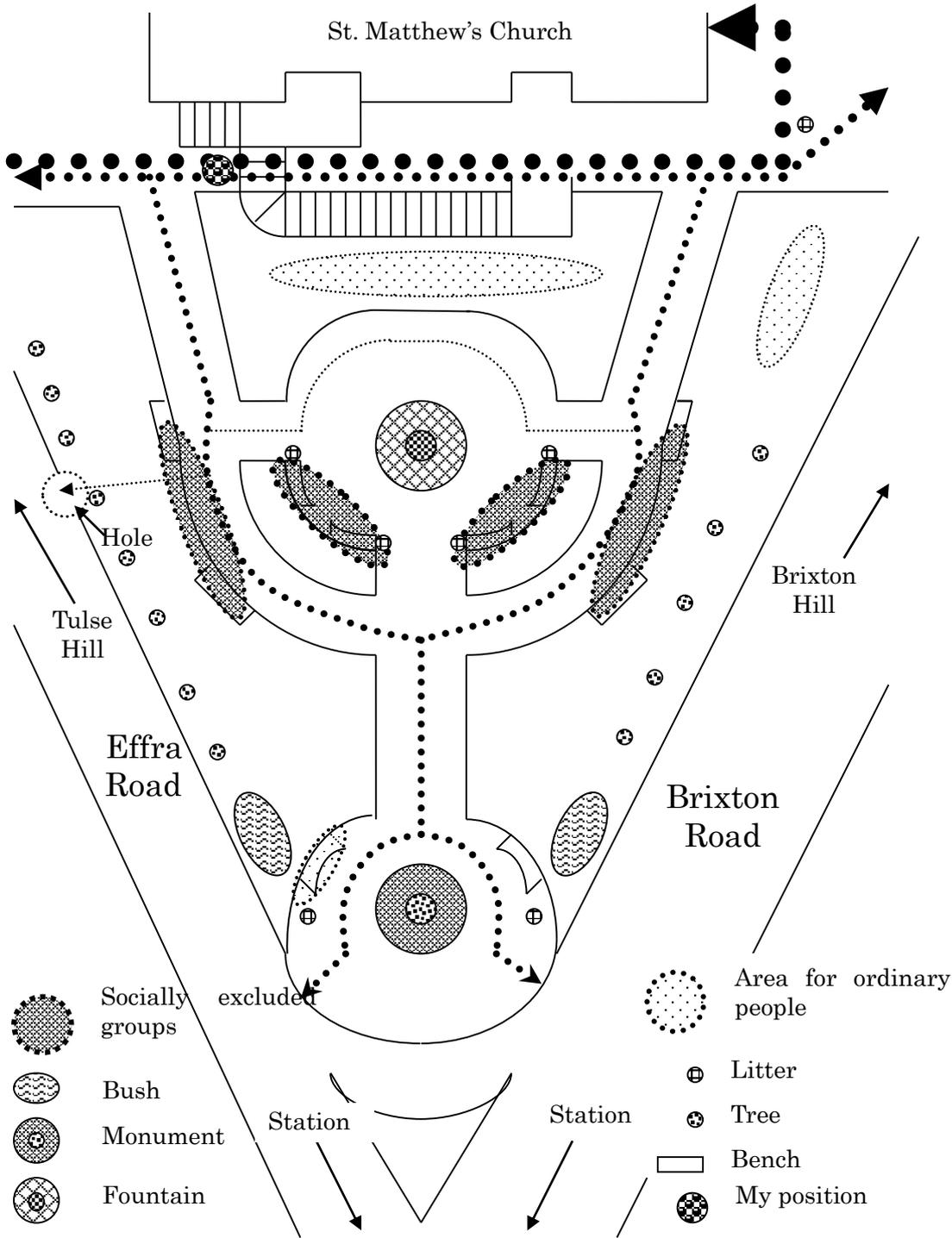


Figure 8.22: People using and walking through St. Matthew's Peace Garden on a weekend before the refurbishment of Brixton Central Square (from 13:30 to 14:30, and from 15:00 to 16:00 on Sunday, the 19th October, 2008)

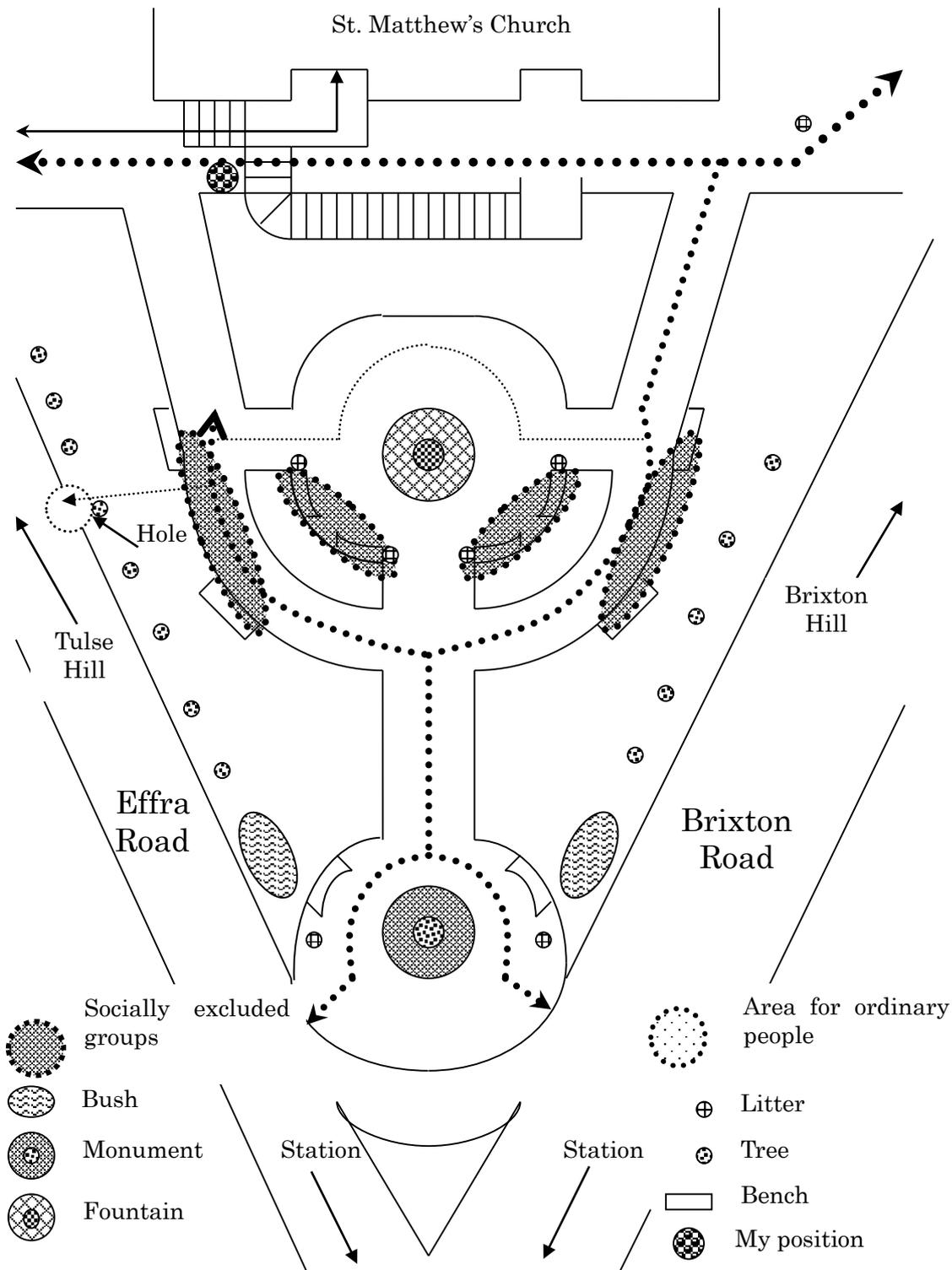


Figure 8. 23 People using and walking through St. Matthew's Peace Garden on a weekend before the refurbishment of Brixton Central Square (from 13:30 to 14:30, and from 15:00 to 16:00 on Sunday, the 23th October, 2008)



**Figure 8. 24: Is this a public or private space? St. Matthew's Church during the refurbishment of Tate Garden and Windrush Square. Socially excluded groups congregated in high numbers on the benches surrounding the fountain in the centre. (Okada, 2009)**

Therefore, most of the socially excluded users in St. Matthew's Peace Garden, just before the refurbishment, were 'forced' into this public space, rather than because they 'wanted' to go there. For these people, the previous St. Matthew's Peace Garden had been a public space that protected them, particularly since many facilities had been removed in Tate Garden. However, the regeneration process in the other parts of Brixton Central Square further encouraged their isolation within this space, turning it into an enclosure rather than an open space for them. It had negatively transformed their existence as a congregation, which later triggered 'another' regeneration in this garden. I will discuss this 'other' regeneration in St. Matthew's Peace Garden later.

Before the regeneration of Brixton Central Square, the daily activities of these socially excluded groups in St. Matthew's Peace Garden mainly consisted of chatting to other users, with cigarettes or alcoholic drinks. Like in the old Tate Garden, a few people would also bring some musical instruments, such as guitars, drums and CD players. These people tended to sit down on the benches surrounding the fountain, in both the inner circle and outer circle, while other users tended to sit down on the grass or the benches at the entrance on the tube station side. In spite of the popularity for socially excluded groups, drug deals in St. Matthew's Peace Garden were fewer than those in Tate Garden before the refurbishment of Brixton Central Square.

St. Matthew's Peace Garden had been a meeting point for socially excluded groups, and seemed to be closer to a private space compared to Tate Garden before both refurbishments. Through frequent interactions, most of the users at St. Matthew's Peace Garden knew the others very well, and moreover, the isolation of this space had naturally encouraged the users to interact with each other, beyond different social backgrounds. By sharing the same subaltern sphere, they partly existed as 'diverse' groups from dominant society, rather than as 'deviant' groups from dominant society.

By arguing the importance of counter publicity for socially excluded groups in stratified society, Fraser emphasized how those counter publicities must exist 'at the edge', as they are, which is beyond either openness or enclave for their discursive contestation through both the connection and disconnection to dominant society in this expanded space. Particularly, through her specialized issue, i.e.

gender, Fraser described this counter public, whose sphere is partly enclaved, but at least disseminated within 'others'.

I am emphasizing the contestatory function of subaltern counterpublics in stratified societies in part to complicate the issue of separatism. In my view, the concept of a counterpublic militates in the long run against separatism because it assumed a *publicist* orientation. Insofar as these arenas are *publics*, they are by definition not enclaves, which is not to deny that they are often involuntarily *enclaved*. After all, to interact discursively as a member of public, subaltern or otherwise, is to aspire to disseminate one's discourse to ever widening arenas. (Fraser, 1992: 124)

Therefore, it is natural that there are some spaces in modern society for these counter publics, which are more occupied by socially excluded groups against the privatization of space through security systems and CCTV by the dominant classes. These privatized spaces have prevented socially excluded groups from having proper places for their interaction (Smith, 1986), and consequently, have forced them to move to certain other public spaces, such as in the case of Brixton Central Square.

This is similar to the cases of the inner city areas of New York in the postmodern period. The youths of ethnic minorities, such as Afro-Caribbeans and Latinos, were left in undeveloped public spaces due to a new highway system proposed by Robert Moses, where they invented their counter cultures, such as rap, graffiti and break dance. In particular, through his memory of South Bronx, Berman brilliantly

described the counter public space, which had frequently acted as a magnet for socially excluded groups who could not, or would not, assimilate (Berman, 1986: 480).

**All those underclass people, crammed together in tenements, exploited at work, oppressed in social relationships, still overflowed with life in their teeming and violent streets was the only place where they could come to life at all. Out in the streets, they could walk in the sun-even in streets where the sun didn't shine. One thing that has made American culture so creative in the 20th Century is that it has had the capacity to nourish itself on the life and energy that our underclass have had to give. It would be an ominous sign for our future if we were to lose that capacity now. (Berman, 1986: 483)**

Like this circumstance in the postmodern American city, the public space in Brixton had also been a space for those underclass people, such as Afro-Caribbean migrants, white working class people, and other ethnic minority groups. In these public spaces, the physical distance from the dominant society in turn becomes an opportunity to restructure their social and cultural identities, through the interaction between different excluded groups that could have shared the same problems.

The unpopularity of these public spaces in Brixton, due to the substantial existences of these marginalized groups, has also peculiarly made the 'emptiness', which has given 'real' publicity to those users who are beyond the control of authorized powers. This has been seen in their activities through the richness of

their culture, such as the graffiti (see Figures 8.25 and 8.26), music, and dance in St. Matthew's Peace Garden. However, the regeneration of Brixton Central Square since the end of 2009 has significantly changed this situation, where St. Matthew's Peace Garden, as a contested space, has been regained by the authorized powers.



Figure 8.25 and Figure 8.26: One example of St. Matthew's Peace Garden as a contested space, when a Brazilian suspect was killed by the police near Stockwell. On the same day, there was a notice board of a shooting in Windrush Square. (Okada, 2005)

As mentioned in the beginning of this chapter, the existence of socially excluded groups had encouraged the refurbishment of St. Matthew's Peace Garden and its unification to the other two public spaces. However, this first provisional plan was rejected due to the difference in authorization between the church (St. Matthew's

Church itself) and garden (by Lambeth Council), which brought a legal difficulty against proceeding.

During the same period as when the other two public places became refurbished, St. Matthew's Peace Garden also had minor changes of its own, which resulted in a significant change of the users and their behaviours in this garden (Figure 8.27). Among them, the benches surrounding the fountain in the inner circle, as well as those at the entrance on the Brixton tube station side, were completely removed. Furthermore, as we can see in Figure 8.28, the directions of the benches in the outer circle were also completely altered in opposite ways. Now, these benches face both Effra and Brixton Road, rather than directly to the centre of the garden toward each other. In addition, the three roads surrounding the garden were finally paved.



Figure 8.27: From disposed to disposal? The new garden represents a strange landscape due to the amount of litter rather than benches. (Okada 2010)



Figure 8.28 and Figure 8.29: The refurbishment of St. Matthew's Peace Garden for 'a' day. Benches in St. Matthew's Peace Garden before and after the refurbishment of Brixton Central Square. (Okada, 2005 and 2010)

These minor changes in St. Matthew's Peace Garden were mainly requested by St. Matthew's Church and done by Lambeth Council, which had a responsibility

for the garden as a public space<sup>xxv</sup>. This change was due to the undesirable congregation of socially excluded groups, who often stayed on these benches throughout the day. Although the church asked for the removal of the benches in the outer circle, Lambeth Council declined this request. However, after negotiations, they changed the direction of these benches from the inside to the outside of the garden. Due to this change, as well as the removal of benches in the inner circle, the socially excluded groups could no longer communicate with each other between the remaining benches. Mark, the manager of *Brix*, the building company of St, Matthew's Church, explained that this change happened in only one morning, in the winter of 2009:

*Mark: Where they hung around are the benches in the semi-circle. The seats were taken up sometimes by 20 individuals, who drank ...They come and abuse loudly. In turn, (ordinary) people come to this area and join it. We have quite disturbance for some activities... So, a decision was made (by), I think, mostly town centre management. We asked to remove the benches. But they thought instead of removing them, we turn out.*

*Shuhei: I see...So, that makes (the benches) look out to the outside.*

*Mark: Yeah...It has been able to do 'hurt less' work. In the semi-circle, now they forced to share (space) 'outwards'. So, obviously people can still sit there, but groups aren't able to sit as one group.It works to some extent. People still get used to benches, which is not as many (people).*

*Shuhei: I see...So it was actually quite successful.*

*Mark: Well, I would say remarkably successful and difficult to use it. I think, what the town centre did not want to do is to remove seating, when someone want to come to sit down. So they turned them outwards, to allow people to use seats for sitting, but not able for a group to abuse frequently.*

*Shuhei: But, the Town Centre could remove the benches on the inside of the circle.*

*Mark: They weren't prepared to remove them. They didn't want to remove benches...*

*Shuhei: But, finally they could?*

*Mark: They could...They wanted to. Just, they wanted to leave them, to use by the general public.*

*Shuhei: I see, but you asked them to remove, so there is agreement if they removed the inside benches and changed the direction...*

*Mark: Well, they (also) removed the two benches. There were two benches in the further point of the Peace Monument. Those two benches, they removed...*

*Shuhei: And inside as well?*

*Mark: No...They felt they needed to keep them for use and a sort of compromise to turn around, which they did very early one morning, which is called 'Brixton surprise' to bench people, when they came along.*

#### **8.4.2. St. Matthew's Peace Garden before the unification of Brixton Central Square**

Consequently, these minor changes in St. Matthew's Peace Garden during the refurbishment of Brixton Central Square have dramatically changed the social structure in this space. Figures 8.30 and 8.31 are behavioural maps of the new St. Matthew's Peace Garden on both a weekend (Sunday) and weekday (Thursday). As we can see in the two figures, the number of people who stayed dramatically decreased after the refurbishment. This has also been proven by my research throughout the days, from 10:30 AM to 5:30 PM; there were some sessions in which no one ever stayed in the garden. One reason is obviously that the number of socially excluded groups in St. Matthew's Peace Garden drastically decreased. Even during the two days shown in the figures, these groups were rarely seen, except for the elderly people of ethnic minority backgrounds (mostly those of Afro-Caribbean or African descent during the early session). On Sunday, a large number of these socially excluded groups were in the centre during the last half of the second session (15:30-16:00). However, during this period, two ladies from a Christian group visited to prepare a meal for the socially excluded groups (according to this group, this social activity started in the middle of 2009), so these groups were waiting for them in the garden. According to my field work on Saturday during the same week, there was no one present from these groups

during the same period. Moreover, even if they could be seen in the new St. Matthew's Peace Garden at other times of other days, their times of stay had been completely reduced. They never stayed for more than an hour, and most of them left after less than a half hour (although some of them came back again).

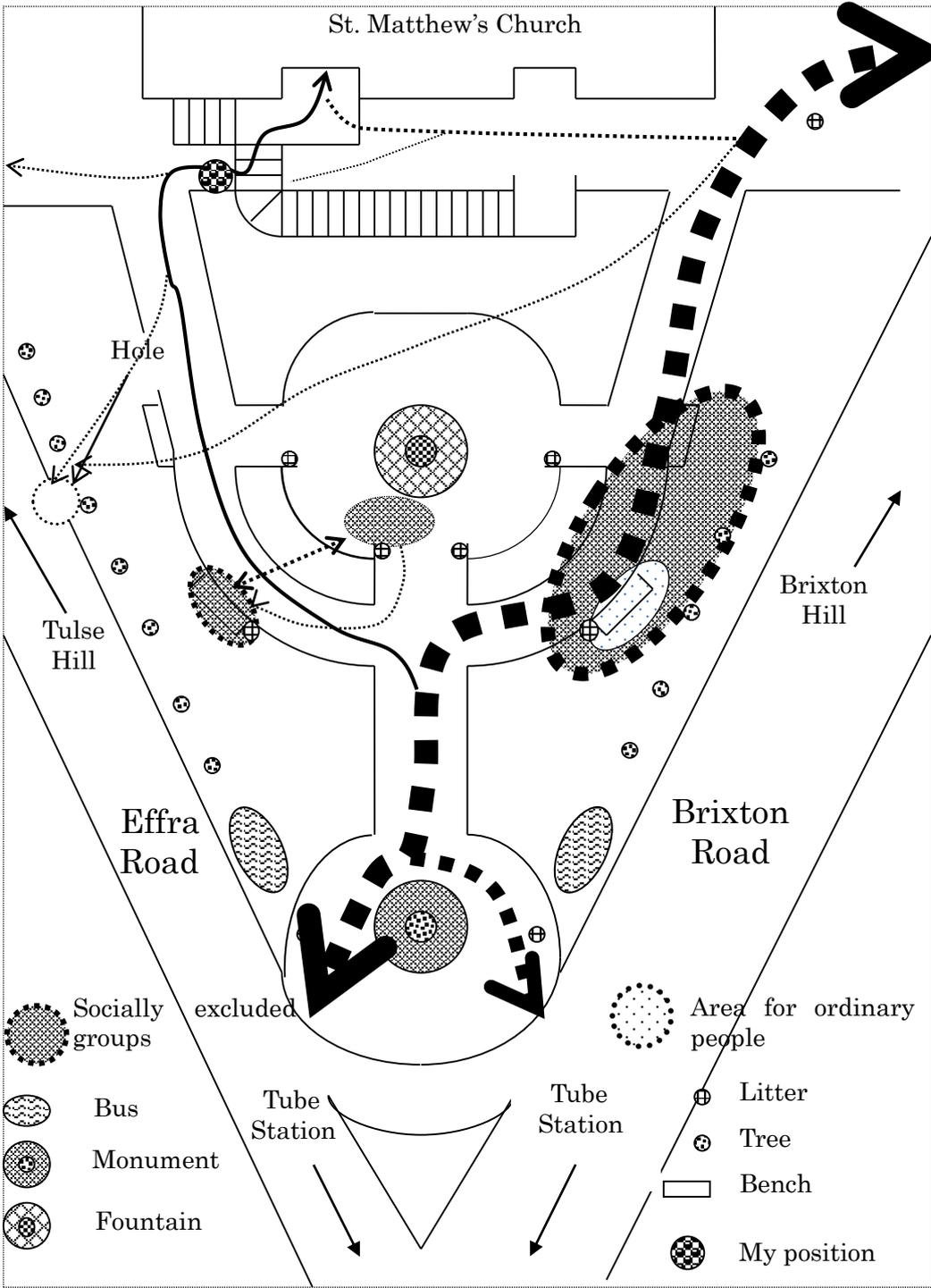


Figure 8.30: People using and walking through St. Matthew's Peace Garden on a weekend after the refurbishment of Brixton Central Square (from 13:30 to 14:30, and from 15:00 to 16:00 on Sunday, the 17th October, 2010)

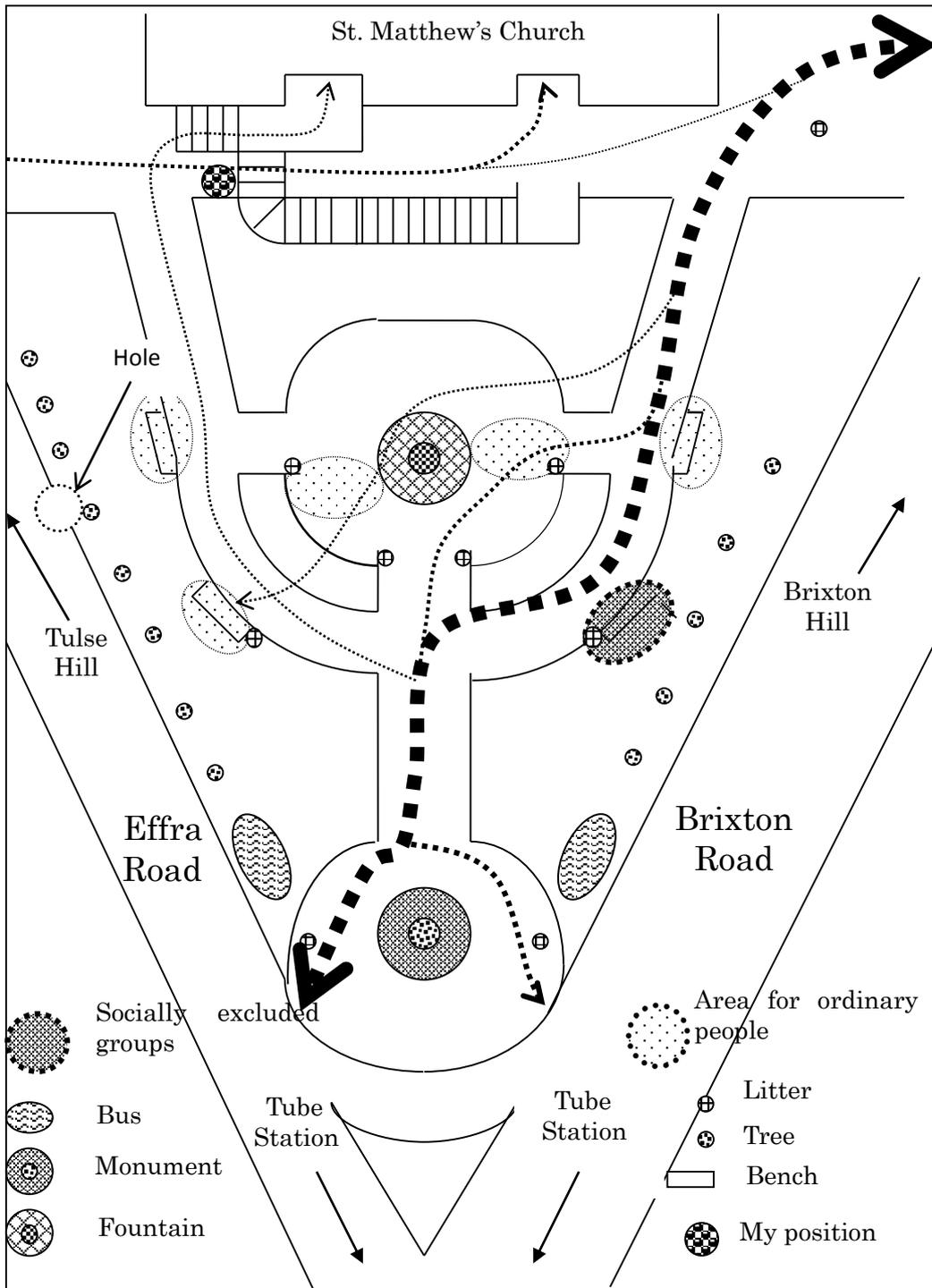


Figure 8. 31: People using and walking through St. Matthew's Peace Garden on a weekday after the refurbishment of Brixton Central Square (from 13:30 to 14:30, and from 15:00 to 16:00 on Thursday, the 21st October, 2010)

Meanwhile, the number of ordinary people after the refurbishment dramatically increased. One example comes before the first session of field work on Sunday. One

amateur band of classical musicians (a white male and females between the ages of 20 and 40) took pictures in front of St. Matthew's Church before or after their 'concert', when no socially excluded groups were staying in the garden. In addition to this case, the number of people passing through St. Matthew's Peace Garden has also significantly increased, compared to two years ago. Many of them were young mothers of European origin and their babies, before or after visiting the venues in Brixton Central Square. These kinds of social landscapes had rarely been seen in this public space before the regeneration of Brixton Central Square. It is interesting to note that when these ordinary people walk through, there are no socially excluded groups staying around the paths in St. Matthew's Peace Garden. This significantly proves the situation that, once socially excluded groups leave this space, ordinary people pass from one place to another.

Since the refurbishments started, the maps of people's uses and movements in St. Matthew's Peace Garden have been similar to those in Tate Garden. St. Matthew's Peace Garden also has the potential of becoming more of a square, despite sustaining a perspective as an enclosed space. This phenomenon was probably caused mainly by the removal of benches in the centre, which has also caused the removal of socially excluded groups. Furthermore, it has probably been encouraged by the new pavements in the surroundings, which gave much easier access to this garden. Finally, it is also necessary to consider the changes in the other squares, which have completely become concrete or grass. In these other parts of Brixton Central Square, there are no longer the landscapes of a classical garden, which gives a new role to St. Matthew's Peace Garden, even for normal users. In addition, people no longer feel the distinction of St. Matthew's Peace Garden from the other

two public spaces. This is also encouraged by the more frequent movements of the socially excluded groups between this old 'garden' and new 'squares', which diffuses their presence throughout the whole of Brixton Central Square.

#### **8.4.3. .Analysis: St. Matthew's Peace Garden after the unification of Brixton Central Square**

Since the regeneration of Brixton Central Square, the social structure of St. Matthew's Peace Garden has also significantly changed; it has gone back to that of a more ordinary garden with the removal of socially excluded groups. As well as minor changes - such as the removal and the reversal of benches - this demographic change has been encouraged by the incorporation of the renewed parts of Brixton Central Square, which has magically traced the border between socially excluded groups and ordinary people through a new connection with St. Matthew's Peace Garden. Especially by normalizing the other types of people (particularly those walking through) between the different spaces, Brixton Central Square has become connected, which not only uproots but also encloses socially excluded groups in each space. Consequently, socially excluded groups currently stay for shorter periods, and move more frequently to Tate Garden, compared to the period before the refurbishment. As a result of such changes, socially excluded groups are more likely to disperse into small groups. This situation is similar to the case of the new Tate Garden, which also encourages ordinary people to walk through the centre by replacing benches with iron chairs.

The further marginalization of socially excluded groups can also be seen through their new existence on a macro scale, throughout the whole of Brixton Central

Square. Among them, the refurbishment of the other public space, Windrush Square, has significantly provided a centre role to the new Brixton Central Square, with a social structure that also reflects those of the other two spaces. Through this transformation of Windrush Square from 'emptiness' to 'fullness', Brixton Central Square now comes to have a new place, which is, however, separate from its whole space.

### **8.5. Windrush Square after the unification of Brixton Central Square**

Throughout the former sections, I have introduced Tate Garden and St. Matthew's Peace Garden both in the past and present through the types of users, their activities, as well as the people who pass between these two public spaces. As I mentioned at the end of the last section, after the renewal of Brixton Central Square, both public spaces tend to show the characteristics of a square rather than a garden. Moreover, this transformation has discouraged the socially excluded groups from staying for a long time, which can especially be seen in the normalization of St. Matthew's Peace Garden. Furthermore, this similarity between St. Matthew's Peace Garden and Tate Garden has encouraged the social unification of the two public spaces without any changes to the physical distinction between them, which has made the existence of socially excluded groups more abstract in their mobility within each of the spaces.

#### **8.5.1. Windrush Square after the unification of Brixton Central Square**

We now come to a question about the socially excluded groups in the new Brixton Central Square. Since their length of stay in Tate Garden and St. Matthew's Peace Garden is now shorter, and their numbers are also fewer than those before the

regeneration, does this mean that they no longer come regularly to Brixton Square? There is one clue to this question. As I mentioned in the first section of this chapter, the area that was formerly Windrush Square (the western part of the new Brixton Central Square) had not been previously occupied by many users since the beginning of its history (see Figure 8.32). However, the name of 'Windrush Square' is famously known as the first ship of the Afro-Caribbean migrants, who came to England during the postwar period. For this reason, in spite of its unpopularity, this public space had been a symbol for Afro-Caribbean heritage (see Figure 8.33), and that was presumably a reason why the new Brixton Central Square became called 'Windrush Square' after the vote. However, through its unity with Tate Garden, some new facilities were also put up in Windrush Square. Through this change, some socially excluded groups have consequently moved (perhaps, been forced to move) to this area from the other parts of the new Brixton Central Square.



**Figure 8.32: Windrush Square before the regeneration of Brixton Central Square. As we can see, the space that is merely occupied by grass and several trees is not being used by anyone. (Okada, 2005)**



**Figure 8.33: The celebration of Windrush Square by African Congress in the old Windrush Square, in the summer of 2005, was strictly allowed to be joined only by African descendants. Except for these few events Afro-Caribbean heritage, this square had been constantly empty of users, except a pedestrian or two who crossed paths. (Okada, 2005)**

Here, I would like to introduce the facilities of Windrush Square, as well as the people's activities after the refurbishment. As we can see in the following figures, there is no longer a Rushcroft Road between Tate Garden and Windrush Square, and the concrete space just behind the two toilets in Tate Garden have become the east side of Windrush Square. In this space, several iron chairs were placed in front of the toilets as well as two more on the Effra Road side. All chairs face the centre of Windrush Square, although each of them has a slightly different direction. These chairs are separated into groups of one, two, and three from Brixton Oval to Effra Road. The two paths across Windrush Square haven't been changed from those in the past. However, around the space where the two paths crossed, a new fountain was built, which attracts many children as well as their parents into the new Brixton Central Square.

Finally, the last significant change in Windrush Square is the space, which became borderless between Windrush Square and the pavement of Effra Road. 16 iron chairs were placed here, basically in two lines from the western edge of Tate Garden to the bus stop on Effra Road, near the northwest corner of Windrush Square. Consequently, after the refurbishment, many people sit on these chairs while waiting for buses. On the other hand, socially excluded groups often stay on the chairs on the opposite side of the pavement of Effra Road, as well as on those near the two public toilets. Particularly, the chairs near the male toilets are an area where street drinkers and unemployed people tend to sit down in groups; especially around the two lines of chairs on the Effra Road side, they often make a large group of 5-10 people, since this is the only space where the chairs are positioned in parallel rows, allowing socially excluded groups to comfortably

communicate with each other. Meanwhile, elderly people from ethnic minority backgrounds also tend to sit down on the chairs next to the male toilet on the pavement of Effra Road, where they stay frequently and for a long time. Lastly, the chair nearest to the Brixton Library is always a 'reserved seat' for an elderly male from Jamaica, who sits down there for the whole of every day except when he is in the library.

Compared to the other two public spaces in Brixton Central, the most significant difference in the new Windrush Square is between weekends and weekdays (Figures 8. 34 and 8. 35). This is further significant even compared to the new Tate Garden. On weekends, the new Windrush Square becomes completely occupied by users rather than pedestrians. In particular, the cleanness of new grass and several trees at the edge of this square provide the space for people to rest, particularly for ordinary people. Most of these people are between 20 and 30 years of age, the majority of whom are wealthy whites who seem to live around this area. Furthermore, several families also prefer to use the space around the new fountain, which also shows a significant difference in use by seasons; the number of users was much larger in Windrush Square in spring, rather than winter (Figure 8.36). These ordinary people mostly congregate in groups of two to five. They often drink beer and eat lunch in this space. The lengths of their stay are also longer than in the other two public spaces, often for more than a few hours.

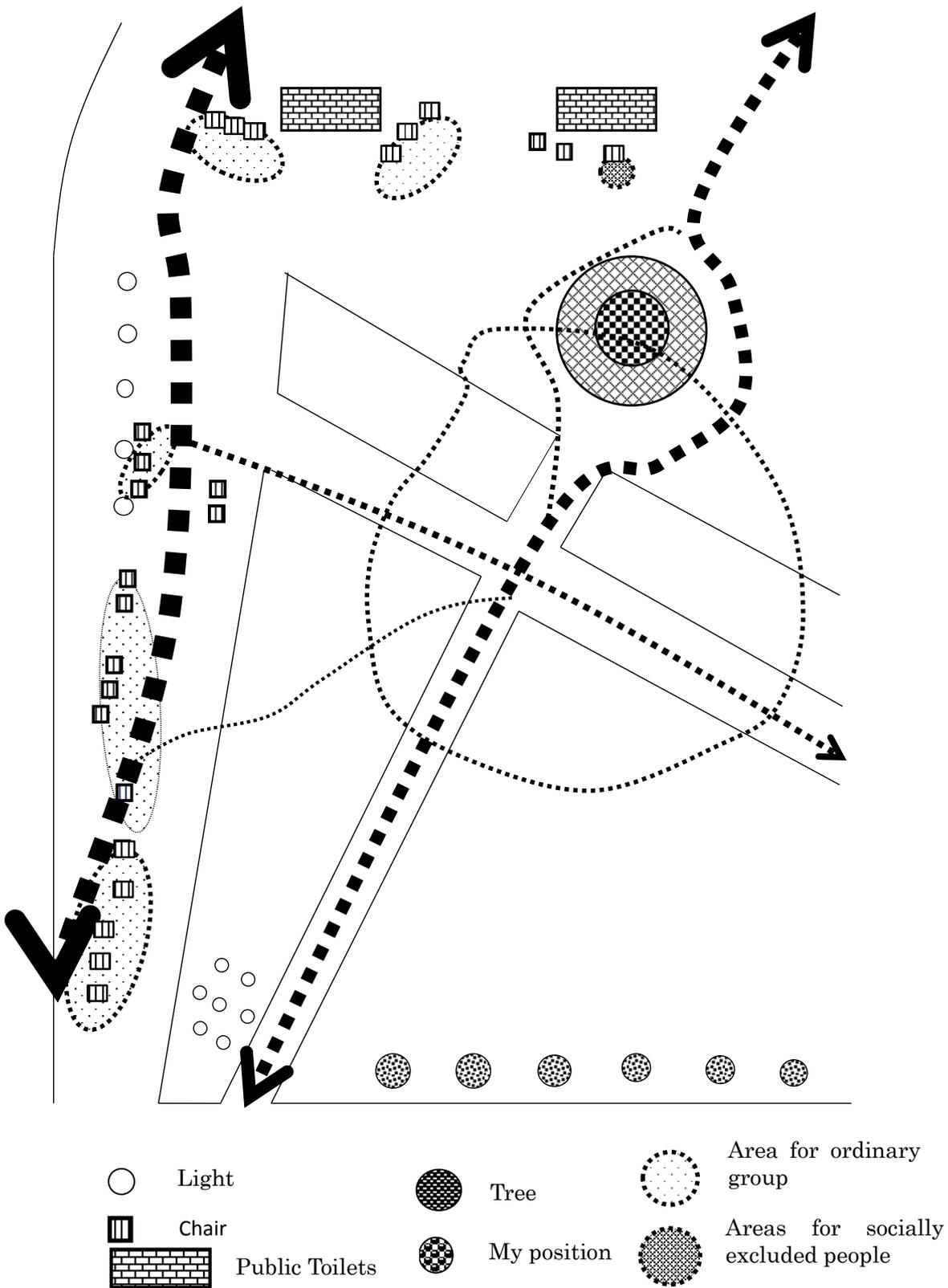


Figure 8.34: The facilities of Windrush Square (the former part of the new Brixton Central Square) after refurbishment, and people using and walking through on a weekday (from 13:30 to 14:30, and from 15:00 to 16:00 on Sunday, the 24th October, 2010)

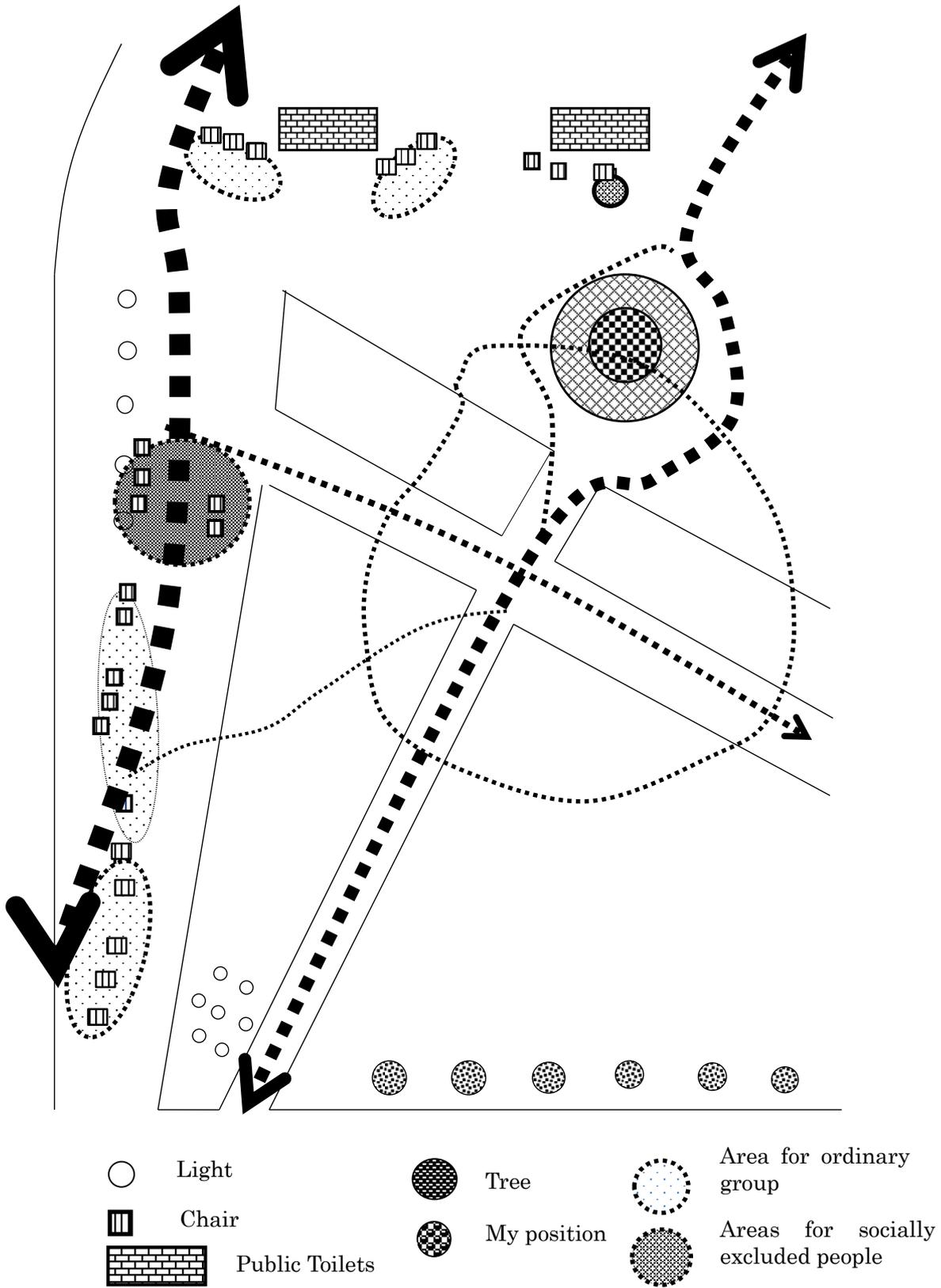


Figure 8.35: The facilities of Windrush Square (the former part of the new Brixton Central Square) after refurbishment, and people using and walking through on a weekday (from 13:30 to 14:30, and from 15:00 to 16:00 on Thursday, the 28th October, 2010)

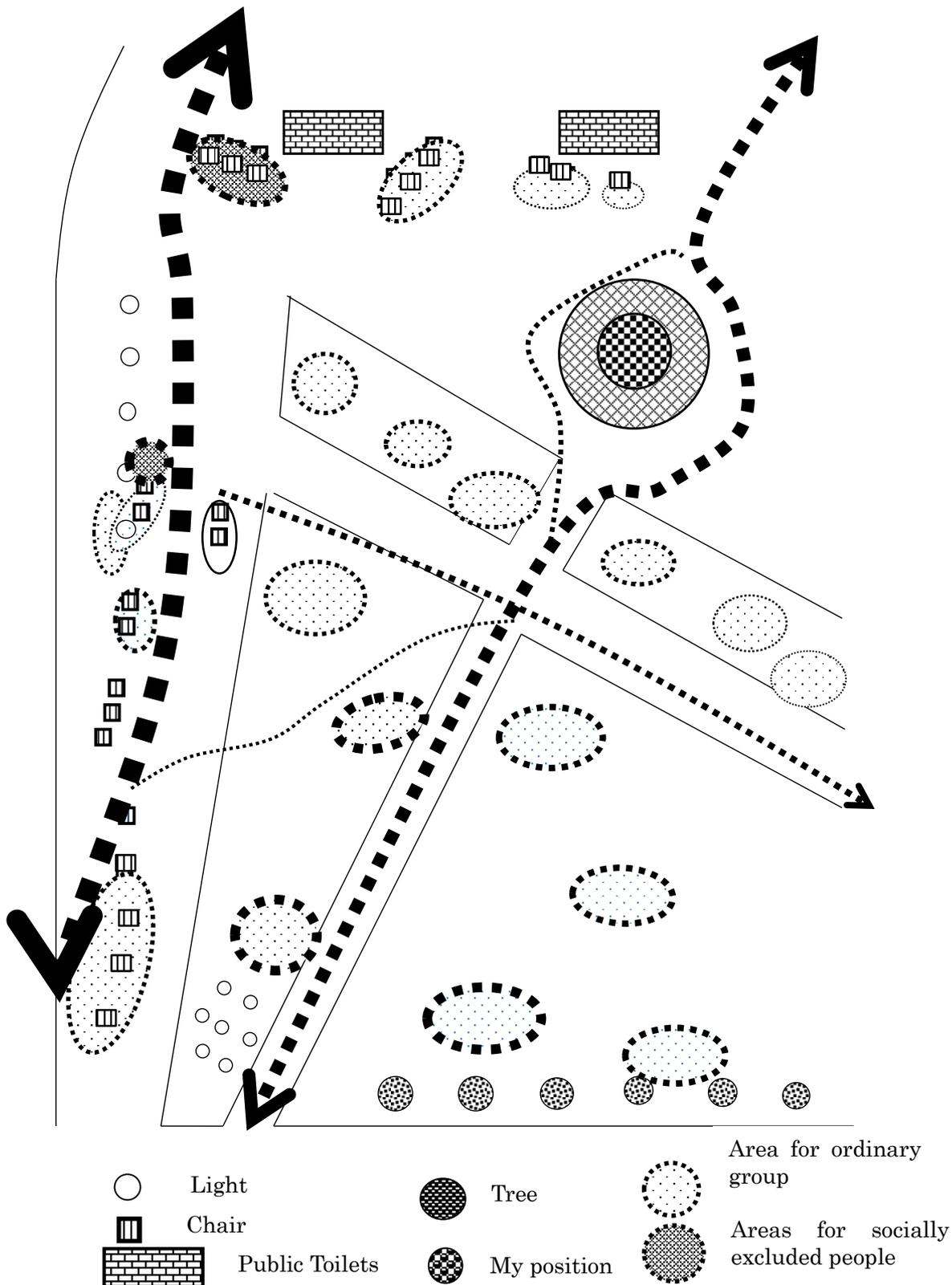


Figure 8.36: The facilities of Windrush Square (the former part of the new Brixton Central Square) after refurbishment, and people using and walking through in spring (from 13:30 to 14:30, and from 15:00 to 16:00, on Easter holiday, the 30th April, 2011)

Meanwhile, socially excluded groups are rarely seen in the centre of the current square on weekends, particularly during daytime. When they do appear in

Windrush Square during the day, they tend to be on the iron chairs near Effra Road. Particularly in winter, this area provides much comfort for them, as the concrete pavement provides a warm temperature, compared to St. Matthew's Peace Garden and the other parts of this square covered by grass. Additionally, they often sit down on the grass at the corner near Rushcroft Road. In summer, this other edge of Windrush Square becomes a comfortable space for these people, providing shade by the new trees. They mostly lie down in this part of the square for more than an hour.

In terms of pedestrians at the centre of the new Windrush Square, the difference isn't clearly seen compared to before the regeneration. Because the two paths across this square are the same as before, most of the people's flows are still significantly seen on these two lines. One of them comes from the corner on the library side to the bus stop on Effra Road, and this path should be popular through the whole week, as evidenced in the diagram on both weekends and weekdays (Figures 8.34, 8.35 and 8.36). There are people going from Hearn Hill and Tulse Hill (including users of buses) to Brixton Central (the library, Ritzy Cinema and Coldharbour Lane). However, on weekends, the other path from Effra Road and Rushcroft Road is also frequently used by those who seem to be local residents from Atlantic Road, the side of Brixton Central between the markets and Railton Road.

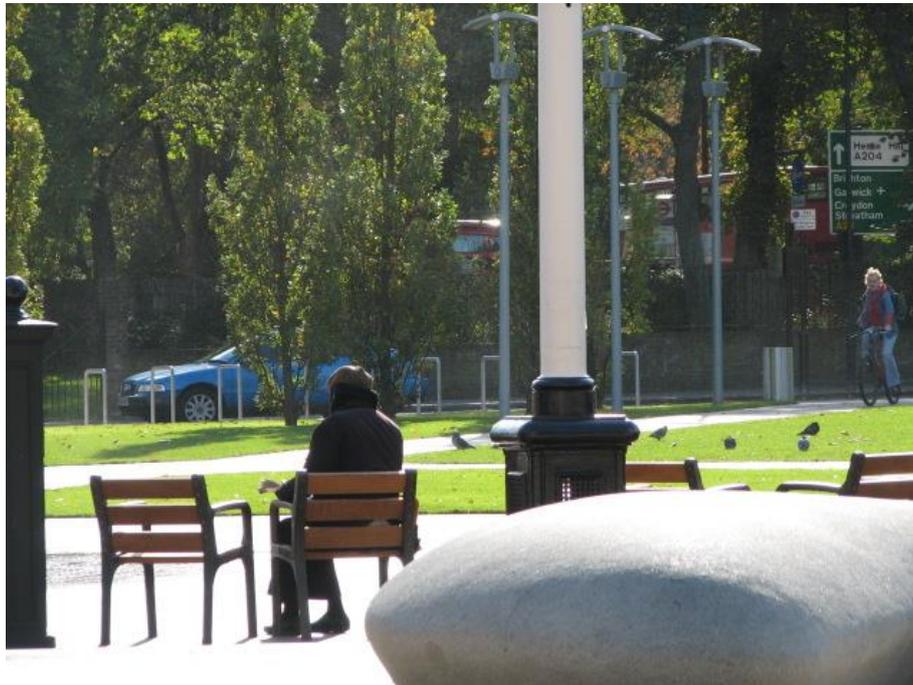
In terms of the passage between Brixton Library and the bus stop, because of the new water feature, people's flow becomes parallel. Moreover, there are no longer iron fences in the former Windrush Square; some people also cross this garden over the grass area (although this is done less frequently than in the new Tate Garden).

Above all, the passenger's flow in the former part of Windrush Square became more diverse; thus, the diagram becomes more spider-shaped.

On the weekdays in the winter, the number of users in the former Windrush Square obviously decreased. Only on nicer days, do a few groups stay in this space. Conversely, during the daytime in the summer, many ordinary groups stay in this space. Furthermore, the number of pedestrians increased in the new Windrush Square on weekdays. The majority flows from the bus stop on Effra Road to Brixton Library on Rushcroft Road. Some of them pass through on their bikes. Another interesting factor is the new fountain. When the research was undertaken for Figures 8.34 and 8.35, the splashing water disturbed the people staying in these areas. In particular, the chairs in front of the toilets were affected, so that people rarely sat down for a long time. This area was preferably used by socially excluded groups, particularly the elderly of Afro-Caribbean descent, in order to find shade during the winter. However, they were unlikely to stay here for a long time, preferring the chairs surrounding the big tree in the Tate Garden. Only Mario, my interviewee, an elderly Caribbean man, currently uses this space for a long time, and the reason is interesting: 'because I was grown up on the riverside in the village of Jamaica' (Figure 8.37).

Surprisingly, this water feature was not working in the summer of 2011. In the summer, this concrete space was not comfortable for socially excluded groups. Instead, ordinary families or youths tended to occupy this space in groups, before they went to venues in the surroundings or lay down on the grass space of Windrush Square. Consequently, the area around the fountain was only occupied

for a short period of time, or was merely left empty.



**Figure 8.37:** In winter, the chairs near the new fountain, a water feature with lighting, becomes an uncomfortable space, where water spreads out. Only Mario, one of my interviewees (the centre), always sits down here after his retirement, because he grew up on the riverside of Jamaica. (Okada, 2010)

In terms of sprinklers in public spaces, Mike Davis found a similar situation in Skid Row Park in Downtown L.A., where the sprinklers are used as an architectural tactic against socially excluded groups, in which cynical repression has turned the majority of the homeless into urban ‘Bedouins’ (Davis, 1998: 236). According to Davis, other tactics, including tiny benches for uncomfortable sitting, show how the exclusion of these socially excluded groups in the city symbolically became evidence that the public space is felt as being secure. In Downtown L.A., these deviant groups were forced to visibly move from one public space to another,

rather than maintaining their invisibility in a particular space as before.

In the case of Windrush Square, the removal of socially excluded groups has guaranteed this to be a recreational space for ordinary people. On one hand, their marginalized position, such as on the new iron chairs on the far-side of the bus stop, was visible to ordinary people who felt that it was an unsafe position, and socially excluded groups were felt to be in the same crowd with the other kinds of people. Those who were only temporarily waiting for the bus, as well as other pedestrians, did not care to be with them in this space, which consequently forced these socially excluded groups to stay here only very briefly.

Finally, Davis concludes how socially excluded groups, such as the homeless, become a negative visibility of the city through their mobility, which inscribes their victimized position:

**They become visible all over Downtown, pushing a few pathetic possessions in purloined shopping carts, always fugitive and in motion, pressed between the official policy of containment and the increasing sadism of Downtown streets.  
(Davis, 1998: 236)**

Like this case, socially excluded groups in the new Windrush Square can present their existence as 'sadness', an emotional mobility that transforms them from invisible to visible. Through their disposition in this space, such as by the positioning of new chairs near the bus stop, their existence was no longer a source of fear for ordinary people in this square, which was also depicted by their visibility

from one micro-space to another in Brixton Central Square. The former part of Windrush Square contributed to triggering this movement through its spatial transformation into fullness, which used to be an empty space before the regeneration.

#### **8. 5. 2. Analysis: Windrush Square after the unification of Brixton Central Square**

Overall, Windrush Square has been transformed from an empty space to ‘another place’ of Brixton Central Square after its refurbishment. Otherwise, it would have traced both the social structures of Tate Garden and St. Matthew’s Peace Garden in the past, through the coexistence of the socially excluded and other types of people. Moreover, the duality of the social structure in this micro-space has been ‘re-transformed’ into the other parts of the new Brixton Central Square, where the socially excluded and the other groups come to share, but use separately, each of the spaces.

Among them, the new Windrush Square currently has a role of naturalizing this social and cultural contradiction formed by the two groups, where one tends to lose not only physical, but also the psychological distance from the other. This is evidence for the transformation of macro-space into micro-space, even within Brixton Central Square. It is the transformation of the space into a symbolic place in Railton Road, and the centralization of the social and cultural space of Brixton in Coldharbour Lane.

With regards to this dual spatiality in the new Brixton Central Square, Neil Smith’s argument for Tomkins Square Park should be introduced. He revealed how

the mobility in public spaces by socially excluded groups later becomes represented through their visibility. For his argument, Smith interestingly introduces the *homeless vehicle* designed by Krzysztof Wodiczko (1992: 54-70). In support of this sleeping shelter on wheels, he proved how the homeless has been represented as evicted in urban space, but also 'located as dislocated':

**Spatial mobility is a central problem for people evicted from private space of the real market...The *Homeless Vehicle* provides a potential means by which evictees can challenge and in part overcome the social dislocation imposed on them by homelessness...The *Homeless Vehicle* expresses a strategic political geography of the city. Evictees' immobility traps them in space, or rather traps them in the interstices of an urban geography produced and reproduced in such a way to exclude them. (Smith, 1992: 58)**

As Smith argued above, the scaling of homelessness into space is able to form a boundary of social divisions, where dominant groups are constrained through the exclusion of others:

**By setting boundaries, scale can be constructed as a means of constraint and exclusion, a means of imposing identity, but a politics of scale can also become a weapon of expansion and inclusions, a means of enlarging identities. Scale offers guideposts in the recovery of space from annihilation. (Smith, 1992: 78)**

Likewise, in the case of the former part of Windrush Square, this edge of space was provided for ordinary people, who could exist not as their space, but as

boundary. This space, which used to be empty before the refurbishment, had given a proper opportunity for creating a social boundary between ordinary and socially excluded groups, by depicting itself within the new Brixton Central Square through dual spatial scales (Smith, 1992: 114):

**It is possible to conceive of scale as the geographical resolution of contradictory processes of competition and co-operation. The continual production and reproduction of scale expresses the social as much as the geographical contest to establish boundaries between different places, locations and sites of experience. The making of place implies the production of scale in so far as places are made different from each other; scale is the criterion of difference not so much between places as between different kinds of places. (Smith, 1992: 64)**

Like the above quotation, the space of the former part of Windrush Square became a border between the new Tate Garden and the refurbished St. Matthew's Peace Garden, where this space existed as a scale for the difference between the other two spaces. As Smith pointed out, this space is a border rather than a scale, which divides the other two spaces through their difference without its own self. In this circumstance, the new Tate Garden has become popular by differentiating itself from St. Matthew's Peace Garden as a space for the socially excluded, which consequently encouraged the refurbishment of the latter space. Interestingly, this differentiation between the two spaces was traced back to the former Windrush Square, in spite of minor changes and upgrades of this space within the new Brixton Central Square. At the moment, the ordinary dominates the centre of this space by sustaining socially excluded groups in marginalized positions.

Moreover, it is also interesting to examine the influence of the new pedestrian at the edge of this space. Jane Jacobs puts the importance on the pedestrian in space through the use of childhood memory in South Bronx, and although pedestrians played less of an economic role in urban space, the abstraction of this space has provided a place where people are able to use the streets for other purposes:

**A city sidewalk by itself is nothing. It is abstraction. It means something only in conjunction with the building and other uses that border it, or border other sidewalks very near it. The same might be said of streets, in the sense that they serve other purposes besides carrying wheeled traffic in their middles. Streets and their sidewalks, the main public places of a city, are its most vital organs. Think of a city and what comes to mind? Its streets. If a city's streets look interesting, the city looks interesting; if they look dull, the city looks dull. (Jacobs, 1965: 2)**

The current existence of pedestrians in the former Windrush Square was the complete opposite, in terms of its role of abstraction. The role of new pedestrians at the edge of this space merely became that of a border, rather than as a part of public space. This is the reason why socially excluded groups no longer exist in particular areas for a long time. The flow of frequent pedestrians in the pedestrian space of Effra Road enclosed people who have lost mobility, where they take up time in the same chairs. In this sense, the former Windrush Square used these pedestrians to keep their 'conscience eyes' on socially excluded groups within immediate practical limits.

## 8.6. Conclusion

According to Williams Whyte, the best way to handle undesirable people in public space is to make these spaces more attractive for ‘everyone else’, because deviant groups never provide the ugliness of public spaces, but ugly spaces provide them. Brixton Central Square, before the regeneration, shows exactly how its poor environment had provided comfortable spaces for socially excluded groups, where the Lambeth Council had previously removed the existing facilities, such as benches, toilets and fountains. Meanwhile, the new Brixton Central Square, after the regeneration, enabled new facilities to provide for ‘everyone else’, where ordinary people could stay shortly, and the other pre-existing groups could no longer stay for a long time like before. Moreover, the majority of ordinary people in the new Brixton Central Square are pedestrians, who are able to pass through these squares without fear of deviant groups, unlike before.

Through other chapters, I’ve discussed the demography of Brixton since the post-war period as being predominantly occupied by Afro-Caribbean people and those of the lower class, who were more likely to be socially excluded, and tended to stay in these public spaces for longer, rather than in their provided accommodations (see also the section on public space in the fourth chapter). The mobility of the public spaces in Brixton Central, through the removal of the existing facilities, shows how socially excluded groups were inscribed by discourses such as class and race, which finally excluded their behaviours after the regeneration of these public spaces. This was similarly seen in the research of Mike Davis, who found that the refurbishment of public spaces was done through the fear of socially excluded groups in Downtown Los Angeles (1998). Interestingly, his findings on the

sprinklers in the central district of L.A. is the same as the case with the new fountain in Brixton Central Square, which was not contained, allowing the water to spread out over not only the grass space, but also onto chairs near the closed toilets. Consequently, the majority of ordinary people in Brixton Central Square are currently pedestrians during the weekends, who are able to pass through the centre of each public space, without any fear of ‘crowds’ of socially excluded groups sitting down on iron chairs or concrete benches.

As we can see, the mobilization of the public space in new Brixton Central Square inscribed social discourses, such as race and class. The fear of socially excluded groups in these spaces, and their anti—social behaviour, created the mobility of this space through new benches and its concreteness, so that people can no longer stay for a long time. On the other hand, this mobility further encouraged ugliness in this public space.

Through this process, three public spaces of Brixton Central currently have a similar structure, sustaining socially excluded groups as the ‘same difference’. In particular, the Tate Garden, where they previously congregated, is currently dominated by ordinary pedestrians at the centre on both weekends and weekdays. The deviant people using this space are currently a minority and isolated from each other in different areas of this space. Meanwhile, St. Matthew’s Peace Garden, which had only minor changes during the regeneration, also became generalized through the increase of pedestrians, as well as the decline of existing users due to the removal and change in direction of benches. Here, these changes reversed the

relationship between the ordinary and socially excluded groups, where the former currently stays, even in the centre of this public space (see Figure 8.38).



Figure 8.38: The area around the *London Plane Tree* before and after the regeneration of Tate Garden (from clockwise). As you can see, it shows how the (ordinary) people became concentrated from the margins to the centre. Currently, Rizty Cinema is allowed a café even in the centre of this space. (Okada, 2009, 2010 and 2011)

Finally, the former Windrush Square interestingly reflected this change in social structure in the other two public spaces. The current centre of this space was completely occupied by ordinary groups despite there being fewer pedestrians, even after the regeneration of this space. A greater number of people tended to stay

in this public space after the regeneration, especially in the summer - except in the area of the new fountain and its connection to Tate Garden, although there isn't a significant difference in this space before and after the regeneration. However, the reduced sitting space at the centre of the other two public spaces encouraged people to stay here for longer, but sustaining the same structural positions represented from other spaces through their mobility. The spatial mobility, both in Tate and St. Matthew's Peace Garden, naturalized the power relationship between the two groups in this new square. Following Lefebvre's notion of social practice, the naturalization of social structure through this square aided the power relationship, which was produced and reproduced through the site of political and economic struggle in the other two public spaces through the regeneration (Low, 2001: 50; Lefebvre, 1991; Keith and Pile, 1993).

Moreover, the mobility of the pedestrians is contrarily located on the edges of the former Windrush Square. The punctual movements by pedestrians in the surroundings are more linear in rhythm and flow, though the cyclical movement of their trajectories in Tate Garden was more inscribed here as points in the centre. It is interesting that, consequently, the locations of the ordinary and socially excluded groups were similar in each part between the former Windrush Square and the other two spaces after the regeneration.

Overall, the regeneration of Brixton Central Square has significantly generated the social contradiction in each space, even if there were only minor changes in the function of their facilities. As a result, although the social structure of the three public spaces became similar after the regeneration, each of them is no longer

restructured through social practice, by socially excluded groups. Most of these groups are currently positioned in the marginalized space of each, where they could briefly stay and go to the same marginalized position in another space of Brixton Central Square. Unlike Brown's (2007: 238-239) assertion, their spatial autonomy through 'differentiation of different space' is no longer possible; only the differentiation within the same space is possible here.

This incident in Brixton Central Square seems to be already apparent in other case studies of gentrification Brixton; such as in the relationship between Railton Road and Coldhabour Lane. The social structure of each of these spaces also became similar to each other, even though their geo-historical backgrounds were completely different before the gentrification. The regeneration of Brixton Central Square shows that this differentiation happens within this micro-space and possibly even beyond. Having examined this micro-case study, I would like to now move on to the last chapter, the conclusion of this thesis.

## Conclusion

I say, the bridge is over, the bridge is over biddy bye bye!

The bridge is over the bridge is over, hey hey!

The bridge is over, the bridge is over, biddy-bye-bye!

The bridge is over, the bridge is over

If you want to join the crew, well, you must see me

You can't sound like Shan or the one Marley

Pickin up the mic, mon, dem don't know what to say

Saying that hip-hop started out in Queensbridge

Saying lies like that, mon, you know dem can't live

Manhattan keeps on making it,

Brooklyn keeps on taking it,

Bronx keeps creating it,

And Queens keeps on faking it.

Compared to Red Alert on KISS and Boogie Down Productions

So easy now man, I me easy now mon.

To KRS-One you know dem can't understand

Me moving over there and then me moving over here

This name of this routine is called "Live At Union Square"

Square, square, square, ooooooooooooooooooooooooooooo

**What's the matter with your MC, Marley Marl?**

**Don't know you know that he's out of touch**

**What's the matter with your DJ, MC Shan?**

**Oh the wheels of steel Marlon sucks**

**You'd better change what comes out your speaker**

**You're better off talking bout your wack Puma sneaker**

**Cause Bronx created hip-hop, Queens will only get dropped**

**You're still telling lies to me**

**Everybody's talking bout the Juice Crew**

**Funny, but you're still telling lies to me**

**(Boogie Down Productions, 1987: B-Boy)**

This song is not about Brixton but New York City, and as the Boogie Down Productions emphasized, the lyrics above state that hip-hop was born in the South Bronx neighbourhood, where it was pioneered by such artists as Kool Herc and DJ Red Alert in the late '70s. As KRS-ONE claimed, by the late '80s, hip-hop was already a part of major music labels through media representation on such stations as MTV, with artists emerging from Manhattan, Brooklyn and Queens representing hip-hop, rather than creating 'hood' cultures of their own (Forman, 2004: 211-212). Pioneers such as the Boogie Down Production competed against MC Shan and Marley Marl from Queensbridge, in a struggle called *The Bridge Wars*<sup>xxvi</sup>. Aesthetic representations of hip-hop in clubs in South Bronx through other places became commercialized, separating grass roots people such as the *Live at Union Square* in the uptown of New York City (Rap Dictionary, 2013).

While working on this conclusion, I found a book about *feng shui*<sup>xxvii</sup> at a vegan restaurant, my favourite Japanese restaurant in London. According to this book, bridges in Asian countries have historically been not only access points, but also areas of conflict. This controversially brought bridges energies arriving from many directions, converging where these places meet, with a constant stream both pouring over and 'spilling outward' (Chen, 1995: 74). This is why many bridges were also sought from other countries, as they generated a tremendous energy and attracted people from far and wide, with artisans and hawkers setting out stalls on these marvellous constructions from 'time immemorial' (ibid).

Such is the bridge as described by Heidegger, as what is found before locations emerge. According to his *Building, dwelling, thinking* (1971: 145-161), a bridge is a time-space before materiality emerges from the present space. Thus, the bridge naturally exists between mortals before the materiality of place emerges from their collections.

Contrarily, the Boogie Down Production's *The Bridge Is Over* ironically showed how the commercialization of Queensbridge separated their culture from the whole of New York City, highlighting a struggle between different hoods. This was similar to the case in Brixton, as mentioned in the third chapter, with its geo-historical background. The transformation of Brixton from middle class suburbs to inner cities has caused the arrival of immigrants and the former class's departure.

As stated in Chapter Four, with the case of Railton Road, the gentrification of Brixton is similar to that of other inner cities, such as those of New York City. Like

Queensbridge, the commodification of the surrounding areas through gentrification isolated Afro-Caribbean communities. Before this period, the *Frontline* - where Afro-Caribbean migrants naturally gathered, from not only Railton Road but also other areas of Brixton - rather had more of a similarity to the role of Heidegger's bridge, as a place between transitional situations through their same poor housing and infrastructure.

The aesthetic representation of black communities in other areas also enforced the *Frontline*, enclosing this micro-space from the incoming middle class through the instability of gentrification as differentiation from the surrounding areas. This was what Ley referred to as 'twig and leaves in ocean', where a particular unequivocal sight was forced into the image of outpost (1974: 254); such is the role of the new middle class in relation to marginal culture in inner cities. When such areas were occupied through the aesthetic culture of the middle class, the *Frontline* faced its counter representation, as a narrower space, as marginal compared to the past.

After the riot, the symbolic representation of the *Frontline* was merely accessed through the pre-existing communities, such as those left in Brixton and those who re-joined *Mingles* (the former *Harmony*). This has disconnected a narrower space through the aesthetic representation from the space. The connection of this space with the outside has triggered a new middle class between these local residents. Even before the Brixton Riot, the *Poet's Corner* forced the *Frontline* into an aesthetic representation of black communities, which consequently operated on a limited aspect like Ley's leaves or twig. This micro-spatiality on Railton Road was

narrower than that of the previous *Frontline*, which is currently available for the new middle class through the gentrification of the pre-existing local communities that are no longer sustained. Meanwhile, the centre of the *Frontline* is currently represented by an aesthetic black culture from outside of Brixton, while the middle class within this inner city and other areas sustains its autonomy. The reverberation of this aesthetic place occurs such beyond Brixton, as each micro-space having contradiction rather than difference over their contradiction. These black representations are abstracted from micro-spatiality, rather than macro-spatiality. In turn, the cultural autonomy of the middle class in the same areas is sustained, relative to their authentic counterparts in inner cities.

Since the mid-'70s, the situation of Railton Road has exhibited interruption through its disconnection from the other parts of Brixton. The gentrification after the Brixton Riot has divided this street into two sides: the Afro-Caribbean communities in place on a micro-scale and the expansion of the white middle class into space on a macro-scale. Here, there is no location that has emerged from a bridge of flow between both sides, unlike the situation Heidegger described. Instead, the micro-space is contradicted between the two groups, where its perspective is buried by both the previous spatiality as history and temporality.

This tendency of micro-space for duality has been continuous in the other three case studies. In the fifth chapter, Coldharbour Lane, which took over the role of Railton Road, saw the disappearance of the *Frontline* and its symbolism in a different way. The decline of Afro-Caribbean communities in the previous area was easily traced to the redevelopment of the other parts of Brixton by the government,

local authority, and estate agents since the beginning of its gentrification. Economic investment from the '80s-'90s determined the Afro-Caribbean successors or non-successors of gentrification based on a relationship to the interior rather than the exterior of this street. Their connection with these new gentrifiers also discouraged Coldharbour Lane from a macro-economy, resulting in its disconnection from the areas beyond this street.

This has resulted in the emptiness of Coldharbour Lane since the decline of the gentrification by the *Brixton Challenge*. The last half of the decade has been dominated by the vacancies of many tenants, whether from local or gentrified stores. Many local shops are isolated from the other parts of Brixton, as an interviewee, Signo, described; meanwhile, the gentrified shops, like Robert's venue, were also affected by the new reputation of Coldharbour Lane as a place of vacancy and danger. Consequently, this emptiness of Coldharbour Lane triggered the inhabitation of this street by affluent people, which quite recently happened as seen in the return of venues such as *Living Room*.

This has also been the case with Brixton Village, the most recent gentrification. Here, rather than a reduction of space, it is a 're-joining' of space. The reduction of the *Frontline* in Railton Road, and its centralization in Coldharbour Lane, has encouraged the resulting emptiness between these previous two spaces to re-join the middle class. Unlike previously, the pre-existing communities here are no longer available for restructuring through this tiny space.

The difference of gentrification between the past and present space in Brixton is

the fragment that occurred by separation and now conjunction. Unlike Railton Road, where the Afro-Caribbean community became segregated from the middle class in the surrounding areas, now the new middle class represents these pre-existing communities as a creative community in Brixton Village.

The derogation of this market easily contributed to its transformation into a middle class area within this empty space. Consequently, the regeneration that the third party established was soon replaced by ordinary gentrification within a short period.

Finally, the recent regeneration of public space in Brixton Central Square has shown these aspects of gentrification since the beginning of its gentrification. Here, gentrification began in the emptiness of space rather than in the place for the emptiness of space. This was further developed through its mobility as public space, particularly after its regeneration. The marginalized position of socially excluded groups established by other gentrifications of Brixton easily traced their marginalized relationship to this micro-space for ordinary people; for instance, Wells mentioned the position of a statue in the main pathway and its replacement of socially excluded groups, as capitalism 'being at a heart of Black Britain' (2007b: 198).

The substantial change of Brixton Central Square has also revealed the social composition of these public spaces through three other phases of gentrification in this area. The first regeneration in the Tate Garden was similar to the case of Coldharbour Lane, which changed the composition of social groups through its

structural change from gentrification, such as with Railton Road. This has also been seen with St. Matthew Peace Garden, but through mobility rather than structural change. Just the redirection and replacement of some benches and the connection of this public space to the other two have changed the majority to minority and the minority to majority. In effect, the mobility of the new St. Matthew Peace Garden traced back this structure to the new Windrush Square, as seen in the case of Brixton Village. Through the regeneration, the middle class settled here with some of the socially marginalized groups that were left in the Tate Garden. This social structure in the new Windrush Square is represented to the new St. Matthew Peace Garden with its mobility. Although the current flow of few passengers in Windrush Square justified the previous Matthew Peace Garden having the same structure, the new space was cynically encouraged to accept it by mobility.

These are interesting case studies of gentrification in micro-spaces; through the new connection between three public spaces, each of them is never fully realized within the same structure as a whole. For instance, the former Windrush Square, with its transformation through representation from emptiness to fullness, hides the mobility of the other two spaces through its differentiation.

From the beginning of this dissertation, I have introduced key aspects in the history of Brixton, particularly with regards to the Brixton Riot and gentrification. The riot and gentrification in Brixton, as mentioned earlier in the literature review, had the same construction of spatial restructuring, but with certain opposing consequences.

As I also mentioned earlier, when a large amount of money was poured into the gentrification of Coldharbour Lane, a chair of the board in the '90s interestingly spoke to the *Brixton Challenger* (Brixton Challenge, 1993a) about the concept of this regeneration in the same way. John Booth, having lived in Tokyo, traced back the image of new Brixton to his experience in the Japanese city. He notably described that the challenge 'will be to use the available space in Brixton, in an imaginative way, while preserving the character of the area' (Brixton Challenge, 1993a: 2). In effect, the character of this area has been preserved, but by those in foreign countries and even other case studies of gentrification applied to the micro-spatiality of Brixton. It is presumed that for him and other contributors the gentrification of Brixton since 1981 was practiced through both the transformation of festive spaces and dead spaces (Mitchell, 2003: 138). Although the riot of residential areas in outer Brixton and the gentrification of business areas in inner Brixton seem to be opposing, these are different spaces having the same structure.

The hip-hop movement in New York City, such as the *Queensbridge* between South Bronx and Queens, is an example of this case study. The hip-hop created in South Bronx - as seen in the Boogie Down's representation at a hip-hop club, the *Live at Union Square* - was absorbed by a later movement in Queens that was residential as an outer area for the middle class. Queensbridge has also taken over as an origin of hip-hop, such as in South Bronx. KRS-ONE's lyric, 'me moving over here and then me moving over there,' is a critique against the commercialization of the hip-hop movement in the later period without its rootedness (Forman, 2004: 211-212).

As mentioned earlier, Heidegger formerly described the *bridge* as existing before a location emerges in space (1971: 154). However, contrary to this definition, the latter case of the hip-hop movement in New York City emerged from a bridge as 'other spaces' (Foucault, 1986) between locations. According to Foucault, brothels and colonies are heterotopia in the modern period, where the boat also contributes as both 'closed in on itself' and 'given over to infinity' between the two types (Foucault, 1986: 27). Controversially, Queensbridge as a boat and the other two heterotopias' isolation have divided hip-hop between entertainment (brothel) and roots (colonies) by its decline. By the same token, the meaning of heterotopia used to be unified, but has become differentiated on opposite sides, separated by the gentrification of Brixton, which resulted in both transformations and similar representations within the same boat. In the case of Brixton, gentrification - from such cases as the residential areas of Railton Road to the entertainment centres of Coldharbour Lane, as well as others having this duality between them - justified the decline of time-space through its separation.

## Notes

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- <sup>i</sup> The *Atlantic* used to be the most visible place for Afro-Caribbeans before its closure in the mid-'90s. The former mayor, Lloyd Leon, was also the manager of this pub (*Observer Magazine*, 1990: 58), before he owned the *Mingles*, formerly known as the *George*, on Railton Road (see also the second chapter of this thesis).
- <sup>ii</sup> As well as the *Atlantic*, the *Coach and Horses* was also a famous pub for the Afro-Caribbean community at the end of Coldharbour Lane since the post-war period. It was taken over by the *Living Room* alongside the gentrification of Coldharbour Lane, and now the property has become vacant with its decline, after taking over the local butchers.
- <sup>iii</sup> Unlike other venues for Afro-Caribbeans, the *Angels* was located in the middle of Coldharbour Lane since its opening in the post-war period. The venue is still in the same location; however, it was taken over by a new owner (also Afro-Caribbean) with a more trendy style, alongside the decline of Afro-Caribbean communities around the area.
- <sup>iv</sup> The *Brixton Social Club* was also in the middle of Coldharbour Lane and located just next to the *Barrier Block* (Southwick House; see also the first chapter of this dissertation) since the beginning of the '80s. It became a meeting point for Jamaicans, particularly serving as a place for the elderly to drink and play dominos. However, because of the decline of the Afro-Caribbean population around the area, the members of the club are currently diverse and from broader areas. This also causes many troubles in the current club, such as drinking and violence between the members.
- <sup>vi</sup> The *Dogstar* was opened in 1995, when an amusement company took over the *Atlantic*, a famous pub for the local Afro-Caribbeans. They also used to own another venue, the *Living Room*, along Coldharbour Lane; however, before its closure, *Dogstar* was also taken over by another amusement company, the *Anti-Semitic Group*.
- <sup>vii</sup> The development of the local entrepreneurs was also incorporated within the *Brixton Challenge* scheme; however, the grants for those small businesses were very limited (see Figure 4.20 and 4.21 in the fourth chapter of this thesis).
- <sup>viii</sup> Its name came from Granville Grossman. (Piper, 1996: 61)
- <sup>ix</sup> The first market built in 1929. It's on the site of one house in Brixton Road (Piper, 1996: 61).
- <sup>x</sup> The market alongside Coldharbour Lane. It was built two years after Reliance Market. (Piper, 1996: 61)
- <sup>xi</sup> *ETTA's Seafood Kitchen* is a Caribbean seafood restaurant owned by Etta Burnell; Bobby's the mother-in-law. Even after the project by the *Space Makers Agency* ended, they sustained top popularity among the restaurants in Brixton Village.
- <sup>xii</sup> The *Olive Tree* was opened in the beginning of 2010, just after the *Space Makers Agency* started the regeneration of Brixton Village.
- <sup>xiii</sup> In the middle of the '90s, *London Association Properties* (LAP) took over all the properties of Brixton Market from the original Jewish owner, who still has the legal rights to those buildings.
- <sup>xiv</sup> The *Brick Box* was opened in the late summer of 2010. Although they are not originally from the *Space Makers Agency*, they have a one-year grant from Lambeth Council and don't need to pay rent.
- <sup>xv</sup> Formally called the *Brixton Cornercopia*, an organic food shop in Brixton Village. Mainly, they sell fresh foods to local people (*The Space Makers Agency*: 2011).
- <sup>xvi</sup> Like Samah's *Olive Tree*, the *Berry Tree* was also opened on the east side of Brixton Village,

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when the *Space Makers Agency* came in. Although they claimed it was quite diverse, most of their customers were the local Afro-Caribbeans, seeking Afro-American products. They also closed down at the end of 2009, just after this interview finished.

<sup>xvii</sup> The *Thinking Flower* is a flower shop owned by Lauren. She shared the pop-up shop with the *Field*, an art workshop that left after the end of the free-rent period. Lauren also closed this shop after my interview and moved to another pop-up shop in Raw Market, which is also owned by LAP. However, their tenancy also ended at the end of 2010, and was taken over by a Japanese curry shop.

<sup>xviii</sup> The term of a ‘rough sleeper’ is from a government paper, *Brixton Phase 3: Question and Answers*. This official paper was published for the improvement of public spaces in Brixton Town Centre between 2009-10 (Transport for London, 2009: 9).

<sup>xix</sup> (Transport for London, 2009: 9)

<sup>xx</sup> The name of ‘Windrush Square’ came from the first ship that the Caribbean migrants took to the UK during the postwar period.

<sup>xxi</sup> Although, in this dissertation, the focus is more on St. Matthew’s Garden rather than Tate Garden, the relationship between the two is quite important, through the past, present, and future (see my in-depth interview in the later section). Therefore, I introduce both here.

<sup>xxii</sup> The *Atlantic*, a pub in Coldharbour Lane, was famous for the local Afro-Caribbean community until its closure in the mid-1990s. Because they did not have security, non-customers, such as drug dealers and alcoholics, were also present, eventually causing the pub’s closure.

<sup>xxiii</sup> As expected, the number of users in the summer was much larger than those of pedestrians. The period of my research yielded the medium of the result between these two seasons.

<sup>xxiv</sup> *The Mayor’s 100 Public Spaces Programme* was launched in July 2002. The regeneration of Brixton is one of the 10 pilot projects, which also became the first initial project, after some of the other pilot plans were declined.

<sup>xxv</sup> According to Mark, the manager of the building of St. Matthew’s Peace Garden, although St. Matthew’s Peace Garden itself belongs to St. Matthew’s Church, the rights to the construction of the garden are given to Lambeth Council. This situation complicated the position between authorization and planning, resulting in the controversy that caused the initial withdraw of the plan for the unification of Brixton Central Square.

<sup>xxvi</sup> ‘A hip-hop rivalry during the mid-to-late 1980s and early 1990s that arose a dispute over the true birthplace of hip-hop music...originally involved The South Bronx’s Boogie Down Productions, led by KRS-One, and Marley Marl’s Juice Crew, hailing from Queensbridge’ (Wikipedia 2013: par. 1).

<sup>xxvii</sup> ‘A Chinese system for deciding the right position for a building and for placing objects inside a building in order to make people feel comfortable and happy’ (Oxford 2011).

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## Appendix: List of Interviews

### Chapter Four: History of Brixton

**Ben McEntergart** is an English duty manager of Brixton Recreation Centre. He is from Greenwich Leisure Limited, and took over this recreation centre about 3 years ago, when this building was refurbished.

**Bryan** is the owner of the *Super Tone*, a reggae record shop on Acre Lane. He has been an owner of this record shop for more than 20 years.

**Tonga** is a Nigerian electrician at Brixton Recreation Centre. He has worked at this recreation centre for about 20 years, even before the former company (the *Leisure Connection*) owned this building.

### Chapter Five: Railton Road

**Antonio** is a Peruvian owner of a news agent, the *Inca of Brixton*, on Effra Parade, a street near Railton Road. He has worked here for about 30 years. He is also an amateur filmmaker, whose films feature the black youths from around the area.

**Cornel** is a Jamaican owner of a long-running dry-cleaning shop. Like Sam, he has spent his life along Railton Road for several decades. Although he moved the dry-cleaning shop to Surrey once, he then moved it back to Railton Road, next to Patrick's laundry.

**Keith** is a Jamaican owner of the *Harmony*, a pub club for blacks at the centre of Railton Road, which was formerly the *George and Mingles*.

**Lucy** is an English staff member of *198 Gallery*, a gallery and art school that opened after the gentrification. The gallery featured the local resident, a Jamaican, Sarmon, who has spent nearly 50 years along Railton Road. Films detailing his life are still uploaded on the website of *198 Gallery*.

**Moses** is originally from Nigeria and is the owner of *BLEU*, a vintage furniture shop on the edge of Railton Road (the opposite side of Brixton Central). Both of his parents are from Nigeria. *BLEU* used to be on Coldharbour Lane, before being moved to its current location due to the rise in rent.

**Patrick** is originally from Jamaica, and is the owner of a laundry that opened after the gentrification of Railton Road. He used to be a journalist.

**Sam** is a Jamaican owner of bicycle shops on Railton Road. He has lived on Railton Road for more than 50 years. His life along Railton Road was featured in the *198 Gallery's* project, *Sam's Wheel* (2008).

#### **Chapter Five: Coldharbour Lane**

**Campbell** is a Jamaican customer of the *Angel*, a long-running pub for Afro-Caribbeans.

**Greg** is a Polish staff member of a second-hand furniture shop in the middle of

Coldharbour Lane. He used to be a 'squatter' around this area.

**Jah** is originally from Uganda. He is the owner of *IKOSI*, a charity shop that opened at the beginning of 2010.

**Knox** is Grenadian, and a part-time worker at a liquor shop on Coldharbour Lane. He is originally from the Caribbean and has worked along Coldharbour Lane for more than 25 years.

**Luis** is an English owner of *414*, a long-running club on Coldharbour Lane. This venue was started as a reggae club through funding from the *Brixton Challenge*. Because of the demographic change in Brixton, most of the events taking place at this venue have currently become trance and Euro-Beats.

**Marcus** is a Jamaican security officer at *Dogstar*, a famous club that opened after the gentrification. He has been a security guard at Dogstar for more than 10 years, although he has not been seen at this venue recently.

**Patrick** is an American owner of *Book Monger*, a secondhand bookshop on Coldharbour Lane. He opened this bookshop after the gentrification of Coldharbour Lane. He provided much useful information, such as regarding the closure of the former Living Room, during the interview.

**Robert** is a Jamaican owner of *Juice Bar* on Coldharbour Lane. It was formerly the Soul of Black Folks (a bookshop for blacks).

**Signo** is an English Costa Rican staff member of the record shop, *Blacker Dread Music Store*, on Coldharbour Lane. He currently lives in Croydon, although he used to live on Coldharbour Lane, when he was young.

**Thueman** is the Jamaican manager of the *Brixton Social Club*, a long-running community centre for the Afro-Caribbean community. He currently lives in Croydon.

### **Chapter Six: Brixton Village**

**Bobby** is a Jamaican staff member at *ETTA's Kitchen*, a Caribbean seafood restaurant. *ETTA's Kitchen* was selected through the competition held by the *Space Makers Agency*, and is still a remaining venue in Brixton Village.

**Burrry** is a Jamaican worker at the American apparel shop, The Berry Tree, which is owned by Carol. This shop was closed after the interview. Although I haven't contacted them since then, it is presumed that the reason for the closure was the high rent and the decrease in business after the *Space Makers Agency* project (see Chapter Six).

**Dougald Hine** is a British leader of the *Space Makers Agency*. The interview with him was conducted at the Tate Modern on the 10th of November. The *Space Makers Agency* is currently working on the project, *Forgotten Places*, at West Norwood, South London, after finishing their project in Brixton Village at the end of October in the last year.

**George** is a New Zealander, and the owner of the *Federation Coffee*, which is a venue that was not supported by the *Space Makers Agency*. Their venue is still currently successful, and has expanded to include one more unit in Brixton Village.

**Eleanor** is the British owner of the Brick Box, a café that opened only a week after my interview. As stated in Chapter Six, the Brick Box was one of the largest units in Brixton Village, and was funded by Lambeth Council for the whole year. The Brick Box has a music event on every weekend, and according to Dougald's interview, they should have become successful as a result of the *Space Makers Agency*.

**Ifature Aolena** is a Jamaican staff member at the *Oracle's Organic Juice Bar*. He was born in England, before growing up in Jamaica. He opened his vegan shops on one of the avenues in Brixton Village after the *Space Makers Agency* had finished the free-rent system.

**Ima** is a Japanese artist who spent more than 20 years of her life in Brixton. After the regeneration, she had several pop-up shops in Brixton Village, and normally taught Japanese culture. She was mentioned in the interview with Burry, who mistook her for being Chinese. It is important to note that although Burry negatively acknowledged her activities in Brixton Village, there are certain exaggerations in his critique of the Space Makers Agency.

**Lauren** is British and originally from Jamaica. She is the owner of the *Thinking Flower* and a member of the *Space Makers Agency*, an organization for the

refurbishment of *Brixton Village*.

**Samah** is the Iraqi owner of the *Olive Tree*, a Mediterranean restaurant, where I conducted the interview with him. However, it was soon closed due to the rise in rent (see Chapter Six). Although the venue was replaced by the Caribbean restaurant, he is still involved in the community activities of Brixton.

**Sivile Mansole** is a German member of Brixton Community-Transition Town. They used to have an office on the west side of Brixton Village, the second floor of which was also used by the *Space Makers Agency* before the closure.

### **Chapter Seven: Brixton Central Square**

**Earl** is Jamaican and a frequent visitor of Brixton Central Square. He came to England in 1992 and has lived in Brixton since then.

**George** is a customer of the *Ritzy Cinema*, in front of Tate Garden, in Brixton Central Square. He is native British, and has lived in Loughborough, the outer area of Brixton, for about 30 years. He goes to the coffee shop on the first floor of the Ritzy nearly every day.

**IB** is of mixed race with Jamaican origins. He is a performance actor in Brixton Central Square, even after its regeneration. He plays music with his CD player in front of the Ritzy, normally when the weather is nice. He is currently studying music at Lambeth College.

**James** is English, and has lived in Brixton for more than 20 years. He currently lives as a caretaker in the council housing in Loughborough Junction. He was a daily customer of the Ritzy, though he was rarely seen after its refurbishment with the regeneration of Brixton Central Square.

**James** is English and a frequent visitor of Brixton Central Square upon retirement. He has a rich knowledge of Brixton Central Square, though he did not appear in this dissertation.

**John Charchile** is an English staff member at Brixton Library. He has worked here since 2001 and has sufficient knowledge regarding Brixton Central Square, both before and after the regeneration.

**Mario** is Jamaican and a daily visitor of Tate Garden since he retired from his job a few years ago. As I mentioned in Chapter Seven, he always sat down in the right-most chair near the closed toilets during the period of my field work, though recently he has not been seen in this square.

**Mark** is of mixed race and a manager of the *Brix*, the office building of St. Matthew Church. He asked me about my field research, and later invited me to his office where I took an interview about the change of St. Matthew Peace Garden,

**Sri Hall** is an Asian staff member in the department of town planning at Lambeth Council. During the interview, I asked her regarding the purpose of the regeneration of Brixton Central Square.



(Brown, 1983)