Uncovering Inclusivity in London's Inner City: A Historical Analysis of Diversity and Its Relation to Gentrification in Brixton

Takuma Matsuo

Abstract This chapter will depict an outline of the inclusivity of Brixton, an ethnically mixed inner city of London, and suggest some aspects of inclusivity that was developed due to the historical context and the social and spatial diversity and is maintained by charity groups. Whilst Brixton has gained a bad reputation because of inner city problems and the riots in 1981, now it is known as an area that is the epitome of gentrification. Focusing on these historic events and the transformation, I argue that these elements generate the environment and actors that accept people who have been put in a variety of circumstances including immigrants, low-income people and people with social disadvantages. Through this examination, I want to make this text a handle on the theory of inclusivity of urban spaces.

Keywords Inclusivity · Inner city · Diversity · Gentrification · Brixton · London

1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on Brixton (Fig. 1), located in the middle of the Borough of Lambeth in London,[1] and it attempts to discover the inclusivity in the history and current state of Brixton as representative of the inner city and to find it of charity groups whose activities are based in Brixton.

From the beginning, the concept of the inner city did not simply signify a geographic location, but since the 1970s it has been politically formulated as areas that have social problems. In the first half of the 1970s, Inner Areas Studies were

---

[1] London (Greater London Authority), the capital of the UK, is comprised of 33 basic municipalities that include the City of London, the City of Westminster and other 31 Boroughs. One of these 33 basic municipalities is Lambeth, and this paper focuses on Brixton which locates on the eastern side of central Lambeth. In term of using Brixton in this chapter, it indicates the district that is the combination of the following 5 wards: Brixton Hill, Coldharbour, Herne Hill, Ferndale and Tulse Hill.

T. Matsuo (✉)
College of Letters, Ritsumeikan University, Kyoto, Japan
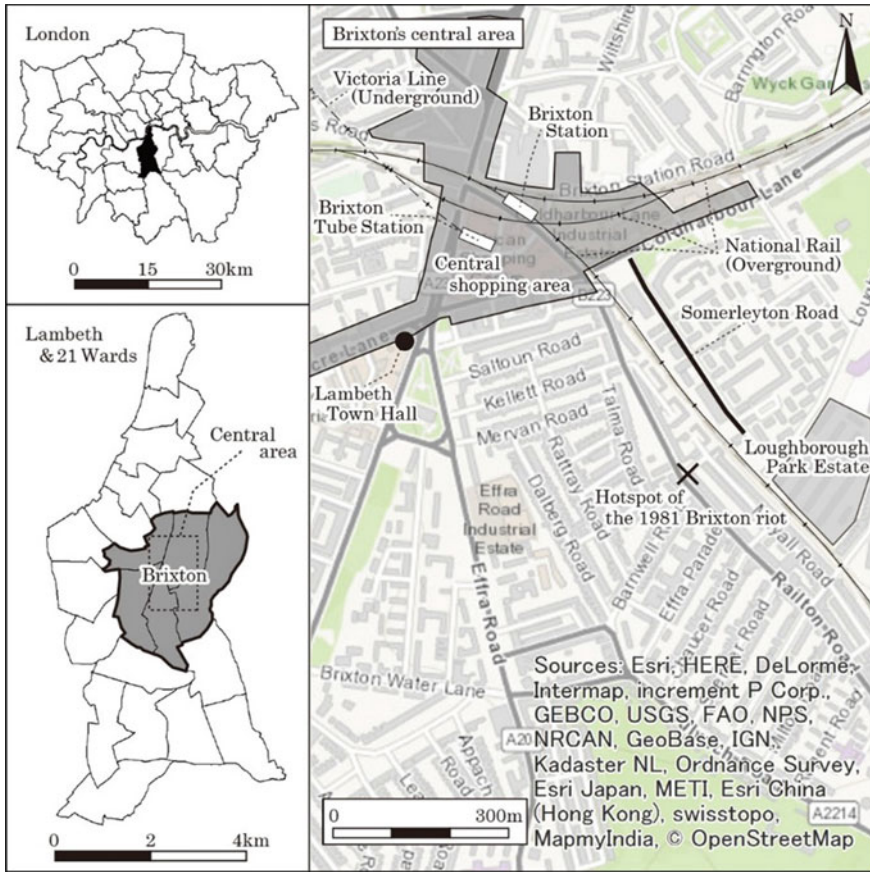e-mail: matsuo33@fc.ritsumei.ac.jp

Fig. 1 Case study area. *Source* Author's drawing

conducted in the British cities of Birmingham, Liverpool, as well as Lambeth Borough of London, and the 1977 White paper Policy for the Inner Cities was released based on the results of these studies. These were pioneering in the discussion of the inner city, and in formulating the concept of the inner city. The concept of the inner city that was constructed in these frameworks was defined as: areas on the edge of the city centre that had problems with economic decline, physical decay, social disadvantages, and ethnic minorities (DoE 1977a, b; Takayama 2013).

There are four reasons that this chapter focuses on Brixton as a way to look at this concept of the inner city. First, the area of Lambeth that the aforementioned Inner Area Study targeted is close to Brixton. Second, since World War II, the situation in Brixton has consistently had all of the aforementioned inner-city characteristics. Third, the social and spatial diversity that characterises present day Brixton originated in its history as part of the inner city. This chapter asserts that this historical context and the present-day social and spatial diversity in the area the foundations for

this area's so-called inclusivity that promotes the acceptance of ethnic groups and socially disadvantaged people. Fourth, present-day Brixton is an area with a high concentration of poverty and ethnic groups that is representative of Inner London, yet at the same time, it is an area that epitomises gentrification; the factors that created this situation can be seen when looking in its history as an example of an inner city. One of the objectives of this chapter is to bring up the charity groups that base their activities out of Brixton as elements that support this inclusivity, and yet to ask the question of why these charity groups still have a need to exist, linking them to the progression of gentrification and the social diversity of Brixton.

Based on the above-mentioned points, this chapter will depict an outline of the inclusivity of an urban space from a wide variety of perspectives such as the inclusivity that was developed due to the historical context and the social and spatial diversity, the inclusivity that is maintained by various groups, and the overall inclusivity of Brixton that combines these more narrowly defined notions of inclusivity. The hope is that through this process, the text will get a handle on the theory of inclusivity of urban spaces.

2 The Influx and Establishment of Caribbean Community in Brixton

In the southern part of Inner London, Brixton is the residential area where black people are primarily concentrated. According to the 2011 census, the population of Brixton was 52.4% White, 13.6% Black Caribbean, and 12.1% Black African; thus, Black Caribbeans were the next highest percentage after White people. This diversity in present day Brixton originates from the influx and establishment of Black Caribbeans since 1948. For this reason, we will first clarify the sequence of events that led to this and the process through which the Brixton area was transformed because of it.

The first large groups of Caribbean immigrants to the UK came in 1948, and nearly 500 people (the majority of them young Jamaicans) boarded the immigration ship the Empire Windrush and came to the UK. There were a variety of problems (overpopulation, low economic growth, unemployment and unstable employment and a slump in the export of sugar that was the primary industry) in various islands in the West Indies such as Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago and Barbados that had been British colonies since the latter half of the seventeenth century. Furthermore, there was an increased demand for labour in the UK after it had gone through World War II (Patterson 1965; Tomioka 1988; Sakiyama 1990; Makiguchi 2007; Adachi 2013).

In this context, population movement gained momentum, and on a more micro-scale, the factors that have been brought up that caused the concentrated influx of Caribbean immigrants to Brixton were primarily the existence of the cheap lodging houses and abandoned residences, and its good accessibility to the central part of London (Patterson 1965). Originally, Brixton was a residential district in the suburbs

of London where the middle class lived, but around the end of the nineteenth century, the large undeveloped plots became construction sites for cheap lodging houses and housing for the working class. It shifted from a district with high-end houses to a residential district for working class people (Scarman 1982; Piper 1996). These cheap lodging houses were initially owned by European immigrants like Irish, Polish and Cypriot people. These people themselves were immigrants, and because of their experience with accepting actors, entertainers and theatre staff, they had little colour consciousness even among the local tradesmen (Patterson 1965). For this reason, it seems like they were tolerant of accepting the Black Caribbeans who came in after 1948.

However, a factor that was more important for the influx of Caribbeans than the cheap lodging houses was the existence of abandoned residences. The fixing of rent prices due to the introduction of Rent control[2] in 1915 reduced the desire to invest in rental properties, and it was a factor that led to selling of rental houses and abandoning repairs on residences. Moreover, the boom in the construction of houses that people could buy in suburbs in the 1930s caused the middle class to move out of the inner cities, and the foundation for managing rental houses in the inner city seemed like it was collapsing (Komori 1978, 1990). Under these circumstances, the Victorian style houses in Brixton dramatically lost value as investments or rental properties and fell into decay, and the Caribbean immigrants moved into these houses. Because these residences had been abandoned, they were cheap and relatively large despite their low prices, so they functioned as places that could receive the immigrants who came to the UK by relying on their blood relatives or local connections. The houses that the Caribbean immigrants purchased or rented, and the houses that the friends and relatives who came after the first immigrants rented or lived in with them, were concentrated in Somerleyton Road and Geneva Road in Brixton.[3] For this reason, this area became the centre where Caribbean immigrants came and became established.

3   From a War-Damaged Area to an Inner City and then to a Riot Area

On the one hand, there was a serious housing shortage in London after World War II. This shortage was caused by the many houses that were destroyed due to the German air raids, and there was an absolute shortage of houses to receive the people returning from evacuation (Piper 1996). The damage from the war in the central part of London from 1939–1945 was mapped out upon being classified into 6 levels for each building: "total destruction", "damaged beyond repair", "seriously damaged-doubtful if repairable", "seriously damaged-repairable at cost", "general

---

[2] The Increase of Rent and Mortgage Interest (War Restrictions) Act 1915.

[3] Somerleyton Road is shown in Fig. 1, but Geneva Road isn't shown because it no longer exists today by the redevelopment of this area.

blast damage-not structural", and "blast damage-minor in nature." Additionally, this map specified the impact sites of V1 Flying bomb and V2 Rockets.[4]

Looking at the map of war damage, the situation of the central part of Lambeth (including Brixton) shows differences to the extent and magnitude of the damage, with the boundary being the National Rail's railway line that generally runs from east-to-west through the central part of Brixton. North of the railway line, overall, there were a considerable number of buildings that had "Blast damage-minor in nature", and in particular, the area between Stockwell Road and Brixton Road had many buildings with "General blast damage-not structural." In addition, this area was hit by V1 flying bombs (3 impacts), and the buildings near these impact sites suffered total destruction or became damaged beyond repair.

South of the railway line, on the other hand, there were not as many damaged buildings as there were to the north. However, places where V1 flying bombs impacted such as the town hall, the north side of Morval Road, the area around Effra Parade and the vicinity of Bonham Road suffer serious concentrated damage to around 10–20 houses.

In present day Brixton, there are many council/social housing estates located north of the railway line, including some that were constructed in areas that were damaged during World War II (Piper 1996; Hirukawa et al. 2002). In other words, the fact that Brixton was an area that suffered war damage during World War II, that council/social housing estates were constructed on these war damaged sites, and that these accepted people in a variety of social circumstances including low-income people, supported the creation of a physical and spatial foundation for its inclusivity.

The origins of present-day Brixton's diversity lie in the transformation in the area involving the residential environment after World War II as well as the influx of Caribbean immigrants; however, after the influx of immigration, Brixton started to be described using terms like decline and decay and became an area that had inner city aspects. According to Patterson (1965) who examined Brixton from the end of the 1950s to the early 1960s, the abandoned houses that promoted the influx and establishment of immigrants stood out because of noticeable contamination to their outer walls, entry ways and windows. The shared spaces like the kitchen and bathrooms were not kept clean, and they had serious problems with overcrowding because several households lived in a single house. Patterson kept this in mind and used the metaphor "ghetto" to describe Brixton. However, she also described it as "the reception centre for new arrivals, and for the unsuccessful, the single, the adventurous, the 'wide boys', and the white girls who live with them" (Patterson 1965: 167) and also "certain streets become the dormitories of the restless, the unsuccessful, the unattached, the anti-social, and the newcomers who have nowhere better to go, together with the white misfits who have drifted into the coloured orbit" (Patterson 1965: 194). For better or worse, she looked at Brixton as an area accepted people of all sorts, both good and bad.

Furthermore, at this point, the Brixton Riot that broke out in 1981 must be mentioned as an important historical opportunity for Brixton. The full picture of

---

[4] Approximately 150 maps of war damage are collected in Ward (2015) Bomb Damaged Maps.

the Brixton Riot of 1981 is detailed in The Scarman Report (1982), in which Lord
Scarman analyses the factors and background of the Brixton Riot; taking many view-
points and facts into account, from the tense relationship between black people and
the police as well as the socio-economic conditions in Brixton at that time. Addition-
ally, Paul Gilroy, whose study included the Brixton Riot and The Scarman Report,
made the following statement: "Britain's 'race' politics are quite inconceivable away
from the context of the inner city which provides such firm foundations for the
imagery of black criminality and lawlessness" (Gilroy 2002: 311). Hence, the histor-
ical background of Brixton, an inner city and the site of a riot, can be extended to
"Britain's race politics," and through that viewpoint, it can be possible to illustrate
clearly the importance of considering of the historical background of Brixton.

    As was mentioned above, from the late nineteenth century until the 1980s Brixton
has repeatedly changed. Changing from a suburban high-end housing district to an
area with a concentration of cheap housing; becoming an area with an influx of
immigrants; becoming part of the inner city; becoming a region with council/social
housing estates; and being the site of riots. Based on this historical background, the
existing cheap lodging houses, and abandoned houses, as well as the council/social
housing estates that were built in sites of war damage, were important conditions for
promoting the influx of people from a variety of social circumstances including low-
income people and immigrants. These conditions can be used to explain the origins of
present-day Brixton's social diversity. Moreover, the riot that broke out after Brixton
started to have these serious inner-city problems was caused by problems both within
Brixton and with the entire society of the United Kingdom. Additionally, it can be
evaluated as one large incident that etched the historic destination of these factors
into Brixton a place which is inclusive.

4   Social and Spatial Diversity as the Foundations
of Inclusivity

From this point onwards, the state that present day Brixton has reached by undergoing
these diverse changes will be reviewed based on the historic background of Brixton
as described so far. The text will investigate what aspects of present-day Brixton
inclusivity can be found in. For example, Mavrommatis (2010) who clarified how
the symbolism of race, difference and identity has evolved, using the examples of
Brixton and Brick Lane in Spitalfields. He examined local policy documents from
the 1970s through the 2000s from these two areas and identified how representations
changed into three time periods; he positioned the mid-1990s onwards as "a cele-
bratory moment", when differences were celebrated and commodified. Moreover,
Robson and Butler (2001) which studied the gentrification of areas all over London,
called out Brixton since the mid-90s as "an internationally renowned, cosmopolitan
lifestyle centre" (pp. 75–76). In other words, after being an inner city, several riots

breaking out in the 1980s, but since the start of the 1990s, many aspects of the area changed significantly.

Present day Brixton is of course on the extension of the historic background of Brixton and the process of transformation that took place in this area, and its current characteristics can be explained in terms of the social and spatial diversity demonstrated below. I emphasise this social and spatial diversity as the foundation of Brixton's inclusivity.

First, as was noted at the beginning of this section, the social diversity can be seen in the fact that Brixton is an area with a mixture of a variety of ethnic groups. The population is comprised of 36% White British, 14.1% other white, 13.6% Black Caribbean and 12.1% Black African.[5] A considerable number of various ethnic groups that are not White British are resident here. In terms of population, the population of the area was about 83,200 people in 2016. In 2004 the population started increasing from approximately 72,000, an increase of around 10,000 people in the last 10 years.[6] Looking at the percentage of population by age, it is apparent that people in their 20 s comprise approximately one fourth of the whole population, and the total population of people who are 39 years or younger has climbed to 67.5% of the entire population.[7] Based on the fact that there has been a striking increase in the population influx of people aged between 20 and 30, it can be characterised as a region with intense population movement centred on the younger generation.

There are various spatial elements that comprise the commercial and residential spaces that deserve to be mentioned with regards to spatial diversity. The central area within a 300 m radius of Brixton Tube Station has a row of a great variety of retail shops and street stalls that sell fresh food, general living necessities, clothing, and electronics, and in this same commercial space, there are also international food chain stores like KFC, McDonald's, Subway and Starbucks Coffee. In recent years, there has been a succession of cafés, bars and restaurants targeting young people that have opened, and Brixton Village and Pop Brixton where these stores are concentrated are important spatial elements that make Brixton an internationally renowned, cosmopolitan life-style centre that is noticed as a popular spot in London. Furthermore, Brixton's spatial diversity can also be explained in terms of the concentration of various facilities in a central area such as cultural facility like the Black Cultural Archives, historical and commercial facility of the Bon Marche established in 1877 and the Ritzy Picture House Cinema in 1911, and concert venues like the O2 Academy Brixton and Electric Brixton. In addition, the residential space that spreads out surrounding this central area is comprised of 29.7% owned, 28.2% private rented, and 41.0% social rented residences.[8] While the percentage of social

[5] London Datastore "Ward Atlas Data—Ethnic Group 18 groups—2011 Census" in Ward Profiles and Atlas.

[6] London Datastore "GLA SHLAA Trend based Population Projection data, released in March 2013".

[7] London Datastore "Ward population estimates by single year of age".

[8] London Datastore "Ward Atlas Data—Tenure of households—2011 Census" in Ward Profiles and Atlas.

rented residences is quite high, the residential environment is maintaining a certain balance based on the fact that the percentage of specific tenure is not extremely low.

The high concentration of ethnic shops that originated from the influx of Caribbean immigrants is an element that particularly emphasises Brixton's characteristics, and this visually ethnic space engenders an atmosphere of "everybody welcome." Moreover, Brixton still functions as a place that can receive low-income people because it still has a lot of social housing. It has this diversity that originates in the conventional history of how the area was formed and inclusivity that originates from this diversity. However, the population increase in recent years that is primarily centred on the younger generation and the transformation of the area into a cosmopolitan life-style centre have brought about new perspectives to approaches on this inclusivity. In other words, these new perspectives are assuming that Brixton's inclusivity includes not only immigrants and low-income people but also white people, the younger generation and high-income people who are working professionals.

5   The Changes in Brixton Caused by Gentrification

Up to this point, Brixton's social and spatial diversity has been confirmed, but the local transformation of Brixton from the 1990s to date requires us to broaden the scope for another dimension of Brixton. This very point is expressed by the following description. In recent years, Brixton "is gentrifying as young professionals are attracted to its arts, nightlife, and generous stock of Victorian properties" (Dehanas 2016: 10), and "… now stands as the epitome of 'class war' as incoming gentrifiers covet formerly radical and immigrant spaces" (DeVerteuil 2015: 136). That is, Brixton changed from inner city to a typical area of gentrification.

The sociologist Yasumasa Igarashi (2009) raised the following factors for the gentrification of Brixton: the low property values since the "danger zone era" that appealed to realtors as an area ready for redevelopment; and the multicultural environment that has been symbolised in musical genres such as reggae and that has been extremely attractive to yuppies (250). If Igarashi's assertions are re-perceived according to the content of this chapter, the low property values are a historical result of Brixton as inner city, and the multicultural environment can be re-phrased as social and spatial diversity.

In addition to the current situation and the historical background, Brixton Tube station that was opened in the centre of Brixton in 1971 was also a large conditional element that promoted the advance of gentrification. Brixton Tube station is the last station of Victoria Line that connects to some busiest stations in central London (Victoria, Euston, King's Cross St. Pancras), as well as to Oxford Circus the most bustling shopping district in London. This gives it a very high level of accessibility because it takes about 15 min to get to the central district of London. The total number of passengers that get on and off at Brixton Tube station increased by approximately

10 million people in the five years from 2010 to 2015,[9] proving that Brixton as an inner city is something of the past.

It must be pointed out, however, that the progression of gentrification in Brixton has not simply caused updated commercial spaces, increased the younger generation and an influx of professionals and gentrifiers, it has also had a large effect on the local residents of Brixton—particularly low-income people. Therefore, these specific effects will be clarified using the example of the problem of displacement of residents in Loughborough Park Estate[10] in the south-eastern part of Brixton's central area, largely by relying on the articles in the Guardian and local media source the Brixton Buzz.

According to these sources, Loughborough Park Estate was built in the 1930s, and it had 390 social rented flats that were managed by Company A, an affordable housing provider. Forty-four of these 390 flats were rented out as short-term rentals, but Company A evicted the Assured Shorthold Tenants (AST) in these 44 flats under the pretext of a reconstruction project necessitating rebuilding. Some of the new units that had already finished being rebuilt had life-time tenants or tenants with full life-time tenancy rights move back into them. However, after the reconstruction, the rent on the other units that were previously rented at affordable rates, was set at around 80% of the average level for Brixton. This rental price was difficult for AST who had lower wages than average, and setting this price ultimately meant semi-forced evictions.

Another problem related to this reconstruction project was that Company A did not have any obligation to the AST, and AST were not even guaranteed re-entry into the apartment complex. In 2012, for the first time, some of the AST were evicted from Loughborough Park Estate. Because these AST did not have any legal rights, they inevitably had to move out, and many of the households ended up moving to residences that were far from Brixton, and they needed housing subsidies to be able to pay the new rents. Among the residents who given eviction notices there were some who refused to leave in protest, started making statements in the media, occupying empty residences, lobbying members of parliament, and submitting petitions. Because of these protests, Company A stated the possibility of accepting residents into other properties that they owned, but the initial offers required moving outside of London, so the protests continued. In the end, the residents reached a point where the residents got agreement to be rehoused in London (Brixton Buzz 21/04/2015; The Guardian 20/02/2015).

At the moment it does not seem that cases such as Loughborough Park Estate happened frequently in Brixton. However, there is certainly a basis to make the statement that the housing environment of Brixton residents is undergoing large changes. For example, in the 10-year period from 2001 until 2011, the number of households in Brixton increased by approximately 5000 to around 33,600. The social rented sector reduced by approximately 80 households, whilst private rented

---

[9] Transport for London "Entry and exit figures by station from 2007".

[10] As of 2020, the redevelopment project of Loughborough Park Estate has been completed.

households increased by approximately 4700.[11] Thus, in this 10-year period, the number of private rented households approximately doubled.

Of course, understanding this change in the housing environment is a result of the influx of young professionals and gentrifiers and a direct cause for the eviction of low-income people is making quite a leap. However, the case of Loughborough Park Estate seems to predict that the change in housing environment discussed earlier will lead to large increases in rent and more eviction issues in Brixton in the future.

6 Foodbanks as Bearers of Inclusivity

Under the situation that this transformation of its social and spatial diversity and gentrification are proceeding, how or by whom is Brixton's inclusivity maintained? I chose to focus on two charity groups in Brixton that support people having difficulties in their lives, paying attention to Brixton's characteristic of historically accepting all sorts of people. As is noted below, both of these two charity groups give supports in the form of being foodbank, and they support the needy by providing the essential item "food". A more important reason for choosing these groups is that they both have diversity and inclusivity, and it seems like they contribute to reinforcing Brixton's inclusivity while responding to the changes the area is undergoing.

6.1 Brixton Soup Kitchen

The first group that will be introduced here is Brixton Soup Kitchen (BSK) that started its activities in January of 2013 and became a registered charity in January 2015. The founder of this group is from Brixton, and he started support activities in Brixton in January of 2013. He started a group to support homeless people together with his current co-representatives. Initially, the group started its activities as a community centre that provided beverages and biscuits, but because they gained a lot of supports, they have moved their base of activities to Coldharbour Lane. The reason they started their activities in Brixton was that the founder was from Brixton. Now, the group's activities are managed by a team comprised of three representatives including the founder and around ten volunteers. The volunteer staff members are from a variety of places, with Spanish and French as well as people from the UK. Additionally, there is a variety of religious beliefs with both Christian and Muslim staff.

The BSK provides around 40 meals a day at its two-storey building where its activities are based, and it gives these meals to homeless people as well as to families having difficulties securing food and drink. Additionally, they also do consultations about housing, education, payments, and legal issues. They are also putting efforts

---

[11] London Datastore "Ward Atlas Data—Tenure of households—2001 & 2011 Census" in Ward Profiles and Atlas.

into their outreach services that they do twice a week, and they provide warm food and clothing to homeless people in central parts of London. The food and drinks provided at their foodbank centre and through the outreach activities are supported by individuals, groups, as well as famous food and drink chains and supermarkets (BSK homepage; Brixton Blog 11/12/2015).

BSK is a group that operates on the donations received from individuals and local communities, and it is not receiving any funding from other charities or the government. By adopting this policy, BSK can develop its activities that suit the stature of the volunteer staff and the founder himself (Brixton Blog 11/12/2015). By only operating on funds that are donations from individuals and local communities, BSK can maintain its independence and autonomy as an organisation, and by fully maintaining this autonomy and independence, it can be flexible in its provision of support activities to match the situation. The founder's comment below provides a glimpse of this organisation's large tolerance or inclusivity for people needing support, and its acceptance of religion. "(W)e found that most soup kitchens were run by religious centres, and people felt bad having to pretend to pray to get food. So, we decided to open a soup kitchen that people, whether they are Sikh, Muslim or not religious, could come and eat at" (Quote from Brixton Blog 12/04/2013).

6.2   Norwood and Brixton Foodbank

The second volunteer group is Norwood & Brixton Foodbank (NBF). NBF is a group that started a foodbank in September of 2011 in a church in West Norwood, approximately 3 km south of Brixton, and it started its second foodbank (Brixton Foodbank) in Brixton in March 2012. NBF's activities are reported based on information provided by the manager of the Brixton Foodbank, the NBF's homepage, and a field survey conducted by the author.[12]

The reason that the NBF—that is mainly based in Norwood—also started a foodbank in Brixton was that they had a cooperative relationship with a church group in Brixton at that time. From summer 2012 they have been getting support from another group's advice worker, and cooperation with several organisations—including support from Lambeth council—continues today. Their primary method of generating operating funds is through donations from groups and individuals, but they also get a small amount of monetary assistance from some foundations and the government. The majority of this funding is used for the advice workers from other organisations with which they cooperate.

Brixton Foodbank's activities are conducted in St Paul's Church located approximately 500 m east of Brixton Tube Station. The non-perishable food and drinks donated by schools, other churches, businesses, and individuals are sorted and managed by the staff, and they are supplied to the needy people who visit seeking

---

[12] When doing field studies in London from September to November of 2016, the author visited St. Paul's Church the base of NBF's activities (Visited on November 1st, 2016).

support. Brixton Foodbank opens two days a week, and their full-time volunteer staff have a broad age range from 16–80 years old. Many of these volunteers are British women, but there are also the staff of different races or nationalities. Additionally, although this group uses a Christian church and cooperates with church groups, only around half of the staff are Christian. According to the manager, the religions of the people who need support are not related to their supporting, and indeed, when a Muslim woman has visited in the past, she was given assistance without problems.

The staff have set up a cooperative system with care specialists like doctors, rounding public health nurses and social workers. And they set up times to interview with people in need of support, share the method of support and guidance to solve their issues and distribute foodbank vouchers for them. Through this voucher system, those in need of support exchange and receive food and drink. The people being supported are also of a wide variety of ages, and they have a variety of nationalities, races, and religions, but there are a relatively high percentage of single men in their 50 s and 60 s as well as single-parent families. Many various situations and conditions lead people to need support, and one of the staff members made the following statement. "It's a real mixture of people who come to Brixton Foodbank. We get people who have been in benefits mix-ups, asylum seekers and refugees, people just out of prison and people who might be working but still struggling" (quote from Brixton Blog 15/05/2012).

7 Conclusion

This chapter outlined the transformation of Brixton, particularly the historical changes that took place from the end of World War II when the influx of Caribbean immigrants started, until the 1980s. It also reviewed its transition into an area that is the epitome of gentrification and affirmed the social and spatial diversity of Brixton. Brixton's social and spatial diversity has been constructed by diverse ethnic groups and the diverse spatial elements represented in the many small retail shops and street stalls in centre area, and these factors make Brixton be assessed as "an internationally renowned, cosmopolitan lifestyle centre."

Among the historical background of Brixton's transformation, some events in the environment of housing had important roles: the existence of cheap housing since the end of the nineteenth century; the slump in the management of rental properties that accompanied the middle class moving to the suburbs; and the decline in the desire to invest and abandonment of maintenance caused by rent control. These were all factors that made Brixton the centre of the influx of Caribbean immigrants. Additionally, Brixton was a war-damaged site during World War II, and the construction of council/social housing estates took place in the areas that were damaged by air raids. These points substantiate the fact that after the war Brixton functioned as a place that received low-income people. And from the 1950s onward, Brixton started to have inner city elements such as economic decline, physical decay, social disadvantage, and ethnic and racial discrimination, but looked at this situation from

another perspective, it could be possible to understand that Brixton had conditions to be "the reception centre" for low-income people and socially disadvantaged people. Moreover, the riots in the 1980s were not mere incidents, but they were critical historical opportunities that determined Brixton's subsequent identity. With regards to this point, the aforementioned representative of BSK said that after the riots black people got to be free to walk around Brixton,[13] and based on the fact that there are frequently protest movements in recent Brixton, the manager of NBF expressed the opinion that Brixton is a place to oppose authority and suppression.[14]

So, what is the significance of pointing out such as Brixton's historic background, social and spatial diversity, and the existence of inclusivity like this? I argue that these points provide us with important elements when we consider the questions about how we should interpret the transformation of Brixton from the 1990s until the present and about what changes in the future will be expected.

Regarding the local transformation from the 1990s until the present, the largest change during this time period gave huge impacts because through that Brixton became situated as an area that epitomises gentrification. Some characteristic trends that demonstrated the progression of gentrification in Brixton are such things as the aforementioned influx of young professionals and gentrifiers, the trend for an increase in people in their 20 s and 30 s that has continued since around 2010, the update of commercial spaces represented in Brixton Village or Pop Brixton and the increase in private rented households. As I've stated, while this transformation has been promoted by Brixton's historical background and social and spatial diversity, the popularity created by these local characteristics and the original high-level accessibility to the city centre have also worked as key elements in the transformation of Brixton into an area that epitomises gentrification. At the same time, however, there are also cases like the displacement problem in the Loughborough Park Estate that stop us from thinking that the gentrification of Brixton was entirely positive. This point is related to the previously posed question of "what changes in the future will be expected."

The changes currently happening in Brixton, as well as the changes that will happen subsequently, doubtlessly should be understood and discussed in relation to gentrification. Therefore, Brixton's inclusivity must be assumed to include not only immigrants and low-income people but also new white people, the younger generation and high-income people who are working as professionals. And I believe that Brixton's future probably depends on these people and that they are needed to be involved extensively developing realistic responses to today's issues. The various organisations and groups that base their activities in Brixton represented by above-mentioned two charity groups are the kinds of people that can be expected to handle these realistic responses. Indeed, NBF has built partnerships with a wide variety of support groups and BSK has maintained a high level of autonomy by not receiving any subsidies from the government and has assured their own flexibility in managing

---

[13] The founder's statement from an interview survey conducted by the present author on the founder at BSK's base of operations in Coldharbour Lane (visit on September 20th, 2016).

[14] Cf. Footnote 12.

their group and handling assistance activities. The existence of groups like these two that accept and give support to everyone who needs it regardless of sex, age, race, ethnicity, religion, or social class will probably be a driving force in the maintenance of Brixton's inclusivity into the future.

References

Adachi S (2013) Liberal nationalism and multiculturalism: social integration policy and Muslims in Britain. Keiso Shobo, Tokyo (in Japanese)

Brixton Blog (15/05/2012) Brixton and Norwood foodbank feeds 1,000 people in six months. https://brixtonblog.com/2012/05/brixton-and-norwood-foodbank-feeds-1000-people-in-six-months/, 25 May 2016

Brixton Blog (12/04/2013) Brixton residents set up soup kitchen. https://brixtonblog.com/2013/04/brixton-residents-set-up-soup-kitchen/, 25 May 2016

Brixton Blog (11/12/2015) The expanding Brixton soup kitchen. https://brixtonblog.com/2015/12/brixton-soup-kitchen/34692/, 20 May 2016

Brixton Buzz (21/04/2015) Brixton evictions and regeneration—the story of the guinness trust estate in Loughborough Park, Brixton. http://www.brixtonbuzz.com/2015/04/brixton-evictions-and-regeneration-the-story-of-the-guinness-trust-estate-in-loughborough-park-brixton/, 21 Sept 2016

Brixton Soup Kitchen (http://brixtonsoupkitchen.org/), 29 Dec 2016

Dehanas DN (2016) London youth, religion, and politics: engagement and activism from Brixton to Brick Lane. Oxford University Press, Oxford

Department of the Environment (1977a) Inner London, policies for dispersal and balance: final report of the Lambeth inner area study. D.O.E, London

Department of the Environment (1977b) Policy for the inner cities. D.O.E, London

DeVerteuil G (2015) Resilience in the post-welfare inner city: voluntary sector geographies in London. Los Angeles and Sydney. Policy Press, Bristol

Gilroy P (2002) There ain't no black in the union jack: the cultural politics of race and nation. Routledge, London

Hirukawa H et al (2002) Encyclopaedia of London. Taishukan, Tokyo (in Japanese)

Igarashi Y (2009) How to get along with the power of a place. In: Iwabuchi T, Haraguchi T, Ueda K (eds) Seed of the heart: an art project that connects memory and society. Kokorumu Bunko, Osaka (in Japanese), pp 246–280

Komori S (1978) Population of Inner London and housing: the process of the decline of districts around the city centre." In: Osaka City University's Economics Research Centre (ed) Structure of modern cities (171–217). University of Tokyo Press, Tokyo (in Japanese)

Komori S (1990) Development of London and regional structure. In: Osaka City University's Economics Research Centre (ed) Global metropolises (1) London (35–76). University of Tokyo Press, Tokyo (in Japanese)

Makiguchi Y (2007) The modern British race issues: diverse racial relationships between colored immigrants and white British people. Shinzansha Publisher, Tokyo (in Japanese)

Mavrommatis G (2010) A racial archaeology of space: a journey through the political imaginings of Brixton and Brick Lane, London. J Ethn Migr Stud 36(4):561–579

Norwood & Brixton Foodbank (https://norwoodbrixton.foodbank.org.uk/), 30 Dec 2016

Patterson S (1965) Dark strangers: a study of west Indians in London. Penguin Books, London

Piper A (1996) A history of Brixton. The Brixton Society, London

Robson G, Butler T (2001) Coming to terms with London: middle-class communities in a global city. Int J Urban Reg Res 25(1):70–86

Sakiyama K (1990) Migrant workers in London: its distribution and concentration. In: Osaka City University's Economics Research Centre (ed) Global metropolises (1) London (281–310). University of Tokyo Press, Tokyo (in Japanese)

Scarman L (1982) The Scarman report: the Brixton disorders 10–12 April 1981. Penguin Books, London

Takayama M (2013) Inner city. In: The human geographical society of Japan (ed) The dictionary of human geography (374–375). Maruzen Publishing, Tokyo (in Japanese)

The Guardian (20/02/2015) Guinness partnership defers eviction of Brixton social housing tenant. https://www.theguardian.com/society/2015/feb/20/brixton-social-housing-tenants-guinness-partnership-defer-eviction, 13 Dec 2016

Tomioka J (1988) Modern British migrant workers: British capitalism and racism. Akashi Syoten, Kyoto

Ward L (2015) The London county council bomb damage maps, 1939–1945. Thames & Hudson, London