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**Translation and Translanguaging**

Investigating Linguistic and Cultural Transformations in Superdiverse Wards in Four UK Cities

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# *Translanguaging and Translation*

## **Paper 21**

### **Translanguaging: Heritage for the future**

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## *Introduction*

In this report we ask what constitutes heritage in a superdiverse context. That is, what do people value, protect, and wish to preserve in a time and space characterised by complexity, mobility, and unpredictability? And how is this heritage constituted in discursive interactions between people?

The report draws on four detailed cases that highlight the ways in which conventional and embedded notions of heritage are re-inscribed through the experiences and practices of migrant groups in superdiverse wards of the cities of Cardiff, Leeds, London and Birmingham. The first part of this report sets out several key and increasingly entangled themes that are central to the on-going re-thinking of what is meant by heritage in the context of superdiversity. It identifies a landscape of shifting values upon which heritage is increasingly co-constructed, and is in the process of being transformed from the bottom up and well as top down. We pay particular attention to the way in which heritage comes into being as practice. The second part of the report sets out the cases of four individuals working with, and re-working, notions of identity, tradition and belonging, in part utilizing and negotiating extant heritages as a resource while at the same time generating new heritages. The final part of the report draws together some conclusions on the ways in which these cases individually and collectively problematize heritage while reflexively opening up more instrumentalist ways of mobilizing heritage to engage positively with difference and social change.

## *Heritage*

Authorised heritage discourses (AHD) have focused on heritage as it is constituted in historical places, monuments, buildings, and artefacts, focusing attention on aesthetically pleasing material objects, sites, places and landscapes that current generations must care for, protect and revere so that they may be passed to future generations. This discourse constructs the materiality of the past – a site, an object, a building – as being of value, and therefore to be preserved for the future. In recent times there has been a shift in the way we think about heritage. This shift travels from conceptions of heritage as state defined, as selected aspects of material culture, as reified and distant from everyday living, to a notion of heritage that is embedded in and experienced through everyday living, reflective of cosmopolitan society and new mobilities, and responsive to the needs of superdiverse cities.

The Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (UNESCO 2003), stated that intangible cultural heritage was constituted in:

The practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills – as well as the instruments, objects, artefacts and cultural spaces associated therewith – that communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals recognise as part of their cultural heritage. This intangible heritage, transmitted from generation to generation, is constantly recreated by communities and groups in response to their environment, their interaction with nature and their history, and provides them with a sense of identity and continuity, thus promoting respect for cultural diversity and human creativity.

The preamble to the Convention stresses the importance of intangible cultural heritage as a mainspring of cultural diversity, which is under threat from the process of globalization and social transformation and the phenomenon of intolerance (Smith 2006: 108). The notion of intangible heritage expands the definition of heritage to include elements such as music, language, dialects, oral history, traditions, dance, and craft skills.

Heritage is at least partly about a sense of *place* (Smith 2006). The idea of place represents a set of cultural characteristics and provides an anchor of shared experiences between people and a physical demonstration of continuity over time. We stretch our understanding of heritage beyond material culture into the realm of practice (Breglia 2006). Recent studies addressing heritage in low-income neighbourhoods (Pendlebury, Townshend, and Gilroy 2009; Rørtveit and Setten 2015) argue for an understanding of heritage that does not focus on the static material environment, but on the use of place by people in ways that reflect social stability and continuity. This view proposes that it is the practice of living in the landscape and home that constitutes heritage. Local efforts to fix community meanings and inscribe them in time and space take on particular significance in the context of changes in urban space and governance (Ingram 2016). That is, heritage is as much practice-in-place as it is place itself.

Heritage may be regarded as the performance and negotiation of identity, values, and sense of place (Smith and Waterton 2009). Networks and relations are facilitated through activity in which social and cultural values, meanings and understandings about the past and present are worked out, inspected, considered, rejected, embraced, or transformed. Harrison (2013) suggests a move from a notion of heritage as salvaging relics of the past to an active, creative, negotiated process of seeking the basis of common humanity in all available forms. This is a notion of heritage as a series of qualities which are constantly chosen, recreated and renegotiated in the present.

### *Translanguaging*

In mobile, complex societies heritage practices include encounters between people with different histories, biographies, and linguistic backgrounds. In such circumstances people translanguage. Translanguaging is the means by which people communicate in contexts where their backgrounds and available resources do not straightforwardly overlap. Translanguaging has the potential to transform interactions between people. Moreover, translanguaging is emblematic of a positive orientation to superdiversity, as differences are acknowledged and deployed as a resource. Translanguaging is contingent on local attitudes to, and beliefs about, communicative practice. That is, translanguaging is a form of communication which relies on the willingness of one or more participant in an encounter to engage in communicative practice which blurs or breaks through apparent boundaries between histories, biographies, languages, signs, and codes. Translanguaging is not a mere set of communicative practices. It is an ideological orientation to communication in changing space. In the examples that follow we discuss how translanguaging practice has the potential to open up communicative space for heritage in practice in four UK cities.

## *The research*

The examples we present in this paper were generated as part of a four-year research project funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council, 'Translation and Translanguaging: Investigating Linguistic and Cultural Transformations in Superdiverse Wards in Four UK Cities'. The multi-site ethnographic project is directed by Angela Creese. The aim of the project is to investigate how people communicate when they bring different histories, biographies, and trajectories into interaction. The research was conducted across four cities in the UK: Birmingham, Cardiff, Leeds, and London. Sixteen sites in the four cities were identified as places where people meet and come into contact, and where in the course of this contact they were likely to engage in communicative practices. The research sites included small shops, market stalls, libraries, community centres, advice bureaux, and sports clubs. Key participants were selected from interested parties in each institution. In selecting key participants for ethnographic research the teams started with particular languages or groups of languages. In each city ward research teams took as one of their points of departure the National Census of 2011 to identify which languages other than English were reported to be most commonly spoken in that ward. In the Birmingham ward, Ladywood, varieties of Chinese were reported to be the most commonly spoken languages other than English; in Cardiff the language was Arabic; in Leeds the languages identified were Czech, Slovak, Roma, and Portuguese; and in London the language other than English most widely reported was Polish. In this paper we report on the second phase of the study, in which we focused on sites differently associated with heritage. In each of four city sites a key participant (two library staff, an advocacy worker, and an artist) collaborated with the research team over the course of four months. The research teams conducted observations, wrote field notes, made audio-recordings in the work-place and the home, collected online and digital communications, interviewed the key participants and other stakeholders, gathered institutional documentation, took photographs, and video-recorded each key participant at work. Key participants were remunerated financially for their participation in the research. The key participants were also invited to participate in a university-led research training course which offered an Open College Network qualification. In what follows we summarise analysis of heritage in practice in relation to key participants in each city.

## *Heritage with no fixed abode*

Monika, a young Slovak Roma woman lives and works in Gipton and Harehills, in inner-city Leeds (Baynham et. al. 2016). Monika has an ambivalent relationship with conventional cultural heritage, whether tangible or intangible. She has a liminal position as a Roma person in Leeds, which relates to her upbringing. She had Roma parents yet she grew up in a children's home where Slovak, rather than a Romani language, was dominant. She sometimes refers to the Roma in Leeds using the first person pronouns and possessives of the insider ('us', 'our people'), and sometimes not ('those people'). She argues with her brother about what he should sell in his proposed Roma cafe: should he sell conventional Roma food? What indeed might this be? Thus, based on our empirical work, we cannot view heritage for Monika as limited to established, static notions of the term.

Monika and her brother Ivan aspire to set up cultural spaces for the Roma people in their area of Leeds. They hope to set up activities which will safeguard and transmit to others their heritage. At the time we conducted our observations there was no such cultural space for the Roma in Leeds. In this respect Monika, Ivan, their family, and their friends are attempting to

make something happen where there is currently nothing. With the support of others, Monika tries to transform her available cultural capital into something that will preserve and consolidate heritage but will also earn her a living. She does so by trying to set up a social enterprise, entailing the completion of a business plan.

For Monika heritage is not simply something that needs to be safeguarded from the past for the future. In Monika's discourse heritage becomes commodified and transformed. Through her contacts with Roma people, and the organisations working with them, Monika is aware that most activities provided for Roma in Harehills are linked to advocacy and health. She identifies a gap in activities reflecting the cultural heritage of Roma people: 'Many kids are talented, they want to dance, they want to sing, they have nowhere to rehearse, there is no-one to stand by them. Many mums stop me, saying please set up an arts school for us'. Through her contacts in Leeds City Council, Monika starts to explore the possibility of obtaining funding to provide arts and dance-related activities for Roma people in Leeds. Monika sets out to formulate and clarify her ideas about the services and activities she could offer, and to secure the funding to do so.

For the Roma in Leeds there is no sense of a settled place to locate, identify and build an idea of heritage. The spaces which do emerge are borrowed, and transitory. A hall in a primary school is used for Roma parties, until permission to use it is withdrawn due to too much noise. A pub is a focus for Roma musical events until it is closed down for infringing the licensing laws. Roma cultural activities therefore take place in impermanent spaces. Additionally, many arts, cultural and community organisations express an interest in working with the Roma, but do not have the contacts to do so. Monika works for Roma Voice, which aims to bring together Roma people with local organisations to create dialogue and identify needs.

Monika's heritage project in Harehills can be conceptualised as an endeavour which seeks to produce a Roma cultural space and therefore preserve and transmit to others that which, for her, is important. In order to create her dream she is required to write a business plan. The business plan represents an active construction and production of a proposal to provide activities and support for the Roma community. In seeking to produce a Roma cultural space, she attempts to build a heritage for the future, to take what is important to her and to pass it on. To do so, she must engage with the funding regimes and bureaucratic processes that will both support and constrain her.

The identification of what counts as shared heritage for Monika is in part an interactional achievement, rather than always *a priori* fact. Monika and her family adopt an approach to heritage in social life as repertoire and resource: individuals have repertoires of cultural practices, some aspects of which conform closely to societally-recognised varieties ('Roma food', 'Roma music') and some less so. However, when they become commodified their value is as something more essentially Roma, but with Roma-ness defined interactionally. Monika and her brother discuss whether certain foods and musical forms are socially recognisable as part of Roma/Czech/Slovak traditional heritage, and if so how they can contribute to the development of a business plan. Types of music and food are commodified, as culinary and musical practices are included as resources in the construction of heritage. This negotiation points to a complex understanding of heritage. Certain cultural practices, which may or may not be socially valued in everyday life, are differentially and strategically commodified – either for the heritage business industry or, in the case of Monika's business plan, for the necessity of making a living and contributing to society.

Long-established understandings of cultural and tangible heritage mean little to Monika. Rather, she values – and holds close in her new environment – her experiences of childhood and her family. Heritage for Monika entails dynamic identifications with different heritage traditions. This leads to an understanding of heritage as having no fixed abode. Rather, heritage comprises a repertoire of resources which she might draw on in different contexts. This contrasts with traditional understandings of heritage as something we might find housed in a museum or gallery. Heritage may be commodified, and deployed for income generation. Furthermore, heritage practices are discursive, informed by competing positions and ideologies. Re-imagining heritage practices and spaces in this way focuses attention on how – in contexts of superdiversity – heritage becomes uncoupled from established chains of transmission.

Monika's ideas about heritage, relating to her desire to see something she values passed on, come up against the exigencies of modern life as a migrant in Leeds, and the need to make a living. With twin aims in mind – to do something for the Roma in Leeds and to earn a living – she works on a business plan that is shaped and constrained in certain ways, and in interaction with others. The social production of thought, action and experience pull her away from her original ideas and towards plans that are more down to earth, involving the provision of advocacy. Her plans change as she prioritises a search for funding, suggesting a mismatch between her own sense of what might be passed on and that of those who could help her.

Monika understands heritage as tradition, appropriating (a version of) Roma tradition as a resource in her application for funds. In doing so she is swept into the processes of AHD via her business plan as she negotiates issues of reification and commodification. Monika is seeking to root intangible (and mobile) cultural heritage in a place that will give it value. Her struggle is to position herself in relation to mobile heritage, and in the place of Leeds, while at the same time making the best use of heritage as a resource. The efforts of Monika and her brother Ivan to turn heritage-related activities into income, and to provide heritage resources for the local Roma community, raise questions about which cultural heritage practices are valued by Monika and Ivan, and which are valued by those around them, as heritage becomes commodified and transformed.

### *Playful subversiveness and creativity: Doing a/n (Polish) artist in London*

The London-based research focused on the language, cultural and work practices of a performance artist, M, an aspiring, young, female, multilingual, freelance artist of Polish origin in London (Zhu Hua et al 2016). M was born in the north-east of Poland, near the Belarussian border. She came to the UK in 2003. She has a BA degree in acting from a drama school affiliated to a UK university and has been working towards a diploma in Translation. In her early thirties she became a self-employed artist. Her linguistic profile is: Polish (first language), English (fluent), Podlaski Dialect (a dialect of Polish in her hometown, fluent), German (learned in her secondary school for four years, communicative) and Russian (mainly passive knowledge). She is co-founder of a non-profit arts organisation which offers support, mentoring and showcasing opportunities to artists of Polish origin. She also has several part-time jobs.

Like Monika in Leeds, M spends time thinking about and filling in funding applications to finance her arts projects. M is very active via social media. The persona that M presents in her social media pages is that of a performer, an artist, and a person who crosses linguistic, cultural and artistic boundaries. Both her Twitter and her Facebook posts often contain links to other content online. M is able to maintain connections with the Polish arts scene, for example by posting information about a film festival in Gdansk. In general, M seems to aim to be a hub for artists, including those in Poland and with a Polish connection in the UK.

Although M's work goes beyond Polish art, she caters for people with Polish heritage and explores the possibility of promoting Polish artists in her work in London through a Polish art group she co-founded. She sees the group as a platform for people to share information about any kind of creative activity, 'just something to keep in contact with people who are into culture, art, and stuff with Polish heritage'. Although M occasionally uses the phrases 'Polish heritage' and 'Polish origin' in describing her identity, Polishness is only one aspect of M's identity positioning. For M identities are multiple and subjective. She employs a subversive yet playful, strategic yet practical approach to managing her identity positions, negotiating misalignment between identities she orients to, and identities assigned to her by others. She is adept at turning stereotypes into resources for accomplishing new social actions, and there are many instances of interactions and practices in which she seems to reject stereotypes while also inhabiting and performing them.

M took an opportunity to turn her reflections about identity into a performance when she came across a call for an e-publication project with the theme 'Lie back and think of England'. The piece, which she named 'Untitled', portrays a pretentious artist who attempts to 'pass' as a Londoner. In the performance piece M wears a red dress with white polka dots and a scarf, and answers questions from a friendly but inquisitive voice about what she is doing and who she is, while cooking a potato dish. In the piece M interweaves creativity with subversive playfulness. She parodies pretentious artists who try to pass themselves off as local Londoners and who play up to stereotypes of East Europeans, Londoners, and Englishness. Making witty reference to Eliza Doolittle and the Polish film, *Mis*, the performance parodies celebratory claims about multiculturalism, and critiques superficial art which makes capital from cultural diversity. The piece has a subversive undertone throughout, challenging uncritical understandings of transnationalism, transculturalism and cosmopolitanism. The piece invokes stereotypes and turns them into a performative resource. The project is also subversive in the sense that it is self-criticism or self-parody, as the character M in the piece, and the performer/director M, could easily be taken as one and the same.

M has a particular relationship with her status as a 'Polish' artist. She recognises that the stereotype of an East European migrant is most likely to be her niche as an actor. However, the problem for her is that playing a stereotypical Polish person only reifies the stereotype. M seems to know very well how to manoeuvre strategically and play along with the identities ascribed to her. She talks about introducing herself as 'just a Polish actress'. While M seems to be prepared to essentialise herself in this way temporarily in order to earn casting opportunities, there is a certain playful subversiveness in the way she goes about it in the deployment of double-voiced discourse (Bakhtin's 1963/1986). By modifying her self-identification with 'just' (meaning 'only', or 'simply'), the critical M voices her dissatisfaction and frustration with the role of a Polish actor often crudely typecast as a nurse or cleaner, or a similar role at the lower end of the job market.

For M, life is a performance and the world is a stage. Her performance in everyday life and her performance on stage feed into each other. Her life becomes the stage of her social and identity acts, embellished by her theatrical skills. M's performance in life and work is highly original, replete with multiple voices, strategic stereotyping, acts of playful subversiveness, meta-commentary and reflection. M's translanguaging practices are imbued with creativity, including language play, double voicing, singing, and mobilisation of a broad range of semiotic resources. These practices foreground the creativity of the multilingual speaker and trained artist, and subvert norms of behaviour that are imposed by social structures. M pushes at linguistic and cultural boundaries. She practises at the border between theatre performance and everyday activity. Participant observation, central to ethnography, takes on a new meaning when the research team is invited to take part in M's performances. This adds another layer of complexity to the notion of performativity, and to interpreting observation and experience.

M knows how to make the best use of what she has and what environmental and institutional structures can provide, and she does so in a strategic, creative, playful and subversive way. M does not mind ambiguity or complexity; in fact she seems to thrive on them. She constructs for herself a complex and multifaceted persona (easy-going, sophisticated, artistic,) through self-parody, strategic essentialism, double-voicing, translanguaging, and multimodality. She creates a world in which it can never be certain what is authentic and what is performance. For her heritage – whether it is 'Polish', 'artist', 'Londoner', 'cosmopolitan' – is a resource that enables her to be creative and critical, as she takes stereotypes and plays with them to explore and challenge existing understandings of heritage.

### *Protean Heritage, Everyday Superdiversity*

In Birmingham the key participant is Winnie Lateano, a Customer Experience Assistant at the new, state-of-the-art Library of Birmingham (Blackledge et al 2016). At the time we observed her she had worked in this role for eighteen years. Born in Hong Kong, Winnie migrated to the United Kingdom in 1990. She married in Hong Kong, and has two children, both now adults. Moving between information desks in different departments on different floors of the library, Winnie spends her working hours dealing with and supporting library users as they arrive with inquiries and requests.

In asking 'what constitutes heritage in a superdiverse context?' we are alert to the values people safeguard and wish to preserve in a city which is characterised by complexity, mobility, and unpredictability. These questions about heritage are fundamental to our understanding of the social world in all its complexity. If heritage is based on values, meanings, and practices, and if it is rooted in the past but present in the future, it concerns everything we may learn about how people navigate the spaces of the superdiverse city. We understand the meanings of heritage with reference to how it is received, talked about, looked at, circulated, ignored, and loved (Robinson and Silverman 2015). Heritage is instantiated in objects and artefacts, gifts and memories, and physical ways of moving and being. It is evident in overlapping histories, biographies, and localities as people come together in everyday encounters in the public meeting-place of the library. Heritage is exemplified in patterns of communication which extend beyond and across languages, as semiotic resources are deployed in ways that transform exchanges between people.

The aggregate of discourses circulating in and through the Library of Birmingham is complex and heterogeneous, testifying to the mobility and superdiversity of the library space. Many library users are young, fashionable, in long dresses and headscarves, wearing make-up and always with mobile phones. But the library users are far from being a homogeneous group. The free-to-enter civic space attracts scholars and business people, international students and those without a home, immigrants and long-established residents, families and the elderly, tourists and sightseers. The users of the library and the staff of the library learn cosmopolitan skills to communicate across apparent difference (Wessendorf 2014: 165).

In the public realm of exchanges between library staff and their clients, and in the parochial realm of interactions between colleagues in the lunch room or in quiet moments on the information desk, the library is a place in which language in use and action reflects the mobility and flux characteristic of superdiversity. Learning the repertoires required to navigate and participate in the superdiverse city is a dynamic process. It is a combination of choosing elements of inheritance and transforming them into heritage (Deumert, forthcoming), and learning new ways of being based on the changing social world. In the superdiverse city 'heritage' is not fixed, nor does it belong to a single, essential culture. Rather, it is based on values and practices about which people may be ambivalent, and which are contested and disagreed about. It is changeable, but also versatile, and adaptable. That is, it is protean.

In her interactions with members of the public who arrive at the information desk from (at least) four continents of the globe, Winnie deploys not merely conventionalised acts to get business done, but an enthusiasm for, and willingness to engage in, translation and translanguaging. As well as being pragmatic, Winnie's linguistic practices are emblematic of her wider orientation to superdiversity. She invokes stereotypes as heritage resources. She is entirely unconcerned about questions of whether she deploys the right word in the right language in the right grammatical position, to the right interlocutor. Her heritage, which is both earned and learned over time, is one which values difference as an opportunity for communication. Translanguaging is a means by which Winnie instantiates and processes that difference. It is what Robinson and Silverman (2015) call a new cultural form, which becomes heritage through effective utilisation and community consensus. If heritage only becomes heritage when it becomes recognisable within a particular set of cultural or social values, then translation and translanguaging are heritage practices in themselves and constitute an orientation to heritage which is learned from inherited values and lived experience.

We may conceive of local language practices in superdiverse cities not simply as the maintenance of tradition, but as socially sustained renewal that connects with the present as well as the past. The Library of Birmingham is a place where minds, bodies and spaces respectively carry, enact and display references to many local places (Hall 2012: 131). If the individual accumulates a local world by being social, rather than simply inheriting a local place by virtue of birthright or social position, the conditions and circumstances in which individuals are able to act, move and express are not insignificant. At the Library of Birmingham multiple localities intersect and overlap. More than learning to live with difference and change, Winnie grabs hold of it and puts it centre stage, making difference and change a resource for good – for communication and for conviviality. She is able to do this because she is not afraid to fail in her attempts to communicate, and because she is willing and able to transform an interaction through her practice of translanguaging.

In the Library of Birmingham indexicals of origin, belonging, and affiliation are woven through everyday interaction. Heritage is not found only in shared culture, but also in the much more unpredictable exchanges of everyday life. In the superdiverse city heritage is as much about local ideologies and practices as about safeguarding the past. These local ideologies and practices include an orientation to difference as a resource to open up space for communication. Translation and translanguaging are often deployed as the communicative means which transform interactions between people whose biographies, histories, and trajectories are different from each other.

It is everyday encounters between people, the unavoidability of such encounters and especially the competence of people to negotiate these multiple and diverse relations in different realms which form the glue of a superdiverse society (Wessendorf 2014:169). This competence is a heritage with which we endow the present and the future. The Library of Birmingham is a convivial space where a multitude of histories, trajectories and expressions converge and overlap. This socially produced space constitutes a means to safeguard a positive orientation to superdiversity in the present and the future. This does not mean that old and new structures of prejudice and discrimination – heritage still, for some – have been erased from the social world. But a protean heritage for the future is one in which social difference is commonplace, and is taken up as a resource in the superdiverse city.

### *Heritages lived*

In Cardiff, the key participant is Mrs H. Mrs H was born in the late 1950s in Iraq in the Kurdish city of Sulaymaniyeh. When she was 7, she and her family moved to Baghdad. Having grown up speaking Sorani Kurdish in Sulaymaniyeh, the move to Baghdad brought the need to learn a new language, Arabic. Mrs H initially felt considerable antipathy towards Arabic because she perceived a great distance between her and her classmates in her new location, politically and socially. However, despite this she described learning the language quickly. Mrs H spent her early adulthood in Iraq where she married and had three children, all boys. When she was in her early thirties the Gulf War saw Mrs H move to Algiers with her young family, and six months later to Manchester, England. Initially they feared the worst about life in their new home. Mrs H knew little English and her husband suspected that he would never work again now he was in this unfamiliar land. However they forged a new life in Cardiff and both became professionals at the university. Their sons are now grown up and work in the UK, where they are starting their own families. Mrs H has worked at a university library in Cardiff for 18 years, and is now an Assistant Manager. Although she knew some English grammar and understood the language somewhat from watching films, when she arrived in Manchester Mrs H knew little English and was concerned about facing another language. Yet she found that people encouraged her progress and admired her efforts, and now she conducts almost all of her working life in English.

For Mrs H, heritage is her lived reality. Kirshenblatt Gimblett describes heritage as “a mode of cultural production in the present that has recourse to the past” (1998: 7), and in Mrs H’s busy working life heritage is part of business as usual. Different heritages are produced and reproduced in Mrs H’s home, work and social life. These overlap and come into contact as she goes about activities in her various social spheres. Heritage is for her many things. It is tied to her personal history in Kurdistan and Iraq, her religious identifications with the Muslim faith, her attachment to her extended family whose generations span out from her in both directions and traverse various countries, and also her librarianship and professional life.

One aspect of Mrs H's heritage centres on her Kurdishness, and the various significances and significations it has for her. Mrs H's first name indexes this heritage in a deep and personal way. She discussed the way this name has held different associations for her and others at different times of her life. When she first arrived in Cardiff, Mrs H and her husband set up a Kurdish society, with meetings and talks about heritage as culture. Yet the society was active in the lived present when, for example, its members met to discuss the atrocities against Kurdish people in the late 1980s, and invited MPs, council members and others to hear about the events. Heritage seemed to become at this time an impetus but also a currency for social action. The memories of those who lost their lives became part of the heritage of Mrs H and her family, and created new heritage for the Kurdish diaspora in Cardiff. These memories became key to the new and evolving heritage of Cardiff Kurds. This aspect of Mrs H's heritage, so much a part of her early life in the UK, has waxed and waned as other aspects of her life became more brightly illuminated.

An important heritage for Mrs H, one closely related to her Kurdish heritage, is her family, including her 'boys', now in cities across England, and her siblings elsewhere, to whom she remains close through Skype conversations. It was for her sons that Mrs H and her husband stayed in the UK despite two difficult initial years. The UK offered an escape from fear and uncertainty about safety, as well as offering a good education. As Mrs H said 'we're so lucky because my boys are safe now and we live in a safe environment'. Yet this safety also had consequences for Mrs H's very notion of family. She reported, 'on the other hand we lost lots of things you know, the contact and the family relationship really'. Her family stayed in Iraq despite the danger and fear they faced daily. Heritage embedded in family became dispersed, but also recalibrated in the struggle to survive. Mrs H found herself suddenly cleaved from family practices and support, whilst simultaneously fearful for the extended family.

We were most closely able to observe heritages in Mrs H's working life. The first time that either fieldworker from the Cardiff team entered Mrs H's work environment she showed us a photograph of the university library in its former days. It was a grand open hall with light streaming through picture windows, before the addition of a mezzanine floor to provide more space for desks for the growing, and changing university population of the mid- to late-twentieth century, and long before the addition of electrical sockets, printers and wifi-hotspots for the current generation of students. Mrs H's foregrounding of the past in her representation of the present indexed a keen awareness of heritage in the workplace, which Mrs H demonstrated throughout the research. Through the fieldwork, the university libraries emerged as sites of heritage (Rayward 2004:674).

Library heritage was observable almost constantly in the library. It was very obvious in the nostalgia about library artefacts and practices which we both saw and heard. Artefacts from the library's past were stored away but easily accessible even though they were not now used. The librarians recalled past procedures fondly and through their recollections constructed a shared history of activities, associations and orientations. They also recalled previous traditions for library users, remembering the regular queues on key return dates and on days when important journals became available in hard copy, for example. Yet the sense of library heritage amongst staff was not merely a form of dreamy sentimentality about the distant past. It was rather a deeply embedded recognition of trajectories of continuity and change which were evolving and playing out in new ways daily. Heritage had different temporalities, as librarians oriented to the traditions and continuities which would rapidly develop and just as rapidly dissipate, due to the short but intense involvements of their 'customers' in their

working lives and work environment. The rapid making and remaking of social relations itself became part of the fabric of the libraries' heritages. At a time of change in government orientations to library spaces, and a change in orientations to the function of higher education, there was a sense in the library of an awareness of the librarians' role in handing down the past and creating a future from the past. This was accomplished through reifying items and practices of the past, delineating and defining difference, and casting particular items or activities as historically interesting.

Mrs H herself embodied library heritage, and also professional and workplace heritages. Her long service in the university library service gave her an authority, tempered by her humanitarian approach to all she encountered. This way of being in the academic environment is itself a heritage, recognizable to others who have a familiarity with that environment.

### *Translanguaging: Heritage for the future*

What counts as heritage has shifted from a focus on old buildings, ancient sites, monuments and masterpieces to also include traditional varieties of music, dance, food, arts, and crafts. What people value, and what they want to pass on to future generations, continues to be elusive, and difficult to pin down. We propose that a linguistic ethnographic approach to researching social life offers insights into how people engage with each other, what they want to hold on to, and what kind of world they want to make. That is, in looking closely and repeatedly at everyday practices in translanguaging spaces we are able to come close to understanding what people in superdiverse societies value, and what they wish to safeguard for the future.

In linguistic ethnographic research in Birmingham, Cardiff, Leeds, and London we observed migrants to the UK as they went about the business of establishing new lives, and contributing to their community and society. We observed them in encounters with others who were migrants, and with others who were not migrants. In Leeds Monika and her brother aspired to set up cultural spaces for the Roma people in their area. The activities they hoped to initiate would safeguard and transmit to others elements of intangible heritage – including music, food, and dance. Monika aimed to transform her available cultural capital into something that would preserve and consolidate heritage, but also earn her a living. She did so by trying to set up a social enterprise, entailing the completion of a business plan. But a focus only on the conventional heritage dimension of Monika's aspirations would be misleading. For Monika heritage in social life was repertoire and resource. Roma food and Roma music were not ends in themselves, but resources which may be drawn upon in the pursuit of her dream, which was to provide a better life for Roma people in Leeds. Her relatively unformed ambition is not that people of Czech and Slovak Roma heritage in Leeds acquaint themselves anew with particular culinary or musical forms, but that they have greater opportunity to look after their children, live in decent accommodation, and find employment. These are the values and practices she wants to safeguard for the future. Writing a business plan is a practice in which her ambitions and frustrations become starkly visible.

In similar but different ways, M, a London-based artist, was ambivalent about any straightforward notion of 'cultural heritage'. Her performance in life and work was highly original, replete with multiple voices, strategic stereotyping, acts of playful subversiveness, meta-commentaries and reflection. For M and her team, art-making was work in progress and

created in a state of flux. They thrived on ambiguity, spontaneity, and going with the flow, despite experiencing the uncertainty, anxiety and chaos that came with it. As a Polish actor M was often the ‘token Polish girl in the crowd’. She employed a subversive yet playful, strategic yet practical approach to manage the essentialised identities and roles ascribed to her by others. M’s translanguaging practices were imbued with creativity, such as language play, double voicing, singing, and mobilisation of multiple semiotic resources. M’s Polish heritage was fundamental to her performance. But it was an ironic take on her heritage, as she deployed parody and pastiche to critique others’ (potentially) essentialist interpretations, the commodification of heritage in the worlds of the arts and business, and the research process. For M translanguaging space was performance space, whether she was on stage or back stage. We observed her performance and her interactions in everyday encounters and found multiple voices, which represented, parodied, and usurped attempts to pin down heritage identities. Her practice, in quotidian life and in performance, took a post-modern approach to heritage.

In Cardiff practices in which Mrs H invoked heritage were multiple, including contact with family members in the UK, Iraq, and elsewhere, memories of home in Sulaymaniyeh, faith practices related to her Islamic beliefs, contact with other people of Kurdish heritage in Cardiff, and recalled and current practice as a librarian in the university library service. Not the least of Mrs H’s heritage was her narrative of migration. Her personal history in Kurdistan and Iraq, her journey to the UK via Algiers, her trajectory of belonging, were very much with her in the present. But heritage for Mrs H was not by any means limited to connections with her territory of origin. It was the heritage of the city of Cardiff, of the university, of changing technology, and changing practices. Different heritages were produced and reproduced in Mrs H’s home, work and social life. But we had no sense that the multiplicity and complexity of Mrs H’s heritage practices and values meant that her ‘heritage’ was in any way reduced. Hers was a heritage that was transportable and mobile, and also rooted in the present and the future. When she told stories of her migration, and of her homeland, she was talking of the present and the future as much as the past. When she presented photographs of the university library in Cardiff bathed in sunlight she was not merely romanticising the past, but was constructing heritage for the future.

In the everyday practices of Winnie, a migrant from Hong Kong working at the Library of Birmingham, heritage was suffused with complexity, as indexicals of origin, belonging, and affiliation were woven through interactional encounters. Heritage was protean: found not only in a fixed, essential ‘culture’, but also in more unpredictable life elements in the exchanges of everyday life. Heritage was instantiated in objects and artefacts, gifts and memories, and physical ways of moving and being. Heritage was evident in overlapping histories, biographies, and localities which came together in interactions between people as they met in the civic space of the library. Heritage was exemplified in patterns of communication which extended beyond and across ‘languages’, as semiotic resources were deployed in ways that transformed exchanges between people. In the superdiverse city heritage was not fixed, nor did it belong to a single, essential culture. Rather, it was based on values and practices about which people were ambivalent, and which were contested and disagreed about. It was changeable, but also versatile, and adaptable. Heritage, subject to conditions of mobility, complexity, and unpredictability, is as much about local ideologies and practices of sameness and difference as about safeguarding the past. These local ideologies include an orientation to difference that is convivial, and recognises difference, and the dynamic tension between sameness as difference, as a resource to open up space for communication. Over and over again we saw Winnie engage convivially with others in brief

interactions where a multitude of histories, trajectories, and expressions converged and overlapped. Such repeated, patterned conviviality constituted a means to safeguard a positive orientation to superdiversity in the present and the future.

In translanguaging practice we can look empirically at how people orient to each other when they look and/or sound different. Such encounters were commonplace in superdiverse towns and cities. When we looked closely into translanguaging practices we saw that people were critical in challenging conventional boundaries between social groups, and creative in pushing through these boundaries. In translanguaging practices we were able to view empirically how people orient to each other *ideologically*. That is, what value they attach to apparent difference. We see this in people's practices, their ways of being, as they engage with that difference. In translanguaging practices we view what people value, what they want to keep for the future, and what kind of world they want to create. That is, in translanguaging practices we see people making a heritage for the future.

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