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All that we are – heritage inside out and upside down

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ABSTRACT

This article explores how the axis between heritage on the ‘inside’ and heritage on the ‘outside’ is imagined and produced, theoretically, politically and institutionally. It asks which outsider narratives are privileged and which are contained, and what the management of these boundaries inadvertently tells us about the politics and anxieties of the ‘inside’. It offers reasons for the pervasiveness of the border despite various initiatives to invite the outside in.

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In the first volume of his *Memories of Empire* trilogy Schwarz (2011) explores how empire, memory and ideas of racial whiteness interacted to shape the cultural and political landscape of the metropole in the years after decolonisation, bringing with it legacies that we are still living within. Memories of empire, in the 1960s moment that Schwarz begins his insightful analysis with, are organised not by the past but by the present, where an imagined order from colonial times is pitted against a perception of current disorder – even though both are fantasies. ‘Memories of the ordered past are thus the consequences of the experience of disorder. And like all memories they are organised in the present’ (Schwarz 2011, 9). For the followers of the famous British politician and right-wing ideologue of race, Enoch Powell, the presence of former colonial subjects in Britain triggered and structured recollections of empire. Such memories then were not lodged in some deep, essential way in the national psyche, but were revived and embedded within the body politic as a reaction to the present. Migrants, he notes, activated ‘memories of the imperial past – memories of white authority, in particular’ (Schwarz 2011, 11).

I begin with this as a way into thinking about the border between heritage on the ‘inside’ and that which remains ‘outside’. Heritage is about understanding which presents are served by the pasts in circulation in the contemporary moment. Discourses of race in critical heritage studies and heritage representations and practices therefore, can be read against these dialogues between past and present, particularly in relation to authority, agency and importantly, silences. Schwarz considers the evasions and displacements in memory work around histories of empire in the years after decolonisation and therefore may help shine a light on that inside/outside binary. Highlighting ‘forgotten’ heritage has not launched a great ‘remembering’ of the histories of outsiders. Rational argument about the centrality of colonialism in understanding national heritage has not led to race becoming centralised. This leads us to consider the irrational, the displacements of memory, wilful forgetting and the persistence and subtlety of patterns of white authority and class domination. Perhaps this will expose how power and exclusion operate, even when under the guise of inclusion and egalitarianism and why the border between heritage on the inside and heritage on the outside remains largely intact.

This article offers a partial analysis of that border. It is not about the outsider heritages which have gained discernible and impactful access to the inside, neither is it focussed on the many ways in which museums, for example, have engaged with issues of historiography, social justice and cultural representation. Rather, it is about the boundary itself and how the axis between heritage on the 'inside' and heritage on the 'outside' is imagined and produced, theoretically, politically and institutionally; and how it is challenged and navigated by those on the outside, and by those occupying both spaces. The first section considers the ways in which political, economic and social power relations structure the inside/outside boundary; the second section attempts to give voice to the more intangible factors that perpetuate it; and the third considers some of the perspectives of those outsiders looking in, and what is at stake for them as they navigate the choppy waters of being included into the mainstream.

It is informed by the work of cultural theorists foregrounding the economics of cultural practices more thoroughly (Littler, [forthcoming](#); McGuigan 2011; Philips and Whannel 2013) thereby reinforcing the 'critical' in critical heritage studies. In a field where the consequences of how the past is organised and understood has direct relevance to everything from migration debates, global ecological collapse, feminist politics and the erosion of the public sector, to give just a few examples, the connections between heritage debates and the contemporary conjuncture can sometimes be hard to identify. Cultural studies as a discipline is concerned with laying bare the political, economic and social assumptions underpinning the ideas, cultures and attitudes which converge to construct notions of 'common sense' (Hall and O'Shea 2015). The desirability of 'including the excluded' has become naturalised within heritage discourses and does not necessarily represent a radical intervention that heralds a great changing of the guard. Therefore as exclusion persists, different tools are required to unpack what may lie behind the impetus to bring the outside in.

This article is also informed by collaborative work I have undertaken with museums, galleries and archives to affect change and influence policy and practice in the sector, by bringing a perspective on the cultural politics of difference that evaded essentialism; ceased 'celebrating' diversity in a liberal, patronising manner; and acknowledged these issues as central and vital for any post-colonial nation that wanted to have a genuine handle on its past (Littler and Naidoo 2005). Most important in this work was to root out more polite and respectable forms of discrimination, therefore visibility and representation were not the only issues – the *narratives* around 'otherness' that heritage practices utilised preoccupied those colleagues in the sector pursuing more progressive approaches. The binary of inside/outside hung over us all the time – our job was to eliminate it.

Heritage policies in the UK have routinely addressed the issue of including the excluded, particularly under the New Labour government (1997–2010) where heritage and culture were tied to a range of programmes aimed at regenerating communities and championing equality and diversity (Hewison 2014). Yet much public history remains untroubled by the need to address the ways in which the outsiders are at the centre of the history of European modernity and the very fabric of every heritage expression situated as part of the inside. Popular understandings of the content of British heritage have changed little in the last 30 years, and the high ideals that accompanied the notion that the arts and heritage sector would respond to economic inequality or social discrimination have not troubled the foundations of that inside to produce different narratives of national identity.¹ Mostly it has been business as usual. For example, when the right-wing press scaremonger about immigrants changing the face of traditional British culture, popular heritage narratives have not been a resource to help confidently counter these statements and instead have returned to discourses of 'tolerance' and benign multiculturalism. The most repeated metaphor that heritage institutions have deployed in thinking about the relationship of inside and outside is 'margins to the core' (V&A 2010), which comes with a presumption that this is the desired direction of travel. But *where* does that core actually reside and are we even speaking a similar philosophical language when we talk about it?

Imagining that the outside is in by virtue of, for example, a museum considering the views of a community group before it embarks on an exhibition, is profoundly different than the outside getting in through a reconfiguring of the boundary itself and a self-reflexive critique of how problematic it is for the inside to set the terms of the encounter. What constitutes inside and outside requires forensic

examination to root out the complex, often subliminal associations that accompany it. To facilitate some of the arguments I refer to the inside and outside in broad and perhaps generalised terms, but the fact that there is a tacit understanding of what belongs where, speaks volumes about the politics of heritage as it is popularly and professionally understood. My observations and examples are also skewed towards languages of race and exclusion and to the UK context, but I hope they speak to many of the barriers that different expressions of outsider heritage come up against across the world.

Inside looking out

The first issue to consider is how patterns of power maintain the status quo through, rather than despite, policies and practices that purport to do the opposite. To do that we need to focus in on the meanings attached to the inside and outside and how and why they are perpetuated. The inside/outside border reproduces the idea that there is 'real' or 'proper' heritage, reflected in such things as the country house, the eternal landscape of the English countryside, the monarchy, etc., and 'new' or 'worthy' heritage where we talk about slavery, mining communities, or the role of women in the First World War (Littler and Naidoo 2014). Every instance of media furor about 'political correctness' in historical representation holds up a mirror to how institutional discourses about 'diversity' have been circulated and interpreted in popular parlance and illustrates the impact that the inside/outside boundary has had on public heritage narratives.² To borrow Schwarz's point, it may be that the New Labour government project in Britain, which required the cultural sector to tackle social exclusion and promote diversity, may have created the conditions for people to imagine, construct and mythologise a stable and monocultural heritage that predated these 'modern' ideas about historical representation.

It becomes apparent that heritage on the inside is coded as representing a range of identities that on the surface appear unmarked, be they white, hetero-normative or upper-middle class. Perhaps a suitable starting point in bringing the 'margins to the core' would be to return to the extensive body of cultural and political criticism that focuses on how the boundary between inside and outside is produced and experienced by those subjected to its power; a power that makes some subjects visible and others appear to be benign representatives of normal humanity. Critics such as Fanon (1986), Said (1991), Morrison (1992), Spivak (1988), Hall (2005), Bhabha (1994), Gilroy (2000), Dyer (1997), hooks (1992) and Ware and Back (2002) to name a few, have turned their theoretical attention to the ways in which representational power allows some subjects to define themselves as somehow invisible, while others are marked by difference. They and many others have also repeatedly examined the ways in which the 'other' confers meaning on the centre and gives flesh and solidity to those who maintain their supremacy through the binary of 'self' and 'other', endlessly reproduced through culture, language, the political economy and other discourses of power. The notion of invisible whiteness is still deeply ingrained in heritage practices and made clear when the 'other' is invited into the institution to talk about outsider heritage only when they can be 'seen', rather than acknowledging that the 'other' is always present in all displays, exhibitions, ideas, institutional practices and discourses. The fact that you cannot see them does not mean they are not there.

There is a reason why the works cited above remain fresh and challenging and why Fanon never goes out of fashion (Gordon and Cornell 2015). Currently, white and middle-class supremacy codes itself through languages of meritocracy (Littler 2013), and the means by which power and exclusion shape shift to suit changes in the political climate have consistently been the subject of scholarship (Bhopal 2016) as well as institutional and popular debate, illustrating how 'common sense' ideas about race, class, etc. morph and adapt. For example, recent frustration at the continued ways in which white, male authority operates even in spaces devoted to increasing diversity, have coalesced around the colloquial term 'whitesplaining' – a word summing up how powerful subjects patronisingly explain the politics of and solutions to exclusion to 'others' (Achola 2015).

This brings up the problem of theorising from the inside as those in positions of power try to grapple with exclusion but cannot decentre themselves in the quest for equality. Rather like the billionaires and industry leaders coming together at a TED conference to discuss solutions to global poverty and

injustice, they are never going to come to the conclusion that *they* may in fact be the problem (West 2015). In the heritage sector, thinking from the inside about what the solutions to exclusion should be can take many different forms. Sometimes this can be precluded by a sensitive acknowledgement of the power relations in operation, for example between a curator and a community group. Such declarations however are often the end, rather than the start of more meaningful considerations of what constitutes an equitable encounter. Ware and Back (2002, 5) discuss the field of writing on whiteness and how it offers theories of ‘how to identify the links between the premeditated violence of the disempowered white supremacist and the “unwitting” solipsism of the individual unaccustomed to questioning the idea that she or he occupies a privileged political and cultural category’. This “unwitting” solipsism’ stalks the sector and contributes to the illusion that the inside is neutral and can offer a hand to those outside without interrogating the basis of its confident assertions to ‘include’. On an institutional level this means assumptions are made about mainstream audiences and what reflects inside and outside heritages for them. Schwarz notes:

... the determination to open up the story of empire to new voices – colonized as well as colonizers, black as well as white, women and children as well as men, queer as well as straight – has met continuing resistances. A tone of easy omnipotence still pervades the literature, as if intellectual authority remains the necessary preserve of those situated at the centre. Above all a more pluralist, complete picture of empire needs to interrogate that most naturalized of phenomena, whiteness itself. (2011, 17)

Heritage on the outside reinforces the representational power of the inside to appear universal and transhistorical. If museums are a product of modernity and the ordering of peoples and the world are central to that project, then a politics of difference should be on the inside, even if that inside appears to be transparent and lacking in substance in relation to that difference. Paul Goodwin, former curator of cross-cultural programmes at Tate Britain, explains in an interview why he was reluctant to approach his post from the position of targeting ethnic audiences and instead focussed on the museum as a space of knowledge production about cultural difference so that central questions about what was on the walls, curatorial practice and ideas about Britishness could be addressed (Dewdney et al. 2011). In my experience in the sector the opportunity to do such work is rare and invites to address cultural difference are usually confined to discussions about ‘new’ audiences thus maintaining the inside/outside paradigm.

Therefore decisions about which outsider narratives are invited in and which are contained are already shaped by this configuration. By analysing which discourses prevail and which are expelled, critics have discerned a deep institutional ambivalence to the full story of modernity and its power relations (Appignanesi 2010; Araeen 2010). Cultural Diversity as an institutional cultural policy in the UK effectively solidified and naturalised the inside/outside boundary despite valiant attempts by many progressive artists, curators, activist, etc. to utilise the agenda and funding opportunities to produce work that undermined it. Therefore, in general, mainstream projects that operated under the auspices of this rubric found it hard to take audiences to a place which enabled them to experience a deeper, more enriched vision of the inherent cultural complexity of the history of British art for example, and it was left to cultural organisations specifically committed to this – such as the Institute of International Visual Arts (Iniva) and Autograph (ABP) – to present work and ideas that showcased the indelible presence of the ‘other’ in that story. Richard Appignanesi notes:

... in this view of cultural diversity the strains of disquieting difference come from the ‘ethnic minority’ cultures, those unsettled and problematic guests in the midst of the host mainstream culture. Mainstream, of course, meaning Western, European and predominantly white; and mainstream also implicitly presuming itself wholly unified and homogeneous. Diversity from this viewpoint is disruptive, an upset of status quo normality, which must somehow be governed so that the mainstream culture can function undisturbed by any threat of ‘difference’ from the inside. (2010, 5)

Appignanesi and others, notably artist, curator, writer and activist Rasheed Araeen, have worked for decades to have a fuller story of post-war modernism, abstraction, minimalism, conceptualism, etc. written into the mainstream of British art history – fuller meaning one that can not only name-check, but critically engage with, the work produced by artists of Caribbean, African and Asian descent

working in Britain. Artists such as Ronald Moody, Araeen himself, Aubrey Williams, Frank Bowling, those who were part of the London-based Caribbean Artists Movement, were not engaged in some side project but were part of the development of the visual language of modernism, yet they are consistently overlooked by an historical narrative disturbed by transnational complexities, by the ideologies of power, colonialism and race, and by the idea that the 'other' within may have something crucial and defining to say.

The increased marketisation of the cultural sector means that the inside/outside boundary is also perpetuated by economic imperatives. The 'inclusion of minorities', 'diversity' or the importance of 'working with communities' are now standardised discourses in the cultural sector and not necessarily at odds with neoliberal economics – they are 'common sense' positions. On the contrary, for the more canny corporate investors they provide the perfect means to promote brands. In their book *The Trojan Horse – the growth of commercial sponsorship*, Philips and Whannel (2013) explore how and why corporations have naturalised their presence in the cultural sector. As I have noted elsewhere, a corporate funder would have little interest in supporting a heritage display that drew attention to the representational nature of dominant whiteness. However the boundary between 'real' and 'new' heritage projects suits the neoliberal economic order well – one through which to perpetuate hegemonic power relations through an evocation of timeless, traditional cultural heritage; the other to provide a safe space to perform good deeds for communities and make capitalism appear benign and caring while it loots the public sector in the interests of private capital (Naidoo 2015).

Analysing the relationship between heritage studies and the neoliberal revolution within British universities can also help shed light on how the inside and outside operates. As universities strive to make academic research have 'impact', and consequently seek to strengthen the links between them and both the dwindling public sector and the private sector, heritage studies has been identified as a key area where such connections can be made, especially around tourism. Jobs advertised in this field increasingly make reference to the need for applicants to mediate between the cultural sector and the academy, especially with a view to pursuing funding from traditional research councils and from newer revenue streams. Few would not want their research to shape heritage practices, but there is a minefield of other issues here around how 'impact' can utilise and exploit community heritage projects for a broader, self-serving agenda.

The structure of funding that followed the inside/outside narrative of heritage practice has also mitigated against the outside moving in. This is summed up neatly in the report *Whose cake is it anyway?* by Bernadette Lynch, a study on engagement and participation in museums and galleries commissioned by the Paul Hamlyn Foundation, which concludes that

... the funding invested in public engagement and participation in the UK's museums and galleries has not significantly succeeded in shifting the work from the margins to the core of many of these organisations. In fact, as this study demonstrates, it has curiously done the opposite. By providing funding streams outside of core budgets, it appears to have helped to keep the work on the organisations' periphery. This situation becomes even clearer now that external funding streams are under serious threat and museums and galleries are scrambling for alternative sources of short-term funding to support their public engagement work. (2011, 5)

The organisation of funding and the categorisation of people (e.g. as BME – black and minority ethnic) has meant that community engagement becomes an issue when a heritage institution initiates a project that they assume is of interest to a marginalised group. What such interest should be, the shape it should take and the outcomes it should produce are therefore already structured into the project narrative, again illustrating the problem of theorising from the inside. The terms of engagement and languages of inside and outside create, rather than simply represent pre-existing communities. Lynch and Alberti (2010, 5) remark:

An African-Caribbean participant invited to consult on Hackney Museum's plans to commemorate the bicentenary angrily commented, 'either it's all to do with me or it's nothing to do with me!' – neatly summarising the confusion and frustration that many participants reported from their engagement with museums in 2007.

The discursive regimes within such classifications as BME construct people as having the right sort of ethnicity. This impacts not only those deemed ‘non-white’ but also those who are not born but ‘made’ white through this.

Inside looking in

The inside/outside boundary is also shaped by something more intangible – fear and anxiety (Naidoo 2011). Therefore we need to not simply acknowledge the presence of these emotions but account for their underlying causes, their tendency to materialise in unrecognisable forms and their ability to stubbornly remain unspoken. There seems to be a fear that something will be taken away from heritage on the inside if there is more equality – that somehow those outside will critique ‘our’ culture, expose the power relations within, make people ashamed and compromise heritage as a commodity and as a resource for anchoring national identity. The body of work on *Heimat* is increasingly relevant as much heritage and memory work is shaped by abstract longings for a fictionalised homeland where the troubling, rootless people who bring change do not exist (Morley 2000) and where it was unnecessary to confront casual discrimination and linguistic violence. As Boa and Palfreyman (2000, 2) tell us: ‘Key oppositions in the discourse of Heimat set country against city, province against metropolis, tradition against modernity, nature against artificiality, organic culture against civilisation, fixed, familiar, rooted identity against cosmopolitanism, hybridity, alien otherness, or the faceless mass’.

Heimat infuses contemporary heritage work with an accompanying consensus that it is an acceptable and natural impulse to entertain such longings, whereas out and out exclusion is obviously not. The inside seeks to retain ownership of certain heritages and cultures creating an alternative space for difference. This is why non-white, British people are rarely courted or positioned as the authoritative voice of any aspect of mainstream culture and heritage. The fear acts as an incentive to police the boundary so that it can maintain a version of the past untainted by exploitation, subjugation, inequality and misery, while also accepting that such things existed. During the 2007 slavery projects I regularly encountered people who expressed the view that historically, Africans had enslaved people too – though this is true it can be read against a series of fearful and sometimes hysterical reactions to the presence of outside heritages on the inside (Smith et al. 2011). This reaction is often accompanied by the view that difference is new and that it is irrational to make all heritage representations stand up to this sort of critique. The inside/outside, real/new binary has another dimension and that is true/politically correct.

In a piece entitled, ‘It’s only political correctness – race and racism in British history’, Caroline Bressey (2008) discusses a BBC radio programme about the remake of the Second World War film, *The Dam Busters* and the potential offence that would be caused by the use of the original name of the dog featured in it called ‘nigger’. Bressey (2008, 30) notes that not one of the interviewees had what was crucial to be able to participate in this discussion, namely an ‘understanding or knowledge of black history, an essential part of any debate around the historical and contemporary use of racist language’. She presents the important contextual information for this such as remembering that Dr Harold Moody and the League of Coloured Peoples were doing anti-racist work in Britain many years before the war, and also cites Una Marson’s poem *Nigger* to remind us that even in 1930s the term was ‘always deeply offensive’ (Bressey 2008, 34). Most importantly, evidence of a BBC apology in 1940 for use of the word makes it clear that by the time the *Dam Busters* was made, knowledge of its meaning and impact was already in the public realm (Bressey 2008, 34). As Bressey says, ignoring the history of anti-racism reflects two things:

Firstly, it illustrates the power of historical ignorance as a tool for those who reinforce racism by arguing that they are in fact challenging ‘political correctness’, and secondly, the general failure of British society to acknowledge black and Asian experiences as a key part of British historiography. (2008, 36)

The erasure of the history of political opposition to inequality repeatedly strips people of their active, historical agency, characterising them as endlessly passive. Accusations of ‘political correctness’

compromise the ability to confront right-wing revisionists for whom the fact of Britain as an island of migration, unstable identities and four nations, is best ignored.

When the inside looks in on itself it is haunted by the idea that a more representative history will diminish it in some way. Kevin Guyan, blogging about the project *Drawing over the Colour Line*,³ which explores the forgotten history of the black and Asian presence in the creative and intellectual life of the Bloomsbury area of London, anticipates this response noting:

Some visitors have questioned the purpose of the exhibition and the political motivation for attempting to expand people's image of Bloomsbury. As I see it, it is not an attempt to evict Virginia Woolf, Lytton Strachey and John Maynard Keynes from their associations with Bloomsbury and replace them with a new assortment of characters but instead to complicate this image and suggest that, as was the case with areas like Soho, there was an equally cosmopolitan presence in early 20th Century Bloomsbury. (Guyan 2013)

If heritage cultures could articulate these anxious responses to the outside – something played out individually, collectively, institutionally and nationally – it would become a less onerous task to mainstream 'other' histories. Fear manifests itself in hysterical responses, apologetic disclaimers about power relations, defensive protecting of territory and the seeking out of the 'other' in ways that conform to the established boundary between inside and out. It also points to the overwhelming anxiety there is about honestly confronting the impact of the histories of empire internationally, nationally, domestically and psychically. Schwarz again:

Memory brings the past into the present, but does so under its own terms. If the events of the past are experienced as peculiarly difficult, silence and unspeakability may continue long into the future and, as we know from the current literature on trauma, they may only come to be recognized for what they are much later in time. (2011, 13)

Waterton (2010, 155), in her analysis of the visual representations used to promote heritage in England, unpacks the symbols that tie it to an elite, white, middle-class but importantly notes that: 'Nonetheless, this understanding of heritage is presented as a consensual past, such that heritage touristic places become ideological spaces within which experiences are presented as conflict-free, sanitised, focussed on leisure and predominantly family orientated'. This is precisely why the troublesome 'other' must be placed outside of this – in the space marked community, engagement, inclusion, diversity or new audiences. The very presence of difference marks those spaces as contested and conflictual. Here then may be the spaces where it is possible to map the repression of memory and wilful, anxious forgetting. Outside identities must be accounted for, labelled, made visible and subjected to stern, disciplinary regimes. Richard Appignanesi's point about managing the 'other' within seems increasingly relevant. He notes:

We can understand cultural diversity as a sort of foreign policy intended for domestic application. Perhaps this way of looking at it will bring strikingly home to us the question: why is there an officially differentiated category of diverse cultures for some citizens who are undeniably in the fabric of British society? Some of us in Britain are being cast as outsiders who require a domestically engineered foreign policy. (2010, 5)

Placing the heritage of the outsider within as 'out there' banishes something potentially fearful to another dimension. However, as we know, the repressed has the unfortunate habit of returning (Dyson 1995).

Outside looking in

In March of 2015 I went to Tate Britain to see an exhibition called *Spaces of Black Modernism: London 1919–39*, part of the *Drawing over the Colour Line* project mentioned above that explored 'the experiences and interactions of people from diverse ethnic backgrounds in London's art world between the wars' (Tate 2015). The narrative on Tate Britain's website continues:

In the inter-war period, cosmopolitan networks of artists, activists, writers and artists' models in London helped shape the cultural and political identity of the city. The studios, art colleges and social clubs of Chelsea, Bloomsbury and Soho became places of trans-national exchange. *Spaces of Black Modernism* draws together paintings, sculpture, photographs and archival material from Tate's collection with others loaned from public and private collections. It follows the interactions between artists such as John Banting, Edward Burra, Jacob Epstein,

Barbara Ker-Seymer, Ronald Moody, Glyn Philpot and Matthew Smith with others including the writers Claude McKay and Una Marson, the poet and political activist Nancy Cunard, the model 'Sunita' (Amina Peerbhoy) and the singer Elisabeth Welch. (Tate 2015)

The exhibition challenged the received wisdom about the black presence in Britain as a post-war phenomenon, and invited audiences to redraw the historical geography of the political, artistic and cultural life of the capital. The characters who inhabited Bloomsbury came alive in this room, reminding us that the most interesting artistic, cultural and intellectual movements occur through encounters across barriers of class, gender, race, sexuality and other forms of difference. This exhibition therefore captured crucial aspects of black heritage in Britain – the existence of agency and differing kinds of dialogue between those who find themselves categorised as different from each other (Tulloch 2014). These aspects of black heritage in Britain are articulated by curators, project workers, academics and community activists seeped in the material culture, historical literature and theoretical frameworks that are necessary to understand the wider contexts of these histories and the dialogues they can establish between past and present. They differentiate themselves from hastily cobbled together projects serving someone's diversity agenda.

However, as I walked around it I couldn't help wondering what would happen to this knowledge once the exhibition was over. Would it become lodged in curatorial memory so that future exhibitions on the period could recall it, or would another generation happen upon this world through specialist research on black London in another twenty years' time? The question of how to embed or move from the margin to the core needs to reflect on how curatorial memory can be sustained if people who are experts in this field do not have full-time, permanent jobs within the heritage sector. All the theoretical reflection from heritage and museology about how to change the relationship is redundant unless there are opportunities for experts in these fields to have power over heritage representations and a space to vocalise how they can negotiate anxieties over the loss of white and class authority. Again the binary of 'inside/outside' operates to make expertise on black heritage in Britain not something that every self-respecting national cultural institution should have, but something that can be bought in to fulfil an occasional commitment to diversity.

The axis of inside/outside does not easily facilitate an exploration of the histories figured in *Spaces of Black Modernism*, any more than it can accommodate the mundane presence of black Victorians presented in the exhibition *Black Chronicles II*, curated by Autograph (ABP) and focussed on nineteenth century and early twentieth century Britain. The introduction says:

Drawing on the metaphor of the chronicle the exhibition presents over 200 photographs, the majority of which have never been exhibited or published before. As a curated body of work, these photographs present new knowledge and offer different ways of seeing the black subject in Victorian Britain, and contribute to an ongoing process of redressing persistent 'absence' within the historical record. (Autograph [ABP] 2014)

This exhibition with its myriad of images of people of Asian, Caribbean and African descent who occupied Victorian Britain makes one wonder what would happen to those people who shout 'political correctness' at any attempt to confront this history. And what would they think about the subjects in them – many confident and poised in front of the camera exuding their full humanity even under the colonial gaze.

Conclusion

The inside/outside paradigm may appear to be a pragmatic means to facilitate good work in the sector, but by serving its own, mostly unspoken, agenda it can ensure that the cultural heritage of outsiders remains outside. It often prevents exploring the centrality of the politics of difference and the exclusionary 'whiteness' of the cultural heritage deemed to be normal or mainstream. It also releases the inside of its obligations to interrogate the role the outside plays in the formulation of the inside. Through it all sorts of identities have fallen through the cracks and diminished our understanding of the histories of the cultural landscapes many of us grew up in.

Heritage discourses order and create identities on the outside, rather than simply giving voice to the historically marginalised ‘out there’. Organisational categories are imposed upon the outsider, yet institutions are surprised when people express their discomfort with them. One’s otherness must be performed in the appropriate way. As Homi Bhabha notes:

Terms of cultural engagement, whether antagonistic or affiliative, are produced performatively. The representation of difference must not be hastily read as the reflection of a *pre-given* ethnic or cultural traits set in the fixed tablet of tradition. The social articulation of difference, from the minority perspective, is a complex, on-going negotiation that seeks to authorize cultural hybridities that emerge in moments of historical transformation. (1994, 2)

To move forward we have to find space for the nuance of hybridities, the complexities of the politics of difference, and be able to critique homogenising notions of ‘community’. Attention should be paid to how the inside/outside boundary is strengthened and reconfigured within, rather than in spite of, languages of inclusion and diversity. By privileging some outsider narratives and containing others, heritage culture signals, to those who enter to participate, which parts of their cultural identity to check at the door and which to foreground. As participation is usually based on the idea of promoting anti-racism, tolerance, dignity or giving voice to marginalised peoples, the pressure to brush over the complexities of subjectivity is immense. However this pressure must be resisted even if it is presented as a ‘first step’ towards genuine cultural democracy. Discourses about outsiders could easily be universalised as applicable to all even if the effects of different forms of violence, oppression and exclusion are obviously experienced in specific ways by different groups, as are the cultures of resistance and solidarity they produce.

Heritage practices leave many citizens untethered from historical context, disconnected from past political struggles, forced into suffocating categories and denied the resources to make sense of their place in the contemporary world. Rather than remaining fragmented and frustrated, though, people all over the globe find the means to express their heritage in all its messy complexity. As the poet and activist Lorde (1984, 137) said; ‘if I didn’t define myself for myself, I would be crunched into other people’s fantasies for me and eaten alive’. If outsider thinking, captured so insightfully by Lorde, could genuinely determine the theories and practices of the inside, things could change very quickly. The space to talk honestly about what is at stake for all of us if the outside is in may help counter the fears that come with any power shift. If we could meet in solidarity rather than duty the wall could come tumbling down.

Notes

1. Even on the very basic level of recruitment there has been slow progress. For example, the Museums Association (December 2015) reports; ‘ACE (Arts Council England) announces £2.6m fund to tackle lack of diversity’, noting that: ‘Figures show museums are behind arts organisations in efforts to become more diverse’. Accessed December 10, 2015 from http://www.museumsassociation.org/museums-journal/news/07122015-diversity-figures-change-makers?dm_i=2VBX,4JG1,27MFCX,D8HW,1
2. See the battle fought over the removal of black Crimean nurse Mary Seacole from the UK national curriculum. Muir, H. 2013. “Why is Gove Trashing Mary Seacole?” *The Guardian*. Accessed March 31, 2015. <http://www.theguardian.com/education/2013/jan/06/gove-mary-seacole-black-florence-nightingale>
3. The project *Drawing over the Colour line*, explores the arts and cosmopolitan politics of London from 1919 (the year of race riots in many parts across the country) and 1939 and is being researched by University College London’s (UCL) Equiano Centre. Accessed March 31, 2015 from http://www.ucl.ac.uk/equianocentre/Drawing_Over_the_Colour_Line.html

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