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## **Towards a history and politics of diasporas and migration: a grounded spatial approach**

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### **Introduction**

On 21 April this year the Arts and Humanities Research Council<sup>1</sup> launched its first autonomous strategic research programme, on 'Diasporas, Migration and Identities'. The event took place at 19 Princelet Street in Spitalfields in London's East End.<sup>2</sup>

For those who do not know this place, let me introduce it. The simplest thing to say is that it is the 'Museum of Immigration and Diversity' but to call it that would erase, or at least not reveal, the history and politics of the place; it would solidify its identity, harden its form and function, even narrow its possibilities. The notion of a 'museum', despite the heterogeneity of places that fall into this category, tends to suggest an official institution, one that contains artefacts of historical significance, one from which we can learn about a time, place, group, culture, issue or even an individual. It is generally a place whose identity we agree about. But when does a building constitute a museum, what struggles are gone through to make it such, how and when does it acquire such a status?

At its most basic level, 19 Princelet Street is, or rather was, a 'house'.<sup>3</sup> It dates from 1719 when it was built as one of a pair by one Samuel Worrall. Furthermore, judging from its most public contemporary face – its website – it is also a 'charity', or, at least, it is the focus of one.<sup>4</sup> The Spitalfields Centre is a registered charity that was formed with the aim of preserving the house (a Grade II listed building) and developing therein a permanent exhibition about the 'many diverse peoples and cultures that created our society'.<sup>5</sup> And indeed, it has developed an exhibition.<sup>6</sup> You can see it if you visit the museum. So, house; charity; exhibition: this is what we know of 19 Princelet Street from the menu of its website. But this tells us very little indeed.

I shall return to 19 Princelet Street a little later, after saying something about the Diasporas, Migration and Identities programme that was launched there and introducing the spatial methodology that I have developed in recent years and applied to several cases (to the left hand (Knott, 2005), and two English public sector organisations).<sup>7</sup> My aim in these studies has been to understand more about the relationship between religion and contemporary secularity, in short to employ a spatial approach to break open the secular and to learn more about its discourses and values. However, I shall use this same spatial approach here to interrogate some of the contemporary

discourses and values associated with immigration and diversity and its heritage as they are revealed through a single place, 19 Princelet Street.

### **The AHRC Diasporas, Migration and Identities Programme**

'Diasporas, Migration and Identities' was the first autonomous research programme to be established by the Arts and Humanities Research Council; 'Landscape and Environment' is its second (both of which offer significant potential for colleagues in cultural geography).<sup>8</sup> The themes of these strategic programmes emerged and were tested in extensive discussions, working groups, periods of consultation and pre-programme seminars within AHRC and its arts and humanities subject communities. AHRC was keen to invest what to it was substantial money in programmes on themes that had the support of these communities, motivated them, had the potential for future development and the possibility of engagement with a wider public and with stakeholder bodies (including government, the cultural and heritage sectors, cultural industries, and community and voluntary agencies).

But why 'Diasporas, Migration and Identities'? Surely it had been done already? ESRC had concluded its 'Transnational Communities' programme and recently begun another on 'Identities and Social Action'. But, as Robin Cohen, renowned scholar of diasporas (1997) – said at the programme launch, the future of research on these matters lies in the examination of diasporic consciousness, subjectivity and representation, the narratives, beliefs and performances of migrant populations, and in the cultures of cosmopolitanism. It is pretty clear that, for all the previous social scientific research, the British public and its representative bodies in government and the media continue to have a rather narrow, short-term and impoverished view when it comes to issues of immigration, asylum-seeking and cultural diversity. When these become matters of public concern, for example at the time of a general election, it is fear, ignorance and arrogance that come to the fore, and statistical, economic and social issues that generally get discussed. The historical background, the cultural and linguistic differences and their associated discourses and values – not least of all those associated with majority culture – are insufficiently understood and engaged with the grim rhetoric of an immigration problem reported to be spiralling out of control. There is plenty of work to be done within the arts and humanities on these issues, and a great need for such research to illumine current thinking. Not that all such research should be focused on our immediate situation: the long durée of population migration and the experience of migration and diasporas in other times and places offer an invaluable context and comparisons. And not that any artificial boundary should be erected between the arts and humanities and the social sciences on these matters.

So, what form does the programme take?<sup>9</sup> Running for five years from January 2005 to the end of 2009, it will fund large collaborative projects, workshops and networks, and will support the research of individuals with small grants, as well as engaging postgraduate students, and – through a further series of seminars – other interested scholars and those from beyond the academy. It does not seek to narrow diasporas, migration and their

associated identities either to any particular definitions or to specific questions that need answering. Rather it offers a thematic map of the terrain based on those areas that colleagues we consulted in the pre-programme stage deemed to be at the leading edge of current research or were held to be in urgent need of study. The themes – and you will find them discussed in some detail in the annex to the Programme Specification – are these:

- migration, settlement and diaspora: modes, stages and forms;
- representation, performance and discourse;
- languages and linguistic change;
- subjectivity, emotion and identity;
- objects, practices and places;
- beliefs, values and laws.

Of course, we do not expect to fund everything, but we thought it was important in the first of AHRC's strategic programmes to adopt an inclusive approach and to select projects for funding on the basis of quality and fit with the programme priorities (see Programme Specification). The Commissioning Panel will, however, be attentive to the need to fund a coherent programme of research that involves scholars from a wide range of disciplines and fields, and that offers scope for trans-disciplinary discussion.

### **A spatial methodology**

The subject matter of diasporas, migration and identities is close to my own scholarly interests, first, because my earliest research was on the religious organisation and practices of migrant Hindus and later on religion, ethnicity and identity more generally, and, secondly, because in recent years I have been developing a spatial approach to the study of religion and contemporary secularity. The *raison d'être* of such an approach is what it can offer in terms of the in-depth analysis of particular places and their inter-connection both diachronically and synchronically, discursively and socially with others. We may ask, 'Are there any places (whether bodies, things, buildings, communities, cities) that, when examined spatially, do not have something to reveal about processes of migration and/or consciousness of diaspora?' I would suggest that information about diasporas and migration and their associated identities inheres in all types of places, possibly in all places. Furthermore, the very ideas of 'diaspora' and 'migration' are spatial – it hardly seems necessary to state this in this setting. 'Diaspora', 'to sow over', combines two metaphors, of horticulture and space (Cohen 1997). It conveys the idea of a scattered people no longer physically proximate but linked perhaps by their genetic relationship, or their origins in a single place, or even just their consciousness of these things. 'Migration' denotes movement from one place to another, of people, things, ideas. No such movement can be divorced from its spatial consequences and effects, both on the place left and the one entered, even on places passed through.

In the time that's left I shall briefly explain this spatial methodology, and put it to work on 19 Princelet Street, before drawing some tentative conclusions.

Unfortunately, I do not have time to tell you how I came to devise such a methodology, why locality, place and space began to interest me or the ways in which I have used this approach to date. I will just say that my journey took me through the territory of postmodern geography back into the socio-spatial theories of Lefebvre, Foucault and de Certeau. Although I was not trained as a geographer I have taken this journey into your discipline with respect and seriousness; it has led me to study with some care not only texts on the geography of religion but also on socio-cultural theories of space and place and geographies of difference. But, of course, I remain an interloper, someone who has transgressed the boundary between disciplines. I am genuinely interested, though, to find out whether a spatial approach devised for one purpose – examining the location of religion in secular spaces (Knott, 2005) – can free itself of that purpose and be put to work to different ends. I think it can, but this remains to be seen and today is not the occasion to find out.

What I shall refer to here as a ‘spatial methodology’ is in fact an analytical process rather than a set of methods. With its origins in socio-spatial theory, it is a way of closely examining a place by focusing on its spatial attributes.<sup>10</sup> This process involves a series of reflections that arise from my understanding of the notion of ‘space’,<sup>11</sup> as emerging from our embodiment, as multi-dimensional, having certain properties, aspects and dynamics. I shall describe these reflections as stages, but we can’t fully separate them and they need not be invoked in the order in which I shall present them. I realise that this methodological systematisation of various ideas on social space may raise some questions about the relationship between theory, methodology and application, and also about my interpretation of the ideas of key theorists, but I only have time to discuss briefly those that have been most pertinent for thinking about the Museum of Immigration and Diversity at 19 Princelet Street.<sup>12</sup>

- The body within space;
- The dimensions of space;
- The properties of space;
- The aspects of space.

The first principle of this spatial approach is the foundational role of the body for our experience and representation of space and – because spatial metaphors are central for cognition and representation (Lakoff and Johnson 1980, 1999) – for talking about our environment, the nature of our society and relationships, time and progress, the sacred, and, for our purposes, migration and cultural diversity.

The centrality of the body for social life and the cultural order which shapes us and with which we engage was recognised in different ways by Lefebvre and Foucault. In his conclusion to *The Production of Space* Lefebvre wrote that,

The whole of (social) space proceeds from the body, even though it so metamorphoses the body that it may forget it altogether – even though it may separate itself so radically from the body as to kill it. The genesis of a far-away order can be accounted for only on the basis of the order that is nearest to us – namely the order of the body. (1991, 405)

Whilst Lefebvre suggests that it is possible to forget the foundational nature of the body for social space Foucault implies that a similar act of forgetting can occur in relation to the body itself. More than the sum of its physical parts and biological processes, it is 'the place where the most minute and local social practices are linked up with the large scale organisation of power' (Dreyfus and Rabinow 1983, xxvi). It is the place where a cultural order plays itself out; it may become a representation of that order, and will certainly be conditioned and disciplined by it.

The first stage of this analytical process then is to look for signs of the body in a place: how has this place emerged from the body and its parts, what discourses of the body are at work within it, how are bodies used to maintain it and reproduce it? The second involves taking seriously what I have called the dimensions of space – Lefebvre called them 'fields' (1991, 11) – the physical, social and mental. Analysing each of these dimensions of a place first separately and then together – reconnecting them – constitutes the second stage. Robert Sack gave us a clear picture of this multi-dimensionality when he wrote of the place of a commodity,

... whether a dress or an automobile, [it] embodies social relations. It is produced and consumed under specific labor conditions and social contexts... A commodity contains elements of the natural world, because it is drawn from raw materials and becomes situated in physical space...[it] also contains elements from the realm of meaning, because cultures attach value or meaning to the objects they use or consume. (1992, 105)

A dress or a car, then, simultaneously envelops (to use Lefebvre's word) these three fields or dimensions of space. But places – whether dresses, cars or museums – gather together other things as well. They are the sum of their components, relations, interpretations and representations. In fact, this is one of the properties of space, its propensity to gather and configure.<sup>13</sup> I have drawn this idea of spatial properties from Foucault's essay 'Of Other Spaces' (Des espaces autres) (1986 [1967], 22-3) – though I am to blame for the term 'properties'; to Foucault these were ideas he had about the nature of contemporary space. Doreen Massey also drew on them in her work in the mid-1990s on the politics of space/time (1993, 155-6). In addition to configuration, these properties include extension, simultaneity and power. Extension conveys the sense of time flowing through space as well as the way in which places contain the traces of earlier times and regimes within them.<sup>14</sup> De Certeau's conceptions of spatial stratification and place as 'palimpsest' are helpful in conveying what it means in a spatial analysis to consider the extensive property of a place.

The revolutions of history, economic mutations, demographic mixtures lie in layers within [a stratified place], and remain there, hidden in customs, rites, and spatial practices. The legible discourses that formerly articulated them have disappeared, or left only fragments in language. This place, on its surface, seems to be a collage. In reality, in its depth, it is ubiquitous. A piling up of heterogeneous places. Each one, like a deteriorating page of a book, refers to a different mode of territorial unity, of socio-economic distribution, of political conflicts, and of identifying symbolism... (1984, 201)

In addition to the extensive, diachronic nature of a single place, there are its synchronic interconnections with other sites, both those of a similar nature (other left hands, other museums, other diasporic communities), and those co-existing sites, both real and imagined, to which our place is connected by the movement of people and capital, the flow of communications and ideas. 'Our epoch is one in which space takes for us the form of relations among sites', wrote Foucault (1986, 23); it is an epoch which stresses the spatial property of simultaneity.

And the final property, which Foucault did not trouble to identify directly in his essay because it was so central to his whole approach, is power, knowledge-power and social power. For Lefebvre, space was an arena of struggle. Without a space to produce and shape, ideas and beliefs, principles and values remain ephemeral and ungrounded. They lack 'an appropriate morphology' (Lefebvre 1991, 417), and, as Massey suggested, socially-constituted space is 'by its very nature full of power and symbolism, a complex web of relations of domination and subordination, of solidarity and co-operation' (1993, 156). And we will see these at work in a moment in the museum.

Analysing a place with these spatial properties in mind makes us aware of the dynamism of that place, and this is further underlined in the remaining stage of this analytical process, where the focus turns to those dialectical aspects theorised by Lefebvre in *The Production of Space* in which space is perceived, conceived and lived (1991, 33, 38-40). Most commonly referred to as 'spatial practice', 'representations of space' and 'spaces of representation',<sup>15</sup> these aspects provide a useful tool for thinking about how people experience the spaces they inhabit and – as agents – use and represent space. Scholars have applied it to a variety of locations, from Edmonton to Los Angeles, and from the promised lands of the Bible to the diasporic spaces in British-Caribbean religious experience.<sup>16</sup>

I shall resist giving a more in-depth account of the methodological value of these aspects as I have not used them directly in what follows (but see Knott 2005, chapters 2 and 9). Let me conclude this account of this methodology by reminding you of its principal features.

- The body within space  
Space proceeds from the body

Bodies are shaped by larger cultural and social spaces

- The dimensions of space -  
Physical  
Social  
Mental
- The properties of space -  
Configuration  
Extension  
Simultaneity  
Power
- The aspects of space -  
Spatial practice  
Representations of space  
Spaces of representation

As I have already suggested, this is a hermeneutical process of thinking deeply about the nature of a place from a number of spatial perspectives, and I shall apply it now to 19 Princelet Street. As time does not permit a thorough analysis, I have restricted myself solely to the dimensions and properties of the three overlapping 'spaces' I mentioned earlier that constitute 19 Princelet Street: 'house', 'charity' and 'exhibition'. I shall reflect in particular on the properties of configuration, extension, simultaneity and power as a means of beginning to understand this building as a representation of the history and politics of immigration and cultural diversity in Britain.

### **A spatial approach to 19 Princelet Street**

In *The Production of Space* Lefebvre stressed the importance of reconnecting the different fields (or dimensions) of space, and of not seeing the ways in which space was perceived, conceived and lived as entirely separate experiences. But he was obliged to differentiate and separate them in order to show the complexity and dynamism of social space, and, in developing his and other scholars' ideas about space into a tractable methodology, it is necessary to retain these divisions for operational purposes – even though to do so can be artificial and unhelpful at times. In my brief account, however, I will not draw repeated attention to the methodology at work.

#### **(a) House**

I shall concentrate on the house in its physical form, although I know that a house represents much more than that. 19 Princelet Street appears to the passer-by as a Georgian house opening directly onto the street.<sup>17</sup> Built in 1719 and occupied initially by a French master silk weaver, Peter Abraham Ogier,<sup>18</sup> and his family it was located in what became for a time an economically successful neighbourhood which benefited from the skill, hard work and prosperity of immigrant workers and from the religious persecution in France which had driven them out (Winder 2004, 78-90; Eade 2000, 126-

7). Domestic life and work were not separated; the workshop was on the site; there was a garden. Once the Ogier family moved on to finer premises elsewhere their place was taken by other weavers' families and the house divided and altered to suit their needs.<sup>19</sup> In later years, other artisans occupied the workshops, carvers and gilders, for example. A woman called Mary Ellen Hawkins ran an industrial school there, but the house remained substantially unchanged with Irish then Eastern European residents (*East End Life* 2005).

But the physical space behind the house frontage has more to reveal. Beyond the small house in what was once its garden is a large room that for nearly a century was a synagogue (Lichtenstein 1999). Acquired in 1869 by the Loyal United Friends Friendly society, a Jewish organisation, the land was developed to serve the religious needs of local Askenazim who had settled in the area following their migration from Poland, Lithuania and Russia.<sup>20</sup> The nineteenth century chandeliers and the Ark or *Aron Hakodesh*, where the Torah scrolls were once housed, remain, and the balcony once used by women worshippers lists the names of those who donated to the development and maintenance of the place.<sup>21</sup>

Two other rooms reveal more still, one beneath the synagogue which oral testimonies have confirmed was the site where 'anti-fascist meetings were held in the 1930s before the famous Battle of Cable Street... a meeting point for Jews fleeing Nazi Germany, and a place of sanctuary for the children whisked away from the continent on Kinder transport trains' (Brown 2003). Upstairs is the now structurally unsafe 'Rodinsky's room' (Lichtenstein and Sinclair 1999) where the untouched belongings of the reclusive Jewish caretaker, scholar and Kabbalist David Rodinsky were uncovered some eleven years after his disappearance in 1969.

The physical fabric of the house is now fragile, disintegrating and worn but, as Susie Symes, Executive Chair of the Spitalfields Centre trust, has said, echoing de Certeau (1984, 201), it is a 'palimpsest... a magical place that encapsulates in its very fabric... the story we are trying to tell' (Brown 2003).<sup>22</sup> Through this space have passed families from many of the ethnic populations that have contributed to the economic and social vitality of Spitalfields, and they have left their traces (Feldman and Stedman-Jones 1989; Eade 2000; Winder 2004). Like its more famous neighbour on the corner of Brick Lane and Fournier Street – which started life in 1742 as a French-speaking protestant church, became a Methodist chapel, then the Spitalfields Great Synagogue and Talmud school, becoming the Jamme Masjid for local Bengali Muslims in the 1980s (Eade 1996, 218-19; Riding 2003; *History International* 2004) – the house reflects the demographic, cultural and economic dynamism of the area.

#### (b) Charity

Falling into disrepair in the 1970s the house was brought to local attention in 1979 when the 'Spitalfields Centre for the Study of Minorities' was established as a charitable trust in order to purchase and preserve it – it was bought for

£150,000 in 1981 (Cunningham 2003).<sup>23</sup> Here we move from the physical to the social space that is 19 Princelet Street. It is a local Bangladeshi who is chiefly credited with having had the vision, energy and commitment necessary to realise its symbolic as well as historical potential. By the 1970s Spitalfields was becoming the centre for a growing immigrant population of Bangladeshis (though *lascars* or Bengali seaman had settled from the 1930s), many of whom found work in the garment industry located in those same premises which centuries earlier had seen Huguenot weavers, then Jewish tailors (Eade 2000, 128). Tassaduq Ahmed, a local Sylheti-born man who died in 2001, with Rabbi Hugo Gryn whose roots were in Eastern Europe, took the first steps to form a registered charitable trust that could take forward the work of turning a decaying building into a museum of immigration and diversity.<sup>24</sup> Apart from the necessary administrative work, these steps – and they continue to be taken by the current trustees and volunteers – have always been political; they have been about persuading people with social and political power and the money to invest that the history of a run-down terraced house in the East End has sufficient symbolic value to be more than a museum of local interest, to become as Lord Desai has suggested, Britain's 'Ellis Island' (Vij 2004; *East End Life* 2005), and as Ken Livingstone has said, 'Europe's first museum of immigration'.<sup>25</sup>

In a *Guardian* article in June 2003, the politics of this became only too clear when the Chief Executive of English Heritage was reported as saying 'We can't have museums for every Tom, Dick and Harry. We can't afford any more flops' (Gibbons 2003). The irony, of course, is that 19 Princelet Street was never intended to be a museum for 'Tom, Dick and Harry' but for a far more culturally diverse mix, symbolised by those who lived or worked in the house, but representing the population of the nation as a whole, the overwhelming majority of whom have migrants in their family trees (all of us, if we go back far enough). Having the audacity to create a space – a national institution – which evokes the complex immigration history and diversity of the British has met with a range of responses, with journalists from the world's leading newspapers, TV channels and radio stations airing the idea with zeal but those with the necessary financial resources for investment far more cautious.<sup>26</sup> Some say that it is precisely the multi-ethnic and multicultural character of the venture that dissuades them, and that it is easier to get financial backing for mono-cultural schemes (Cunningham 2003; Purves 2003), with many charitable trusts having the needs and claims of their own communities built into their terms of reference.

So, the struggle goes on beyond the physical space of the house to raise the necessary funds to shore it up, meanwhile it continues to open to the public on only a few days each year.<sup>27</sup> An interesting social space is created outside the property with hundreds of people queuing at a time to gain entry.<sup>28</sup> Between 7,000 and 10,000 people pass through the house by this means each year. And yet it is not an official museum at all but a dilapidated, unconventional, virtually bare space, brought to life by a few original features and an unusual exhibition, but chiefly by the volunteers who keep it going and render it meaningful to its visitors. These volunteers include professionals and students with public relations, administrative, cultural and fund-raising

skills, but chief among them are local children, from diverse ethnic backgrounds, many of whom act as guides (Vij 2004).

### (c) Exhibition

As a visitor to the house and its exhibition, 'Suitcases and Sanctuary',<sup>29</sup> one is instructed to 'Listen to the walls', and the fabric of the building does have a lot to say, as we have seen (though it does need intermediaries through which to speak – hence the guides). The other elements in the exhibition – which emerged in 2000 from work with 9 and 10 year olds from local schools as well as artists and poets – are few in number, the first to gain the attention of the visitor being a pile of old suitcases containing poems, stories and pictures. And as a visitor you can add to the pile yourself by filling in a card or luggage label with the details of the most recent arrival to your family, or what you would take with you if you had to leave home suddenly. You can join with children in imagining the trials of Irish people who had to leave their homes at the time of the Potato Famine or the hopes and ambitions of those who came from the Caribbean in the 1950s and '60s, or you can listen to old stories told in the kitchen where families from different places once cooked and ate.

This exhibition is not about exhibits or the communication of information via static labels or signs. It is an exhibition of narratives of migration and settlement – mental spaces – some more or less factual and historical, but most imagined.<sup>30</sup> Perhaps the most important 'exhibits', if we can call them that, are the unique moments that occur for each visitor to the museum: the encounter with one's own personal and family history of migration, and the opportunity to stand in an imaginative space of exile (...if you had to leave home suddenly...). These mental spaces extend backwards in time, but also outwards, encapsulating our living as well as our dead relatives and our recent journeys, encounters and current identities.

So, 19 Princelet Street is the configuration of these overlapping and simultaneous mental spaces, as well as its bricks and mortar, its listing 'at risk' with English Heritage, its charitable registration, and its volunteers and visitors.<sup>31</sup> It is the very antithesis of the typical national or regional museum in which history and knowledge, cultures and societies must be present through their physical remains, their relics. It is true that at Princelet Street generations of immigrants to Britain and their experiences are invoked, but through the voices of children, the imaginations and memories of visitors, and the deteriorating 'palimpsest' of the building itself. Funds are required not to make the museum more 'museum-like' but simply to make the building safe so that more people can be exposed to this type of evocative experience.

### **Towards a history and politics of immigration and cultural diversity**

19 Princelet Street is the envelope that contains all these historical and contemporary spaces – physical, social and mental – that I have only been able to hint at here. But it is neither sealed nor static, being connected outwardly and socially to its communities of interest, and mentally to political struggles over immigration, multiculturalism, and the historical formation and

definition of Britain and Britishness. As a social, mental and physical space it encapsulates the notion that, as a body, migrants constitute significant cultural capital in contemporary Britain; it demonstrates 'the political importance of diasporas' (Vertovec 2005).

Of course, an informed account of 19 Princelet Street and its struggle to become a symbol of the local history of immigration and settlement and a national celebration of cultural diversity – to become 'a museum' – does not require a spatial approach. No doubt other disciplines, theories and methods have much to contribute, including many insights unavailable to me. The virtue of a spatial approach, however, is its commitment to reconnecting 'fields', the physical, social and mental, and the disciplines associated with them. It is this same commitment to trans-disciplinarity that I hope will make the AHRC programme on 'Diasporas, Migration and Identity' more than the sum of its disciplinary parts. But that, as yet, remains to be seen.

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<sup>1</sup> The launch took place just six days before the change in status from ‘Research Board’ to ‘Research Council’ was celebrated with the launch of the Arts and Humanities Research Council at the British Museum.

<sup>2</sup> Unfortunately, I have not been able to verify the contents of this paper with the Chief Executive or trustees of 19 Princelet Street. An earlier version of the paper was sent and followed up, but no response was received. These are my own views and interpretations, though references to text and images from the website (<http://www.19princeletstreet.org.uk>) have been included where appropriate.

<sup>3</sup> See <http://www.19princeletstreet.org.uk/about.html>.

<sup>4</sup> See <http://www.19princeletstreet.org.uk/charity.html>.

<sup>5</sup> See <http://www.19princeletstreet.org.uk/charity.html>.

<sup>6</sup> See <http://www.19princeletstreet.org.uk/exhibition.html>.

<sup>7</sup> See publications by Knott and Franks forthcoming in association with the AHRC project ‘Locating religion in the fabric of the secular: An experiment in two public sector organisations’.

<sup>8</sup> AHRC also runs several research programmes in association with other research councils (‘Cultures of Consumption’, ‘Design for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century’, see <http://www.ahrc.ac.uk>).

<sup>9</sup> For more information on the AHRC Diasporas, Migration and Identities programme, see <http://www.ahrc.ac.uk/dmi>, in particular the Programme Specification. The Programme now has its own website: <http://www.diasporas.ac.uk>.

<sup>10</sup> By ‘place’ I mean a part of dynamic, multi-dimensional space (Knott, 2005, 29-33). Places, whatever their nature – be they things, objects, persons or locations large and small – are necessarily interconnected.

<sup>11</sup> ‘Space’ is a concept which allows us to talk, write and share ideas about one aspect of human and social experience, the experience of our situatedness vis-à-vis the body, others and the world about us. It is a concept with a contested history. When I use the word ‘space’ – henceforth without quotation marks – I mean the concept or notion of space not the phenomenon of space.

<sup>12</sup> See Chapter 5 (Knott, 2005) for a full presentation of this methodology, also Knott (2005a).

<sup>13</sup> It is Heidegger who is most commonly associated with the idea that places hold or gather things together (*versammlung*) (1993, 355).

<sup>14</sup> See Peter Berger in his essay on portrait painting from 1971, in Gregory and Urry (1985, 29-30).

<sup>15</sup> Stewart (1995, 610) and Shields (1999, 161 and 165) prefer the translation “spaces of representation” to Nicholson-Smith’s “representational space” (Nicholson-Smith was the translator of Lefebvre’s 1974 book *La Production de l’espace* into English).

<sup>16</sup> See Shields (1991), Soja (1996), Lied (2003), Chivallon (2001).

<sup>17</sup> For a dynamic view of vernacular architecture in Spitalfields, including the house at 19 Princelet Street, see History International’s ‘Global view’ (2004),

<http://www.19princeletstreet.org.uk/press/041209HistoryInternationalN.html>.

<sup>18</sup> See <http://www.19princeletstreet.org.uk/about.html>.

<sup>19</sup> See <http://www.19princeletstreet.org.uk/about.html>.

<sup>20</sup> See <http://www.19princeletstreet.org.uk/about.html>.

<sup>21</sup> See photograph, <http://www.19princeletstreet.org.uk/openings.html>.

<sup>22</sup> For a further illustration of a Spitalfields ‘palimpsest’, see Peter Ackroyd’s account of ‘St Mary’s Spital’, where lie the stratified remains of buildings from Roman to Victorian times and where ‘the levels of the centuries are all compact, revealing the historical density of London’ (2000, 778).

<sup>23</sup> See <http://www.19princeletstreet.org.uk/charity.html>.

<sup>24</sup> See the obituary in <http://www.19princeletstreet.org.uk/tassaduq.html>.

<sup>25</sup> See <http://www.19princeletstreet.org.uk/openings.html>.

<sup>26</sup> See the many press reports, interviews and films about the museum, on <http://www.19princeletstreet.org.uk/press.html>.

<sup>27</sup> See <http://www.19princeletstreet.org.uk/openings.html>.

<sup>28</sup> Except for special occasions, only some 40 visitors are allowed into the house at any one time.

<sup>29</sup> See <http://www.19princeletstreet.org.uk/exhibition.html>. The exhibition was supported with a grant from the Paul Hamlyn Foundation (Cunningham 2003). See photograph in Riding (2003), <http://www.19princeletstreet.org.uk/press/nyt030611.html>.

<sup>30</sup> For discussion of new museums and exhibitions of migration, globalization and diversity, see Macdonald and Fyfe (1996), Paine (2000) and Kong (2003).

<sup>31</sup> 19 Princelet Street was listed ‘at risk’ by English Heritage in 2002, <http://www.19princeletstreet.org.uk/news.html>.