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The discursive construction of moral agents among successful economic migrants in Elephant & Castle, London

by

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The discursive construction of moral agents among successful economic migrants in Elephant & Castle, London

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Abstract

This article examines the migratory experiences and the perceptions of community reported in interviews with two successful Spanish-speaking Latin American retailers based in Elephant and Castle (Southwark, London) in light of the regeneration of the area and the displacement of many of the principally Latin American small businesses and local residents therein.

A general discourse analysis of how they construct themselves as moral migrant agents relative to their co-ethnics at such a critical moment highlights that one of the norms on which this community appears to be based holds that the best action is one that maximizes personal gain, and that community relations are primarily forged by the personally beneficial consequences of members' actions towards themselves and one another.

Although the interviewees migrated for primarily economic reasons and the area revitalization is likely to be financially beneficial to them, at least in the short-term, the socioeconomic threats faced by many of its members would, in theory, act as a catalyst for community solidification. Instead, a picture of a fragmented community emerges.

The article contributes to our understanding of a relatively unexplored ethnic community within the diversity of London by reporting one-sided perceptions of the norms on which it is based.

*“First they came for the Socialists, and I did not speak out—
Because I was not a Socialist.
Then they came for the Trade Unionists, and I did not speak out—
Because I was not a Trade Unionist.
Then they came for the Jews, and I did not speak out—
Because I was not a Jew.
Then they came for me—and there was no one left to speak for
me.”*

Martin Niemöller

1. Introduction

Research on Latin Americans in London (circa 145,000) has pointed out the diversity of the social group (McIlwaine et al. 2011, McIlwaine 2016) in terms of the geographical origins of its members, similarities and differences in their motivations for migrating, levels of education and cultural practices, such as religion, linguistic diversity - primarily varieties of Spanish and Portuguese - and leisure activities, including eating preferences and forms of entertainment. Even though most of these aspects might favor the creation of strong links amongst members within diaspora, a general lack of solidarity, as illustrated by talk of *chismes* (‘malicious gossip’) and *envidia* (‘jealousy’) among Spanish-speaking Latin Americans in London (e.g. Cock 2011) has been documented. This suggests a somewhat fragmented social group, which leads us to question the sometimes uncritical scholarly use of the label ‘community’ (Walby 2001) to refer to Latin Americans in general, without taking into account the different locations and scales at which Latin Americans enter into a dialogic relationship in which they are differentially situated (Yuval-Davies 2013). Indeed, such positional nuances are what allow us to make sense of the seemingly conflicting ideologies,

perceptions and definitions of membership offered by the accounts generated in the interviews we discuss. In this paper we focus on the views of two economically successful retailers in Elephant & Castle (E&C) as articulated in their interactions with the researchers against the backdrop of the area's urban transformation.

E&C is a recognized Latin American enclave in South London, where the clustering of migrant ethnic businesses since the 1980s has transformed the area into an important space for socialization, networking and economic opportunities for Spanish-speaking Latin Americans in the city (Cock 2011, Márquez-Reiter and Martín-Rojo 2015, Román-Velásquez 1999). For that reason, the revitalization of the area, in particular the demolishing of the shopping center will result in the displacement of the businesses currently located in the mall. In this article we focus on the accounts of two Latin American retailers whose businesses are located, not in the shopping center but across one of the adjacent main roads: the Walworth Road. Their businesses will therefore not be negatively affected and are in fact likely to prosper given the reduced number of competitors, at least in the short term. This paper analyses how the two retailers construct themselves as Latin American community leaders, business pioneers and exemplary models of hard work who, by drawing on material and symbolic conditions (e.g. ownership of pioneer ethnic radio stations, extensive experience working for and with Latin Americans in London), vest themselves with the necessary legitimacy with which to judge the actions of others. In other words, they position themselves as moral agents in accordance with the normative expectations (Kádár & Márquez Reiter 2015) of the primarily economic Latin American migrant community with whom they interact on a daily basis.

2. Background

The term Latin American¹ embraces a common geographical origin and a multiplicity of national, ethnic and linguistic identities. Contrary to previous multicultural patterns in the UK, where ethnic groups tended to live in small communities within the city (cf. Vertovec 2007), Spanish-speaking Latin Americans are residentially dispersed across London, with the presence of Latin enclaves in the city (de Cock 2011, Román Velázquez 1999). One of these enclaves is the Elephant & Castle (Southwark) shopping center and surrounding areas. It represents one of the emblematic symbols of *Latinidad* in London's culturally diverse landscape and constitutes the backdrop against which this article is written. Essentially, the currently primarily Latin American composed shopping center will be imminently demolished, along with the surrounding stores to the north of the Walworth Road, which runs alongside the current building. Those on the south side of the Walworth Road will be unaffected, at least for now. The shopping center hosts circa 12 stores featuring some well-known UK supermarket chains, pharmacies and discount variety stores, a small number of other ethnic stores, such as a Chinese and a Polish supermarket, as well as an Arabic food stall. These ethnic stores are relatively new compared with many of the Latin American small businesses in the mall, such as *La Bodeguita Restaurant* and its sister coffee shop, Lucy's hairdressers, an Ecuadorian restaurant and a general newsagents. According to the fieldwork we conducted in the area (see section 3), they were sublet by Latin American lessees as soon as the prospect of the mall's demolition and the displacement of businesses loomed large.

¹ Latin Americans have recently achieved official recognition as an ethnic group in four of the London boroughs where they are mainly concentrated (i.e. Southwark, Lambeth, Islington and Hackney - 2012, 2013 and 2015, respectively). Recognition has brought important changes for the local populations such as access to local services facilitating political representation.

While the redevelopment of E&C is likely to improve the area's infrastructure and overall reputation by helping to satisfy London's incessant demand for (investment) properties, ongoing research on Spanish-speaking Latin Americans in London (Márquez Reiter 2013, Márquez Reiter and Martín Rojo 2015, Román Velázquez 2014) has pointed out the threats that it poses to the well-being of the relatively large number of Latin American businesses, local residents and visitors. Román-Velazquez and Hill (2016) mapped the area and identified around 96 Latin American small businesses distributed across the shopping center and the surrounding areas. This is indicative of the Latin American presence in the borough of Southwark and brings to the fore the significance of this group in entrepreneurial activities in this part of London. As explained by Roman Velázquez and Hill (2016), "...Southwark is characterised by a high concentration of migrant entrepreneurial activity, reflecting the ethnic diversity of the population (circa 300,000), over 60% of which are of minority ethnic background (London Borough Southwark, May 2014)" (p.14). Latin Americans constitute circa 9% of the population of the Borough (ibid: 14)

Given that a new space in the city has not yet been found and that the community at E&C feels their voice has not been heard, the proposed regeneration of the area and that of the shopping center represent yet another form of displacement for many Latin American and other migrants therein. The revitalization of the area thus has the potential for undermining the socioeconomic livelihood of the group and, for undoing the intra- and inter-group links that have been forged by many of the Latin American migrants who settled here.

For Latin Americans, E&C is not just a place for consumption. It is an important space for socialization and a gateway to social integration. E&C serves both an instrumental and a social purpose. It is one of the primary urban spaces in the city where Latin Americans meet other Latin Americans, other migrants and locals; a space in which multiple and often

contested identities are constructed (Cock 2011; Román Velázquez 1999). It represents a place in the city where those who cannot communicate fluently in English find important information in Spanish and those who can speak English and Spanish often use as an additional network resource (Alba et al 2002). The planned regeneration of E&C, especially that of the commercial center and the surrounding areas, may thus sever the brokering chains that lead to the socioeconomic integration of (newly arrived) Latin Americans such as secondary migrants from Spain, and the inter-community connections that have been established.

2. Conceptual framework

In this paper we report how two successful economic migrants make sense of the notion of the Latin American community and construct themselves as legitimate members of it at such a critical moment. They do this with what at first seems to indicate little empathy towards others whose businesses will be negatively affected by the urban transformation currently under way. In this process, these participants offer us a lens through which to explore the values and perceptions upon which their legitimacy is based and their situated views on the community. Indeed, the notion of community is discursively (co)constructed through categorization processes that inform how members position themselves and the others, as well as how they respond to categorizations made by the interviewers and found in the wider receiving society. Critical moments, such as the regeneration of E&C and the imminent displacement of many of its businesses, cause social groups to reconsider their identity and (re)position themselves in order to make sense of their new situation (Block, 2007), as well as to develop networks of solidarity (cf. Peró, 2011). Indeed, such sensitive circumstances generally result in the discursive (re)construction and (re)negotiation of identities “through discourses available to individuals at a particular point in time and place” (Pavlenko and

Blackledge, 2004: 14). Discourse and identity are mutually constitutive in at least two ways. On the one hand, it is through communicative resources such as categorizations and language choice, that identities are constructed and negotiated. On the other hand, ideologies of language and identity underline the ways in which individuals use communicative resources to display their identities and to evaluate the use of such resources by others.

These two retailers discursively construct this perilous moment as an opportunity for some, and a loss for others, based on the personal benefits that can be gained or not. They do this by appealing to the morality that ought to permeate community relations and to market forces that, naturally, are beyond their control and for which they are not responsible. This allows us to observe what these participants regard as normative in the social formation of the Latin American community in E&C and possibly also in London generally from their own particular positioning, as articulated in situated interactions with the researchers. Thus, the revitalization of E&C and the imminent displacement of many Latin Americans provide us with a unique opportunity to capture intra-community relations and related tensions.

McIlwaine (2011) and Cock (2011) note that besides their diverse nationalities, ethnicities and cultures, Latin Americans are referred to as a “community” in both research and social discourses (see, for example, headlines such as “How London's Latin Americans are fighting back”, *The Guardian*, 22/06/2012). Even though the definition of Latin Americans as a community is debatable, we argue that Spanish-speaking Latin Americans constitute a community in the sense that they share ethnic and cultural affinities where language use plays a central role (Márquez-Reiter and Martín-Rojo, 2015). Importantly, the notion of a Latin American community emerges in their interactions with us as researchers. This was voiced by all the retailers and non-retailers we interacted with and in our fieldwork, particularly in the context of having achieved ethnic recognition. The latter entailed the association of Latin

Americans at a political level with a sense of a shared identity and belonging to a given a locale at a particular time scale. Indeed, our fieldwork and the interactions we report in this paper indicate that ethnicity, irrespective of any fundamental bonds that may or may not have once existed between members of the group, and a shared language are at the heart of their notion of community when a common good that is beneficial for all or most of its members can be obtained.

MacMillan and Chavis (1986) define community as "a feeling that members have of belonging, a feeling that members matter to one another and to the group, and a shared faith that members' needs will be met through their commitment to be together" (p. 9). Thus, the authors' understanding of 'community' is based on an experiential rather than structural formation. It rests on four elements: membership (boundaries, emotional safety, a sense of belonging and identification, personal investment, a common symbol system), influence, integration and fulfillment of needs and shared emotional connection. In the case of the Latin American community in E&C, this can be observed in a common origin insofar as its members hail from the Americas, and have a shared symbol system including language. Influence and fulfillment of needs are represented by their needs for further visibility (McIlwaine et al 2011, McIlwaine 2016) and the position enjoyed by the leaders of the community, in this case retailers, who act as gatekeepers (Márquez Reiter 2013) between the community, whose members typically occupy elementary positions in the labor market such as cleaning and catering, and the outside world. Finally, emotional connection is observed in their shared cultural capital, beliefs, experiences and trajectories in diaspora, and status insofar as their (ir)regularity², and lack of English language skills are concerned. As we argue in this paper, it is also observed by the moral values that at least some of them hold (see

² Although Latin Americans may enter the UK legally (e.g. on a student visa), they may subsequently lapse into irregularity by overstaying their visa or working in contravention of their conditions of entry (see, for example, Datta et al 2009).

Section 3) and their attitudes towards themselves, the situations they report, and other members within the group and the receiving society in the situated communicative arena of the interviews we report on.

The examination of the interviews is based on a general discourse analysis of the life stories (Atkinson 1983) that emerge therein. The analysis draws on the deployment of linguistic resources such as categorizations, identity negotiation (Pavlenko and Blackledge 2004) - through the use of small stories (Bamberg and Georgakopoulou 2008), which can be about recent ('today, this morning') or still unfolding or hypothetical events, and notions from conversational analysis such as assessments (Pomerantz 1984), extreme case formulations (Pomerantz 1986) and (non) affiliative laughter (Glenn and Holt 2013) as supplementary elements to capture the participants' (re)positioning in light of interventions which they regard as interpersonally delicate (Márquez Reiter et al 2016).

Unlike prior research on the Spanish-speaking Latin American community in London primarily anchored in social science (e.g. McIlwaine et al. 2011, McIlwaine 2016), this study follows an interpretivist perspective. It uses the voices of the interviewees as a lens through which to explore the way they discursively construct relationships between Latin Americans in London, and looks at what this tells us about their notion of a Latin American community, including their role in it based on the moral order they invoke. The paper thus contributes to raising the profile of a still largely unexplored ethnic group in London relative to others, by discussing some of the principles on which the social formation of the group is based at a specific socio-historical juncture.

3. Data collection

The data for this paper were gathered in sociolinguistic interviews conducted as part of an on-going linguistic ethnographic project in the area. We collected life story interviews with 10

retailers in E&C as part of an exploratory fieldwork carried out between June 2014 and June 2015 in which we set out to examine intra-community relations against the backdrop of urban transformations in the city. The revitalization of the area will result in the eventual displacement of the community from their cultural hubs, including many of surrounding areas where they have settled. Our fieldwork included intermittent photography of the area, the collection of local newspapers and other relevant documents such as flyers for community events, and non-participant observations over a period of six months, by visiting the shopping center and the area once a week, including weekends when the mall is busiest. We typically ordered coffee or the menu of the day at various eateries, briefly interacted with service providers, took field-notes and compared notes at the end of each research day. As part of our fieldwork, we interviewed twelve Latin American retailers in restaurants, a real estate agency, a legal consultancy firm and two food stores for a bespoke radio program for a local Latin American radio station. The aim of the radio program was to document the activities in which Latin Americans engage in one of the most important cultural hubs in the city and, in this process, examine intra-community relations at such a critical moment.

Our interviews with these two retailers mainly stemmed from the recommendations of some of the service providers and passers-by we interacted with while conducting observations. In addition, our experience as customers and the notes taken while carrying out observations also informed our choice of interviewees, our interpretation of the data as well as guiding our fieldwork. Three of the retailers we interviewed were located in the shopping center, and seven in the surrounding areas.

For the purposes of this article, we will draw on two representative voices of retailers in E&C, Don Jaime and Inés, with successful migratory trajectories and whose businesses will not be displaced since they are neither located in the shopping center nor the immediately

surrounding areas that will be demolished. Instead, their businesses are on the south side of the Walworth Rd, the ‘better off’ side. They thus represent retailers whose businesses will be positively affected by the revitalization of the area, at least for the time being. We examine the way in which these retailers position and reposition themselves intra-ethnically in light of the imposed relocation of many businesses.

4. Analysis

The E&C Latin American businesses are distributed along the two sides of the Walworth Road as illustrated in Figure 1 below. The shopping center and main areas that are being regenerated are located to the north of the Walworth Road, thus triggering the displacement of retailers located there to an as yet unknown destination. On the other hand, the retailers to the south of the road can, at least for the time being, will suffer no negative consequences. The Walworth Road thus constitutes a symbolic as well as geographical border that divides those who will be imminently displaced from those who will not, at least for now.

Figure 1 – Walworth Road, a symbolic border

Our examination of the discourse that emerges in the interviews has allowed us to understand the ways in which these two retailers construct and negotiate their identities in relation to other Latin Americans in the city as well as how they understand their present situation and imagine the future. In these, old discourses are revitalized to delineate symbolic national borders and make relevant forms of participation that allow the interviewees to include or exclude members of the group. For the purposes of this paper, we will focus on interactional segments from two interviews with retailers (local elite) of different origins (Colombia and Ecuador) with a relatively successful migration, reflected in the high social position they enjoy in the community. In these two encounters, the interviewees position themselves and others as “winners” v. “losers”, “legitimate” v. “illegitimate” voices who earned their place as

a result of hard work rather than receiving hand-outs or other “immorally” procured benefits. *Latinidad* emerges as the interviewees’ position themselves with respect to other Latin Americans (‘othering’ - us vs. them). In so doing, they construct their experience through recounting on-going, past, future, or hypothetical events according to a moral order and align (or not) themselves with or (dis)affiliate from/with other members or projects indicating a distinctively moralizing, albeit arguably exploitative, position in the face of relocation. Thus they bring to light their prerequisites for ‘belonging’.

5.1 Don Jaime: *I’m one of the oldest businessmen in Elephant and Castle*

Our first interview was conducted with “Don Jaime”, of Colombian origin, whose success as an economic migrant is evidenced by how he has established himself economically in the area. He is located on the south side of Walworth Road. He is a commercial leaseholder who manages various other commercial activities and is well connected with other highly positioned Latin American migrants as per his own accounts and those of other Latin Americans we interacted with during our fieldwork. Don Jaime constructs the regeneration process experienced in the area, by deploying a winners/losers opposition, distinguishing between those located on the side of the Walworth Road where their businesses will be demolished and those on the other side who will not be negatively affected by the regeneration project for now. He does this by invoking the inevitability of progress for which he is not responsible, given that it is based on natural market forces. This, as we will see later, allows him to construct himself as a moral agent able to show empathy towards those who are suffering misfortune. The participants in the interview are Don Jaime, Rosina and Adriana, researchers of Latin American background (Uruguay and Colombia, respectively).

Excerpt 1. Constructing leadership

103. **Rosina:** =Usted hace mucho que está ubicado aquí?

104. en Elephan[t]

Have you been here for a long time?

(...)

113. **Jaime:** Yo soy uno de los comerciantes más

114. antiguos que tiene Elephan' and Castle (soy)

115. uno (.) hay muchos yo conozco varios

((sniff))=

I'm one of the oldest businessmen that

Elephant and Castle has (I'm) one (.)

there are many I know many ((sniff))=

116. **Rosina:** =ajá

117. **Jaime:** .hh y:::, desde que empezamos a hacer negocios

118. >desde que yo empecé a neg- egocios< pues a

119. m- a menor escala pero. pero sí::: (0.4) .hh

120. (.) he- (0.4) hemoss:::- he trabajado mucho

121. mucho muchos<años con la comunida' y he

122. teni'o (.)cantidades de negocios .h .hh y:::

123. como anécdotas yo: soy el pri- yo fui el

124. primer pIRATA (.) radial latinoamericana en

125. este país

*.hh and:::, since we've started doing
business >since I started doing bus-iness< I
mean on a sma-ller scale but. But yes::: (0.4)*

*.hh (.) we-(0.4) we have:::- I have worked >a
lot a lot many< years with the community and
I've had (.) many types of businesses .h .hh
and::: anecdotally I: am the fir- I was the
first PIrate (.) Latin American pirate*

radio station in this country

In L. 117-125, Don Jaime positions himself as one of the pioneer leaders of the community by drawing on his seniority and his ability to benefit from market opportunities. He brings to light his role in facilitating the ventures of other Latin Americans who have settled in the area (*since we've started doing business*). He provides evidence for this by offering an account of

his various business activities (*I started doing bus-iness, I have worked >a lot (...) years with the community and I've had (.) many types of businesses*)-(*I: am the fir- I was the first PIrate (.) Latin American pirate radio station in this country*). With this, he constructs himself as a community pioneer insofar as he has acted as model for those who came later. In positioning himself as leader, Don Jaime underlines the importance of agency as illustrated in the repeated used of the personal subject pronoun and the inclusive 'we' (*we've started doing/ we've:- I have worked a lot*) to refer to the early community projects in which he has been involved in a leading capacity. Don Jaime invokes one of the values migrants should have to progress: seize any business opportunities provided personal gain can be obtained (e.g. his then illegal broadcasting practices). This, in turn, has vested him with the authority to present himself to us as an authority figure as illustrated in excerpt 2:

Excerpt 2: Constructing inevitability

441. **Rosina:** >y di- dígame una cosa< (c'm')

442. HH (0.7) Cómo ve? (1.2) ¿mirá ahora que van a

443. demoler el centro comercial (.) sí? Cómo ve c-

444. qué le parece que va a pasar con el área con

445. la comunidad latina con toda esa gente que

446. usted .hh

>and te- tell me something<

(how')

.HH (0.7) how do you see? (1.2) look now that they are going to demolish the commercial center (.) right? How- what do you think will happen to the area to the Latino community to all these people that you. Hh

(1.0)

447. **Adriana:** (Ha es[tado estos año]s [y con sus clientes])
(Who've [been here over these year]s [and with your customers])

448. **Rosina:** [Viene aquí:] [a lo largo de los a]ños y

449. (con) la gente que [viene aquí]a esta misma

450. tienda [no?](.) el negocio suyo=
[come here:] [over the y]ears and
(with) the people who [come here] to this very store [right?] (.) to your business=

451. **Adriana:** [sus clientes] [Sí sí]
 [*your clients*] [Yes yes]

452. **Rosina:** =cómo lo ve? qué?
 =*how do you see it? What?*

453. **Jaime:** (0.4) Sí e::(h) hh
 (0.4) Yes u::(h) hh

454. **Rosina:** Qué piensa
 What do you think

455. **Jaime:** (0.4) Realmente::(h) son cosas de:(h)l de(hl)
 456. del desarrollo (.) urbanístico (0.6) son cosas
 457. del progreso (.) que eso no lo puede detener
 458. nadie(h). y un país como este que es
 459. progresista que es un país desarrollado .hh y
 460. que día a día está avanzando (1.2) en su
 461. desarrollo es normal que este tipo de cosas
 462. pasen .hh desafortunadamente los que nos vamos
 463. a ver afectados somos los comerciantes
 464. latinoamericanos hay muchas otras
 465. comunidades pero .HH hablando por mi comunida'
 466. nos vamos a ver muy afectados porque somos(h)
 467. .hh uno de los (.) números más grandes de
 468. comerciantes en el área (0.6) .hh

*(0.4)In fact::(h) these are things to do with:
 (h)with (h)urban (.) development (0.6)they
 are the things to do with progress(.) that
 cannot be stopped by anyone(h). And a country
 like this which is progressive that is a
 developed country .hh and that day by day is
 advancing (1.2)in its development it's natural
 that these type of things happen .hh
 unfortunately the ones that are going to be
 affected are us the Latin American business
 people there are many other
 communities but .HH speaking for my community
 we're going to be very affected because
 we're(h).hh one of the (.)the largest number of
 businesses in the area (0.6) .hh*

At L. 455, after much prompting from the researchers, he sets the scene to offer what he imagines his position in the community will be subsequent to the demolition (see L. 530 in Excerpt 4). He proffers a delayed (0.4) assessment with some hesitation (h) (L. 455), thus indicating that he treats the topic as potentially delicate. Given the fact the he is located on

the ‘better off’ side of the border, he can take advantage of downtown’s misfortune as business is likely to come his way. Despite constructing himself as not responsible for the misfortune of the businesses on the other side of road, as a community leader (L. 465 *speaking for my community*) and as an authority figure in the community, the expectation would be for him to show some emotional connection with those badly affected by the area regeneration (MacMillan and Chavis 1986). He thus articulates his response by putting forward inevitable ‘fact of life’ explanations. The assessment offered is constructed in the impersonal and represents an official stance, in as much as it is in line with the view on urban development embraced by the local Council and, thus implicitly aligned with the demolition and displacement project. However, at L. 462, after a short delay, he introduces a hypothetical story offering a negative assessment of the development project. He prefaces it with a stance marker (*desafortunadamente* (unfortunately)) positioning himself as part of the affected community (i.e. Latin American businessmen who will be displaced). This is observed by the use of a hypothetical (future) story constructed through the first person plural followed by an increment in which he explicitly voices the business community’s concerns and further constructs himself as an authoritative figure within the community (see also L. 117-124 in Excerpt 1). In so doing, he underlines his emotional connection with those negatively affected and with the community in general. This is further illustrated in Excerpt 3, below, wherein Jaime expands upon his answer to the question initiated by Rosina in L. 441 (Excerpt 2).

Excerpt 3: : “us”, on the “better off” side v. “them”, on the “worse off” side	
488. Jaime:	[y desafortunadamente] e:(hh) estos
489.	comerciantes del centro comercial se van a ver
490.	seriamente afectados porque ellos van a quedar
491.	sin:(h) ninguna reubicación. (0.8) en ninguna

492. parte(.) no hay donde acomodarlos ((sniff))=
 [and unfortunately] u: (hh) the
 business people of the commercial center will
 be seriously affected because they will be
 left without: (h) any relocation. (0.8)
 nowhere (.) there's nowhere to accommodate
 them ((sniff))=

(...)

505. **Jaime:** Pero es imposible o sea yo he habla'o mucho
 506. con ellos ((sniff)) y:: por ejemplo hay un
 507. comerciante que paga siete mil quinienta'
 508. libra' al año en este momento
*But it's impossible I mean I've talked a lot
 with them ((sniff)) and:: for instance there's
 a trader who pays seven thousand five hundred
 pound' a year at the moment*

509. **Rosina:** °Mj(h)°

510. **Jaime:** en el local que tiene .hh cuando regrese a
 511. ese mismo:, local si es[que va a regresar .h]=
*for the store he has .hh when he returns to
 the same:, store if he is [going to return
 .h]=*

512. **Rosina:** [Y el alquiler ?]
 [and the rent?]

513. **Adriana:** no

514. **Jaime:** =ya no van a decir tres mil quiniento' vale
 515. cuarenta por encima de cincuenta mil libras el
 516. arriendo entonces ya no hay forma de .hh de
 517. de- d- de pagar ese dinero porque es muchísimo
 518. (0.4)tendría que trabajar sólo para pagar[(
 519. la renta)y eso no .hh]
*=they're no longer going to say three
 thousand five hundred it now costs forty
 over fifty thousand the rent so there's no
 way to .hh to-to-to- to pay that money
 because it's an awful lot (0.4)he'd have to
 work just to pay [(the rent)and that's not
 .hh]*

This excerpt and 4 (below) offer us a window onto the discourses that circulate among the community regarding the regeneration program for E&C. In excerpt 3, we observed an initial

narrative: those who leave, won't be able to return because of the increasing rents - allowing Don Jaime to position himself interstitially along a fortunate-unfortunate line. Thus, in L. 488-492 Don Jaime introduces a long assessment in order to align himself with those members of the Latin American business community who will be negatively affected by the regeneration plan. In L. 488, he carefully (n.b. *desafortunadamente* (unfortunately)) proceeds to distinguish between two groups of business people in the area separated by the physical border constituted by the Walworth Road, and symbolically separated by a fortunate-unfortunate discourse depending on which side of the border they are. This is illustrated by the use of us vs. them, with extreme case formulations (Pomerantz 1986) L. 491 (*ninguna reubicación, en ninguna parte* (they will be left without: (h) any relocation, nowhere (.) there's nowhere to accommodate them)) invoking the inevitability of their future in which he aligns himself once again with the fortunate team, given that he is located on the 'better off' side of the Walworth Road. In L. 506 he draws on a story in which he constructs a hypothetical anticipated future, using 'them' vs. 'us' opposition and the likely future that awaits the losers (L. 510-511/ 514-519) to illustrate his point: current Latin American business people will not be able to come back to the area.

Excerpt 4: "there are no second opportunities for the losers"

520. **Rosina:** [Y cómo le parece que le afectaría] a U S T E D
 521. AQUÍ a su negocio en esta parte de Elephant 'n'
 522. Castle .hh el que tirasen abajo (.) el centro
 523. comercial

*[And how do you think it'd affect you] Y O U
 HERE your business in this part of Elephant
 'n' Castle .hh their demolishing (.) the mall*

524. **Jaime:** hh

525. **Rosina:** que está en frente cómo l- qué repercusiones le
 526. parece que puede tener (.) [para esta parte de

527. Elephant]
*opposite how w-what repercussions do you
think it might have (.) [for this part of
Elephant]*

528. **Adriana:** [° Sí para esta
529. par]te°
[° yes for this
par]t°

530. **Jaime:** n(h) (.) Les voy a ser honesto (1.0) le' voy a
531. ser honesto (.) desafortunadamente (.) c- c
532. co:n: (.) co:n: (1.6) con las caídas de algunas
533. personas o de algunos negocios con el cierre de
534. muchos negocios se benefician otros (.) y yo
535. creo que yo soy uno de los beneficiados
*n(h) (.) I'm going to be honest with you (1.0)
I'm going to be honest with you (.)
unfortunately (.) w-w- w:ith: (.) w:ith: (1.6)
the failure of some people or some businesses
with the closure of many businesses others will
benefit (.) and I think I'm one of those who
will be benefit*

536. **Rosina:** M(h)=
537. **Jaime:** =Es::=
=it's::=
538. **Adriana:** =Es=
=it's=
539. **Jaime:** =Es desafortuna' [o para ellos]
=it's unfortunate [for them]
540. **Rosina:** [En qué senti]do beneficiado
[in what sen]se will you
benefit

541. **Jaime:** Porque que es que::(h), resulta que (.) todos
542. los clientes de ese centro comercial y todos los
543. comerciantes que tiene (d'allá) latinos (.)
*Because it's that:: (h), it turns out that
(.)all the customers from that shopping mall and
all the Latino traders they have (there)(.)*

544. **Adriana:** M(h)

545. **Jaime:** quedan desubicados y todos: la mayoría buscan
546. para acá (.) para estos lados. .hh y yo sé que
547. Muchos de esos clientes de (allá) vienen para
548. acá inclusive yo tengo mucha gente buscando
549. locales aquí yo ya no tengo .hh (.) se quieren
550. acomodar enn este pedazo en este- en este- en
este shop [part]
*end up 'displaced' and all: the majority look
over here (.) on this side. Hh and I know that
many of those customers from (over there) will
come here indeed I have many people looking for
stores here I don't have any more .hh (.) they
want to set up in this place in this-in this-
store [part]*

551. **Adriana:** ['sted] alquila aquí
[do you] rent here

552. **Jaime:** (.) Sí (.) la gente está buscando porque: este
553. el futuro (.) de los comerc[iantes de-]
*(.)Yes (.) people are looking because: it's the
future (.) for the trad[ers in-]*

Excerpt 3 allows us to observe one of the discourses that circulate among the community regarding the regeneration plan: there are no second opportunities for the losers (L. 514-519). In Excerpt 4, this discourse is reinforced by emphasizing the belief that only those on the 'better off' side of the border are fortunate (L. 541-543 and 545-551). Indeed, at L. 530 after

- <when they're building there>*
49. **Adriana:** (Se vienen para acá)
(they will come here)
50. **Inés:** Cla: (h)ro la gente va a venir para acá(h)
Of: (h) course people will come here (h).

Like Don Jaime, Inés embraces the regeneration project (L. 42-43) and justifies it on the basis of what is legally right and wrong (L. 29-31) based on the laws of the land that ought to be common knowledge to all. This is illustrated by the way in which she invokes a common sense understanding of contractual rights and obligations (*[if y]ou finish a contract here: (.) you have to hand it over (h) (.) like a house like anything (h)*). This is used to present a rational stance in terms of her position as a rightful winner and further helps to justify her assessment (L. 42-43) of the regeneration project, i.e. the means justifies the end and her lack of responsibility for the fate of those who will be displaced. In so doing, she positions the negatively affected business people as having no leg to stand on, in so far as they knew what they had signed up for. Hence, she constructs them as responsible for their own fate in line with how she constructs herself (see Excerpt 7). She sheds further light on how one's own hard work determines one's fate. This is illustrated in Excerpt 6 where she outlines the (un)desirable behavior of others in the community, with particular attention to the relatively recent arrival of onward Latin American migration from Spain.

Excerpt 6: the *legitimate* Latin American in this context

66. **Rosina:** Ajá (.) y dime y la clientela que tienes? Inés
67. sobretodo de dónde qué país es=
Aha (.) and tell me and the clients you have?
Ines mostly from which country are they=
68. **Inés:** =De to:do °mi amor° aquí viene gente de toda
69. [partes]
=a bit of ev:erything °my love° people come here
from[all over]
 (...) (Inés talks about the customers and the food

- they consume)
70. **Rosina:** Y TE VIENE-? Y estos latinoamericanos que están
71. llegando de España te están viniendo?
*AND ARE-? these Latin Americans arriving from
Spain coming to you?*
72. **Inés:** Sí:(h) vienen un poco de todo.
Yes: (h) all sorts come.
73. **Rosina:** Y cómo los notas
And how do you find them
74. **Inés:** (1.4) Pues la inestabilidad que tiene' en este
75. país mi amor (0.5) es triste porque no hablan
76. inglés:s, (.) ^A:(h) y ya han dejado de venir con
77. maleta' a estar aquí por montones, (.) a buscar
78. trabajo, (.) es muy du:ro. y ellos lo que buscan
79. es todo barato (0.8) ellos buscan eso (.) todo
80. barato (0.7) y esto es Londres [no es p()]
*(1.4) I mean the lack of stability they have in
this country my love (0.5) it's sad because they
don't speak English, (.)^A:(h) and now they've
stopped coming in drove:s with their suitcases to
stay here, (.)to look for wo:rk, (.) it's very
ha:rd. And they look for whatever is cheap (0.8)
that's what they're looking for (.) whatever's
cheap (0.7) and this is London [it's not ()]*
81. **Adriana:** [Y ellos] no hablan
82. inglés? (.) estas personas=
*[and they] don't speak
English? (.) these people=*
83. **Inés:** =Cla:ro, y si yo vivo diecinueve año' y no tengo
84. un buen inglés hhahaha imagínate ellos que
85. acaban de llegar (.) °imposible° (0.7) pero eso
86. no es culpa del país ni culpa de nosotros. (0.4)
87. ellos debían 'ber pegado cada uno a sus
88. paise(h)s. (.) pero ellos vinieron a aventurar
89. acá (.) Te cuento que el. (0.6) cincuenta por
90. ciento están ya, bien ubic(h)ados.
*=of cou:rs, if I've lived here for nineteen year'
and don't have good English hhahaha imagine
those that have just arrived(.)°impossible° (0.7)
but that's not the country's fault nor ours.
(0.4) they should each have returned to their own
countrie(h)s. (.)but they come to take a risk
here (.) I tell you that. (0.6) fifty per cent of
them are now, well place(h)d.*

In Excerpt 6, we topicalize secondary Latin American migrants from Spain, known as *españoles* and *rencauchados* by some,³ in the light of the findings from our fieldwork. Inés provides an account of their behavior vis à vis her own. She contrasts her own behavior and paints a picture of herself as a law-abiding, hard-working migrant. In short, she constructs herself as a moral agent who has justifiably earned her position. She does this by outlining the requirements that ought to be met by migrants to be successfully integrated in London (*they don't speak English* (L. 74-75), *they want everything cheap* (L. 78)) such as speaking English and working hard rather than expecting government hand-outs, as we will see in the following excerpt. Specifically, secondary migrants are portrayed as opportunists who are not prepared to work as hard as they ought to and are only interested in taking advantage of what others, like Inés, have worked hard to achieve (L. 77-79). In this sense, they do not meet the necessary conditions to live in the receiving society and should return to their countries of origin, wherever these may be. In short, they do not have the necessary tools to make a 'good' life in London or indeed the right moral principles (similar distant relationships have been reported among Polish migrants in the UK, see, for example, Jordan and Duvell 1999, Jordan 2002). This emerges more clearly in the small stories she draws on in Excerpt 7 to further construct herself as a moral agent.

Excerpt 7: we had to work like mules

1. **Adriana:** *Cómo le va a la gente si están contentos si::=*
How are they doing are they happy if::=
2. **Inés:** *=^Tienen que contentarse pues mi amor (.) si este*
3. *e'el país de las maravillas*
=they be happy I mean my love (.)if this is the
country of wonders

³ These categorizations emerged during our fieldwork, especially by those with a relatively long history of settlement, i.e. those in London since the late 1980's

4. **Rosina:** HE hhehehehehehehehehe=
5. **Inés:** =hasta los hijos que no son de ellos vienen
6. cargando pa' que el gobierno los mantenga
=*they even bring children who are not theirs
for the government to support them*
7. **Rosina:** Cla::[: : : .]
Of c::[: : : .}
8. **Inés:** [cuando] a nosotros nos tocó: trabajar como
9. el burro (.) yo por lo meno' (.) desde que tuve la
10. niña fue que el gobierno me dio ca:sa (0.3) me lo
11. dio por allá lejísimo' d' donde yo vivía ante' (.)
12. me tocó devolver y yo con- vendí mi propieda' en
13. Ecuador para poder comprar aquí(h)
*[when] we had to work like mules (.)at least I did
(.) after I had my daughter the government gave me
a ho:use (0.3) they gave it to me there really far
from where I lived before(.) and I had to return
it and I with- I sold my house in Ecuador to be
able to buy here (h)*
14. **Adriana:**Ya:(h) .
Right: (h).
15. **Rosina:** .hh Y dice que traen hijos que no son de ellos
.hh *and you say that they bring with them
children that are not theirs*
16. **Inés:** Traen hasta hijos que no son de ellos mi amor de
17. los primos de los pariente' que tengan lo' mismo'
18. apellidos (.) para pedir los a- los beneficio'
19. aquí. (0.9) y yo estoy de acuerdo con Cameron (.)
20. yo estoy de acuerdo con Cameron de que- (0.7) que
21. una persona que viva por lo menos tre' años y
22. pague impuestos en este país tenga derecho a que
23. reciba alguna ayuda (1.0) Aquí yo tuve (0.4) unas
24. morenas aquí arriba en la peluquería(h) (0.6) yo
25. la oía cuando conversaba con el marido porque
26. pegaba ^unos gri:tos
*they even bring with them children that aren't
theirs my love of their cousins of relatives with
the same surnames (.) to claim the- benefits
here. (0.9) and I agree with Cameron (.) I agree
with Cameron in that- (0.7) that person who has
lived here at least three year and pays taxes in
this country should have the right to receive
some help (1.0) I had (0.4)some black women here
upstairs in the hairdresser's(h) (0.6) I heard
her when she talked to her husband because she
used to shout so much*
27. **Adriana:**Hh:e::(h)

28. **Inés:** Señora tenía tre' apartamento' rentado' aquí en
29. Colom- en a(h)quí en: España (0.6) bie:n rentados
30. y aquí (.) le pedía apartamento al gobierno y
31. todo pero como aquí el gobierno parece que nada
32. hace (0.5) c(h)o:(h)m:o a los siete meses (0.3)
33. pegaba los gritos ay ^A:::Y ^me llegó una
34. ^CA:RTA que tengo pagar ^siete mil paun' que por
35. la vivienda .hh ^que chequearon que yo tengo
36. propiedade' en España ¿() (1.0) .hh y así le ha
37. pasado a más de uno yo°e(h)° tengo una amiga
38. ecuatoriana que me contó lo mismo también le
39. mandaron una carta que tenía que devolver el
40. dine(h)ro. (0.3) que recibió porque ella tiene
41. propiedade' en Es[p a ñ a]

*The woman had three flats rented out here
In Colom- here in: Spain (0.6) with a good rent
and here (.) she was asking the government for a
flat and everything but here the government looks
as if it doesn't do anything
(0.5) l(h)i:kel(h)i:ke seven months later (0.3)
she was screaming ay ^A:::Y ^I received a
^LE:TTER that I have to pay ^seven thousand pound
for the flat .hh that ^they checked that I have
properties in Spain¿() (1.0) .hh and the same
has happened to more than one I °u(h)m° have an
Ecuadorian friend who told me The same they also
sent her a letter that she had to return the
mone(h)y. (0.3) she received because she has
properties in Sp[p a i n]*

Inés reacts to our question regarding the well-being of onward Latin American migrants from Spain with sarcasm (*this is the country of wonders*). With this, she prepares the ground for the discourse that migrants with children are more likely to receive benefits. The formulation is received with laughter that is heard as affiliative (see Glenn and Holt 2013) as a result of which, a set of small stories in which onward migrants are constructed as immoral subjects are produced.

In these stories she reports the illegal practices that these migrants engage in to obtain benefits, such as bringing children and relatives as their dependents when they are not,

provided they have the same surname and, claiming housing benefit when they own properties overseas as well as illegally subletting them. These stories enable her to paint herself as a moral agent in contrast to onward Latin Americans from Spain. Unlike the latter, she had to work very hard and did not receive any government assistance until after her daughter was born. Furthermore, she sold her property in her native Ecuador in order to set up her own business. She thus presents herself as a moral agent who can rightfully align with the government, especially with the views of the governing party at the time.

Secondary Latin American migrants from Spain are not only depicted as unscrupulous with respect to their behavior towards the authorities in the receiving country but also with reference to their behavior towards members of their own community who, as in her case, have offered them support, albeit arguably to obtain some personal benefit i.e. managing to rent out the unit above her store. This is observed in Excerpt 8 where she narrates the scams they are prepared to inflict on hard-working Latin Americans such as herself. Later she presents herself as a victim of their fraudulent behavior and reiterates her moral deeds in contrast to theirs.

Inés thus constructs secondary Latin American migrants as benefit cheats by reporting the illegal and immoral practices they engage in. She further justifies herself as moral subject in relation to the newcomers and voices one of the discourses that circulates amongst the community i.e. there is more likelihood of receiving financial assistance from the government if you have dependent children. This was a recurrent narrative in our fieldwork and is further articulated in L. 9-11 when Inés tells us that she received housing assistance only after her daughter was born.

Secondary Latin American migrants are thus portrayed as lacking the necessary conditions to participate in the community as they are not prepared to work hard. They are constructed as

immoral given that they purposefully set out to defraud others (i.e. herself (as seen below) and the local authorities). They are excluded from the community. This is further emphasized a couple of minutes later in her telling of the immoral practices that they engage in (L. 16-26, LL. 28-39). Her narration indicates that, unlike herself as someone legitimately ‘fortunate’, the means employed by onward Latin American migrants do not justify the ends.

Excerpt 8: Here people want everything cheap

1. **Inés:** Voy a botar toda esa peluquería de arriba.
I'm going to kick out that whole hairdressing salon above
2. **Rosina:** AH SÍ?
OH REALLY?
3. **Inés:** S[í]
Y[es]
4. **Rosina:** [Y] dónde se va la peluquera?
[and] where will the hairdressers go?
5. **Inés:** A:- no no no tengo- no tengo rentado a nadie.
U:- no no I don't -I haven't rented it to anyone.
6. **Rosina:** A(h)
7. **Inés:** (0.8) Desde que me gastaron quinientos pauns en
8. Agua y no se cuántos miles en lu:z
(0.8) Since they left me with a five hundred pound water bill and I don't know how many thousands for the electri:city
9. **Rosina:** En la pel[uquería?]
In the hair[dresser's?]
10. **Inés:** [peluquera] no quiero.
[hairdresser] I don't want.
11. **Adriana:** =°A: (hh) °
12. **Inés:** (0.4) ^Claro mi amor te pasa u- un- MEDIA hora UNA
13. hora secándote el PELO Y GASTANDO LU'Y GASTAN-hhe
14. .HH (.) No=
(0.4) Of course my love if you spend a-a- HALF an hour ONE hour drying your HAIR AND USING ELECTRICITY AND SPENDING-HH. HH(.) NO=
15. **Adriana:** =Y ellas no pagaron el a- no pagaron eso antes
16. de irse?

=AND they didn't pay the- they didn't pay before they left?

17. **Inés:** (0.5) Mi amor aquí la gente todo quiere
18. b(h)ar(h)at(h)o (.) to:do quiere barato .hh (.)
19. una amiga vino antes de ayer y me dice que por
20. qué no le dejo vender ropa allá
21. arriba? le digo sí (.) tanto cuesta la renta >^Ay
22. no me lo puede dar así nomás le digo< mi amo:r yo
23. tengo un lease y lo pago.
*(0.5) My love here people want everything
ch(h)e(h)p(h) (.) e:verything they want cheap. Hh
(.)a friend came the day before yesterday and
asks me why I don't let her sell clothes there
above? I say yes(.) the rent is so much >Ah can
you not give it to me just like that I say < my
lo:ve I have a lease and I pay it.*

24. **Adriana:** A(h)
25. **Inés:** (.) y tengo todos los biles encima(h) (mh?)
26. entonces atrevida(h)
*(.) and I have all the bills on my shoulders(h)
(mh?) so cheeky (h)*

27. **Adriana:** HHEhhhh
28. **Rosina:** DiOs mío bendito=
My good God=

29. **Inés:** =Estos son recién llegados
=these are the new arrivals

30. **Rosina:** Esta gente creo yo que es gente que [()]
These people I think are peopl who [()]

31. **Inés:** [De todo] de
32. todo(h). (.) la gente es atre(h)vida °mi am(h)or°
33. (.)quieren GRATIS
*[All sorts]all
sorts(h). (.) people are chee(h)ky my °lo(h)ve°
(.)they want everything FREE*

As previously mentioned, Inés presents herself as a victim of the fraudulent practices that she attributes to onward Latin American migrants in her accounts. As part of her self-portrayal as a moral subject, she depicts herself as somebody who has learnt from experience. In excerpt 8 she presents a story to justify her decision not to support these newcomers who do not follow the civic rules of their new society. During our visit, Inés told us that she owns another unit

above her main business. She had rented this space to onward Latin American migrants from Spain for a hair salon. In L. 1 she refers to that property explaining that she wants to get rid of it and clarifies (L. 5) that the space was not rented at the time of our interaction with her. Inés starts a story in L. 7, to justify her reasons for no longer letting her property to be used as a hair salon: “*they [tenants] spent five hundred pounds in water and I don’t know how many thousands in electricity*”. In L. 12, she expands on the business practices that were carried out at the salon. In answering our question in L. 15, she concludes that “*they [onward Latin American migrants] want everything cheap*”, and reinforces her statement by initiating another story about a “friend” who wanted to use the space to sell clothes without expecting to have to pay any rent. This story underlines the fact that the notion of friendship in this context seems to be tied to taking advantage of the other. After assessing such people as “having a cheek” (L. 25), Inés, as a moral subject, invokes the common sense business rules that anyone who sublets a business should pay the rent, along with any bills, since these are the responsibility of the tenant unless stipulated otherwise in the contract.

4. Concluding remarks

Our study aims to contribute to the understanding of the social relations between Latin Americans in London within the context of a regeneration plan that is affecting one the areas where Latin Americans are concentrated, and the visibility of this social group in the city. As reported by previous studies on this group in the UK (see, for example, McIlwaine et al 2011 and Cock 2011) and in the US (Almeida, et al., 2009; Guarnizo et al, 1999; Pessar 1999), some of the behavior among its members is marked by a lack of solidarity and by tensions. This is not surprising in the case of the regeneration of E&C, given that the regeneration entails a critical moment for this social group in which the limited resources they have access to are being axed. Nonetheless, we considered it important to document how Latin Americans are making sense of their community, themselves and each other at such a moment.

Our analysis of our interviews with two retailers of Latin American background located in the area of E&C has allowed us to observe the ways in which these social actors position themselves and “others” in the light of the regeneration of the area and at different scales (i.e. from first generation migrants to onward Latin American migrants) The “others”, in this case, emerge, on the one hand, as the Latin Americans who work in the shopping center and will be displaced as a result of its demolition. On the other hand, the “others” are onward Latin American migrants in London who primarily hail from Spain as a result of the 2008 Spanish economic crisis. Don Jaime and Inés represent the voices of those retailers who are on the “fortunate” side of the Walworth Road, and who will not suffer the immediate consequences of the regeneration plan. As explained in the initial section of this paper, Walworth Road is constructed in the discourses of these retailers as a symbolic border separating those who will be displaced, from those who will benefit from the initial phase of the Council plan.

Don Jaime and Inés are migrants with successful migratory experiences. Both have been in London for over 19 years and represent small Latin American businesses. They own leases on properties and stores in different parts of E&C, and in Greater London. They both construct themselves discursively as pioneers who settled in E&C and who are somehow responsible for what E&C currently is, that is, an important enclave for the Latin American diaspora in the city. Their migratory trajectories, experience and lifestyle in London vest them with the appropriate knowledge to understand how things work and how people should behave in the receiving society. On the grounds of such experiential knowledge they present themselves as exemplary economic migrants. Thus, they are able to state judgements regarding the core skills and values that newcomers should have: the language of the receiving society and working practices such as working hard and availing oneself of any working opportunities in order to succeed. In addition, one of the retailers stipulates the

morality that should permeate the working practices of Latin American migrants in the city, with particular attention to onward Latin American migrants from Spain.

The fact that these two participants are on the “fortunate” side of the Walworth Road, shapes their discursive portrayals. Consequently, Jaime and Inés draw on different communicative resources to construct themselves as pioneers and moral agents. Some of these resources are shared while others differ slightly. Thus while Don Jaime aligns himself with the discourses of ‘inevitability as imposed by progress’, from which he supports the regeneration plan launched by the local Council, Inés aligns herself with the Council inasmuch as she explains that those who took leases in the shopping center knew right from the beginning that it would be demolished. Both social actors present themselves as knowledgeable and moral subjects who accept the changes and values of the ‘advanced’ society in which they now live. However, they present themselves differently by drawing on different sets of resources. On the one hand, Jaime shows fleeting moments of solidarity by positioning himself as one of the leaders of the community and voices the concerns of the less fortunate i.e. those who will be displaced, whilst also accepting the inevitable demands of the future. Jaime provides us with further evidence that social identity is circumstantial and that who one is varies according to what one is doing and with whom one is doing it. Inés, on the other hand, assigns total responsibility to those ‘who knew from the very beginning that the regeneration was going to happen’ i.e. those who will be displaced. In her discourse, responsibility is viewed in terms of legal duties. She thus explains how (economic) migrants should know that bills, rents and leases must be paid (“nothing is free”), and offers stories about immoral practices marked by breaches of trust and illustrated by the deliberate swindling practices that secondary migrants engage in.

Our interactions with these two retailers have offered us a lens through which to explore some of the discourses that circulate within the Latin American community in E&C at a

critical moment and to gauge some of the norms around which this primarily economic migrant community is formed. Some of the discourses documented in this paper, such as the value of personal gain in the social formation of community, are likely to emerge in the voices of those not prejudicially affected by the redevelopment of the area. This is because the vast majority of Latin Americans currently in London migrated in order to achieve a better (economic) life. Importantly, the views of the two retailers presented in this paper should not be seen as representative of the whole community at E&C. Those with a less successful migrant trajectory in the city, such as onward Latin American migrants, those who work in unskilled positions and those whose businesses will be displaced, are likely to have a different stance on the regeneration project and their (uncertain) futures in the city.

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Transcription conventions (adapted from Schegloff 2007)

- [] overlapping speech
 - (1.5) numbers in brackets indicate pause length in seconds
 - (.) micropause
 - :
 -
 - .
- lengthening of the sound of preceding letter
- word cut-off
- falling or final intonation

?	rising or question intonation
=	latching utterances
<u>Underlining</u>	contrastive stress or emphasis
CAPS	indicates volume of speech
°°	markedly softer speech
> <	talk is compressed or rushed
< >	talk is markedly slowed or drawn out
()	blank space in brackets indicates uncertainty about the speech

Fig. 1 Map

