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ABSTRACT

European cities have increasingly highlighted diversity as a marker of their progressive status. A growing field of research argues that "super-diverse" neighborhoods exemplify a normalization of ethnic and racial difference as a positive facet of everyday life. However, contemporary manifestations of urban diversity cannot be disentangled easily from the European colonial legacy that underlies a series of racial and spatial imaginaries. I argue that an inadequate conceptualization of race and ethnicity limits our appreciation of ongoing struggles over the meaning of urban diversity. The claimed reconfiguration of European cities as sites of normative diversity obscures the ongoing epistemological framing of Europe as white, thereby placing long-standing ethnic and racial minorities within a hierarchy of belonging. Contemporary narratives that focus on the normalization of difference in diverse neighborhoods fail to sufficiently engage with the dynamics of structural racism that underpin ethnic and racial categorizations.

> I have only one language and it is not mine.
> —Jacques Derrida[1]

An increasing number of European cities have positioned themselves as beacons for diversity. Many cities, including former imperial metropoles, point to their demographic diversity as an indicator of social inclusion and progressive values. The "London is open" campaign, for example, claims that "despite Brexit, London will always be open to the world, proud of our diversity and inclusion . . . ." Similarly, Amsterdam proclaims that "everyone is free to be themselves—regardless of ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, age, disability or religious beliefs." Meanwhile, Helsinki "strives to become a model city of diversity" and Madrid is apparently "a beacon of tolerance and diversity."[2]

These statements seem to emphasize a political commitment to a progressive urbanism enhanced by diversity. However, the reality is that ethnic and racial minorities continue to face structural inequalities and discrimination, as well as everyday instances of racism and harassment (see, for example, Dunbar & Jones, 2021; Elias et al., 2021; Hu, 2020; Nafilyan et al., 2021). Moreover, European cities have been both the site and also focus of decolonization movements marked by protests challenging the visible and material expressions of the ongoing "celebration" of the colonial legacy. Recent protests across Europe, in the wake of the Black Lives Matter movement, saw vocal opposition to the continuing memorialization of the slave trade, including the toppling of a controversial statue in Bristol, and the defacing of statues in Brussels, Antwerp, and Ghent.[3] At the same time, buildings, public spaces, and streets, associated with slavery have been renamed (see, Rea, 2020; Rees & Craig, 2020). Intense public disagreement over the colonial legacy reveals a continuing limited engagement with the ongoing legacy of colonialism and empire within the contemporary European context.

My paper begins by examining the ways in which the categories that underpin diversity discourse reflect longstanding and problematic frames of ethnic and racial difference. I then explore how the mobilization of the super-diversity concept feeds into a series of assumptions which center whiteness

at the heart of its assumed positive disposition. Next, I consider how diversity and difference are mobilized in relation to claims over the use of space in order gain insights into how race and ethnicity are actively produced and reproduced within everyday life. Finally, I show that a Eurocentric ethos of belonging is connected to notions of "good diversity" which censure those who challenge the hegemony of whiteness.

What's super about diversity?

In this paper I seek to make a critical intervention into the degree to which contemporary urban diversity discourse is predicated on a limited engagement with the European colonial legacy. By this I mean not only the specific histories of European colonialism but also the centrality of Eurocentric epistemologies and their contribution to ongoing processes of racialization (see, Chakrabarty, 2000; Stoler, 2010 for a discussion). There has been a sustained engagement with a growing field of urban scholarship that has crystallized around what is described as "super-diversity," "everyday diversity" and associated concepts of conviviality and cosmopolitanism. This area of work has been strongly influenced by the "super-diversity" concept developed within British migration studies by the sociologist Stephen Vertovec (2007). Super-diversity has influenced a wide range of fields beyond migration studies with examination of the heterogeneity of groups, cultures, and languages within cities (see, Phillimore & Sigona, 2020). Super-diversity scholars argue that their approach offers a more nuanced lens through which to explore varied patterns and categories of difference, as well as their intersections, within already existing ethnically diverse neighborhoods (see, for example, Pemberton & Phillimore, 2018).

My aim is not to criticize the field of super-diversity per se. Rather I am interested in exploring how super-diversity, which Vertovec (2019, p. 126) proposes is "a concept and approach" and not a "theory" has infused normative approaches toward urban diversity (see also, Meissner & Vertovec, 2015). Super-diversity and everyday diversity scholars locate the perception of increasing difference within patterns of ongoing and changing migration (see, for example, Wessendorf, 2019). However, less attention has been given to the ways in which ongoing racial categorizations are developed in tension with colonial hierarchies. More attention is given to descriptive migratory dynamics, with these specific racial groups subsumed within changing patterns of migration. However, the anthropologists Ayse Caglar and Nina Glick Schiller's extensive contributions have long problematized "methodological nationalism." Here, migrants are continuously placed outside the assumed shared culture and values of the European nation-state. Çaglar and Glick Schiller (2018, p. 5), problematize the term "migrant" and "non-migrant" within a reflexive and critical framework urging us:

> . . . to challenge the assumption that the lives and practices of people who move to a city from other countries are subject to categorically different dynamics from the "majority" and/or "natives." Instead, we maintain that it is necessary to place migrants and those who see themselves as natives within the same analytical framework.

Their argument points to how the borders of the nation-state are reinscribed within the urban realm through the distinction between migrants and those presumed to be already part of the nation-state (see also, Meeus et al., 2019).

The field of migration studies has been extremely important in developing conceptual and empirical understandings of diversity nonetheless I purposefully do not locate my argument within this area of work. Studies of everyday diversity occupy a sphere between sociology, anthropology, urban studies, and planning (Raco, 2018). Migration is often situated as the background to empirical studies rather than subject to deeper conceptualization, with ethnic minorities often assumed to represent another group in an ongoing series of migratory incomers (see, for example, Wessendorf, 2019). My approach is focused on Black and ethnic minorities as European citizens. I question the overt description of these groups as former or established migrants not least because many Black and ethnic minority people have not migrated to Europe.

The terms *Black and ethnic minorities* and *Europeans of color* encompasses a series of groups connected through (post)colonial and economic ties. These groups' citizenship rights differ and include British New Commonwealth citizens who held full British citizenship in the postwar era and Dutch Surinamese settlers who were offered citizenship rights in the wake of decolonization. Guest workers also are important groups and include migrants from Turkey to Germany and from Morocco to the Netherlands. Their citizenship rights have been limited but they were specifically invited to assist in economic recovery efforts. Of course, it is important to acknowledge that there are complexities and contradictions with how groups become racialized and how ethnicity and race are defined and there is no singular or agreed terminology.[4] The temporalities of migration are writ large within the terminology *second*, *third* or latterly *fourth* generation migrants rather than citizens. These distinctions are primary reserved for Europeans of color and remain entangled with deep-rooted beliefs that normalize European-ness as white and Christian by default.

The concept of diversity has come to exemplify a field of urban scholarship that presents ethnic and racial difference as a descriptive reality in ways that obscure the preservation of racial hierarchies within diversity. Attentiveness to the changing diversity of Europe in cities may seemingly emphasize the welcome co-presence of numerous ethnic and racial groups. However, by engaging with a series of empirical examples from cities considered to be locations of "super-diversity" I consider how these examples illuminate the ongoing centrality of race and ethnicity, at the same time as they are presumed to hold an apparent ordinariness. I explore how these narratives situate minorities and majorities within longstanding integrationist and nationalist narratives. The perspective that diversity heralds a new direction in European racial thinking is worthy of further scrutiny given the significant cultural and epistemological legacy of colonial racism.

The Black studies scholar Rinaldo Walcott (2019, p. 395) has forcefully argued against diversity in the North American context. His rejection of the diversity ideal emphasizes how its embrace within politically progressive language is driven not only by white innocence but what he terms *white lies*:

> But more specifically, white people must collectively lie to themselves that the current organization of human life is arranged to give us all access to what I shorthandedly call the "good life"—and that diversity will further enhance it.

His words have significance in the European context given the specific colonial legacy of race. The essentialization of Black and ethnic minority groups' identity as primordially non-European is predicated in a racist exclusionary discourse (see, for example, Beaman, 2019; Bhambra, 2017; Gilroy, 1987; Keskinen & Andreassen, 2017; Mayblin, 2014; Miles, 1993). Continuing assumptions regarding ethnic difference are closely related to disputed racial categorizations in ways that privilege whiteness (see, Bhopal, 2018). Added to this is the way that diversity moves between overlapping arenas of "narrative," "fact," and "policy" (Berg & Sigona, 2013, p. 350) meaning that there is considerable capacity to obscure the specific political dynamics that animate ethnic difference and stabilize white identities (Lundström, 2017). Before moving to specific discussion of how everyday diversity has been described within the literature, I turn to its interconnections with state multiculturalism.

Whose diversity?

Diversity emerges from the legacy of state multiculturalism alongside its rejection. Multiculturalism, as with diversity, encompasses a spectrum of political, philosophical and policy stances. Multiculturalism is a wide-ranging and contested term encompassing an empirical reality, "policy orientation," a "philosophy that argues for the moral right of group recognition" and finally "a form of governance" which offers a route to forms of minority inclusion in policy making (Korteweg & Triadafilopoulos, 2015, p. 664). The sociologist Gurminder Bhambra forcefully argues that

understandings of multiculturalism, postcolonial society, or diversity remain predicated on migration: "This, however, renders invisible the long-standing histories of empire and colonialism that already connects these migrants, or citizens with Europe" (Bhambra, 2017, p. 396).

Despite previous state commitments to forms of state multiculturalism, for example, through political representation at city level (see, Uitermark et al., 2005), many minorities found themselves criticized for their lack of capacity for "integration" or living "parallel lives" under these regimes of multiculturalism. The German chancellor, Angela Merkel, stated that Germany had failed in attempts to create a multicultural society in October 2010. She was followed by the former British prime minister David Cameron in a speech given in February 2011 ostensibly about terrorism, in which he criticized "state multiculturalism" and "passive tolerance" of difference, centering on British Muslim communities. The Netherlands introduced legislation in the same year which explicitly replaced ideas of multiculturalism with integration. Politically, these changes have sought to critique and replace perceived problematic models of multiculturalism that consider minorities as seeking to sustain purported "non-European" modes of urban life (see, Uitermark et al., 2005).

These political statements draw on tropes of ethnic and racial minorities as attempting to impose non-European cultures and norms into the nation-state and situate them as threats to ostensible purported progressive values. The resurgence of a nostalgic politics of the homogenous white nation-state has been successfully harnessed by the Far Right who have gained increasing political strength across much of Europe. The Alternative für Deutschland (AfD), a recently formed German political party, uses campaign posters that depict a White Europe under threat from the Islamification of German society. Whilst their relative vote share declined between the 2017 and 2021 federal elections, they are the leading political party in the states of Saxony and Thuringia, in the East of Germany, and also hold seats in the federal parliament (Schultheis, 2021). Their broader campaign has amplified official critiques of multiculturalism, implicitly contrasting the assumed non-European values of ethnic communities with "true" Europeans.

The embrace of diversity seemingly marks a distinct shift from multiculturalism. Rather than the emphasis on visible minorities as culturally different from white European populations, diversity policy sought to emphasize difference as a form of normality within urban space. The promotion of the homogenous white Christian nation-state has foundations within a colonial legacy that places European ideals at the heart of a presumed cosmopolitan ethos. Gurminder Bhambra is critical of forms of progressive European thought, as represented by figures such as Ulrich Beck and Jürgen Habermas, and continuing attempts to centralize a purported progressive stance on an unproblematized modernity:

> The cosmopolitan cultural diversity of Europe, then, is counterposed to that constituted by and through multicultural others who are presumed to import their diversity into (and against) the cultural diversity already present in Europe. How, precisely, these differences are understood and recognized as cosmopolitan differences or multicultural differences is not clear, except insofar as they map onto some notion of visible, that is, racialized—or, then, more recently, religious—difference. Counterposing cosmopolitanism and multiculturalism in this way, however, precisely demonstrates the Eurocentric particularism at the heart of the cosmopolitan European project. (Bhambra, 2016, p. 197)

European cosmopolitanism and related concepts such as diversity are argued to be rooted within a Eurocentric legacy. In contrast, the types of diversity that Black and minority ethnic migrants are considered to represent remain considered less progressive and representing values that have been "imported" into European society. Diversity's formulation in the European context thus insufficiently engages with the racial ordering consolidated through colonialism and the widespread and deep-rooted racial inequality for Europeans of color. The emergence of diversity as a seemingly positive reformulation of European multiculturalism denoting the cosmopolitan and progressive orientation of European urban society thus requires further consideration.

Insofar as these ideas relate to the urban arena, there is a significant valorization of diversity as a means for encouraging acceptance through recognizing our multiple differences (Putnam, 2007). Proponents of everyday diversity have argued that instead of constantly drawing attention to the

negative dimensions of ethnic and racial difference and conflict, we should be engaged with conviviality and the ways in which numerous dimensions of difference are navigated as ordinary dimensions of life. The rise of "everyday diversity" studies constitutes a field concerned with examinations of forms of "close proximity" that animate ordinary life (Jackson, 2019; Jones et al., 2015; Wilson, 2011). Minorities, and implicitly majorities, are participants in European "contact zones" within urban spaces where cultural and ethnic difference is negotiated (Putnam, 2007). Individually negotiated practices of social mixing within specific cities and neighborhoods have formed the basis of empirical studies. The identification of forms of "everyday diversity" has emerged as a frame of reference to explore urban co-existence and forms of "tolerance." The majority of work thus far focuses on London (see, for example, Neal et al., 2017; Rhys-Taylor, 2013; Wessendorf, 2013, 2014), but other cities including Berlin (Robinson, 2014), Amsterdam (Broerse & Spaaij, 2019; Crul, 2016), and Rotterdam (Peterson, 2017; Scholten et al., 2020) provide further sites of exploration and exposition.

Many scholars situate their attention to ethnic and racial diversity on the ground in relation to Paul Gilroy's (2006, p. 40) elucidation of conviviality whereby:

> Conviviality is a social pattern in which different metropolitan groups dwell in close proximity, but where their racial, linguistic and religious particularities do not—as the logic of ethnic absolutism suggests they must—add up to discontinuities of experience or insuperable problems of communication.

Everyday diversity scholars have focused on how cohabitation of diverse ethnic and racial groups within super-diverse neighborhoods has not created insurmountable tensions. Instead, relatively peaceful co-existence amongst a diverse or multicultural milieu is argued to demonstrate the ordinariness or relative lack of importance of ethnic and racial categories within the negotiation of everyday life. The sociologist Sarah Neal and colleagues (2017, p. 29) argue that the seemingly mundane everyday life of super-diverse neighborhoods provides ways to reject "a narrative of either entrenched antagonistic division or celebratory collaborative identities" and see the "gradations and convergences between these two polarizing binaries." Everyday diversity scholars are not arguing that conflict is absent or that racism has been overcome within these locales but they emphasize that these differences are considered an unremarkable reality for many peoples' lives (see also, Askins, 2015).

Public and semi-public spaces where forms of everyday and fleeting interaction occur have been the primary focus of attention for these encounters (Jackson, 2019; Jones et al., 2015; Neal et al., 2017; Robinson, 2020; Wessendorf, 2014; Wilson, 2011). Further strands consider the "sensorial" dimension through food cultures, food halls, and food markets (see, Rhys-Taylor, 2013). Diversity scholars seemingly reject fixed and bounded categories of identity but their work emphasizes *more* rather than *different* categories (see for example, Jones et al., 2015; Neal et al., 2017; Wessendorf, 2013, 2014, 2019).

I am not arguing that all work that examines race and ethnicity should be obliged to primarily focus on racism and discrimination. Everyday diversity scholars have emphasized their own engagement with conflict and racism. However, I am interested in how this standpoint obscures the complex ways in which racism and exclusion span everyday life (see, Valentine, 2008 for a discussion). For example, the urban sociologist Susanne Wessendorf in her 2014 book contends that diversity is considered so unremarkable for her research participants in Hackney that "Because of this lack of tensions, I was confronted with the strange circumstance of doing research about something people did not perceive as an issue of contestation" (p. 3). She concludes that "my many years of participant observation in the area, have revealed that racism and xenophobia have little bearing on everyday social relations" (Wessendorf, 2014, p. 170).

These assertions are interesting particularly as in discussion of the civil uprisings in Hackney in 2011 it is noted that respondents consider "it was mainly black youngsters who committed such crimes" (Wessendorf, 2014, p. 37). Such claims offer racist sentiment as a matter of common-sense or accepted fact. Caution must be exercised in how an observed agglomeration of everyday cordial or indifferent interactions relate to claims that racism is not a defining feature in everyday life given its pervasive institutional and structural force. The London borough of Hackney records annual increases

in hate crimes which are defined as "based on a person's characteristic or perceived characteristic, such as race, religion, sexual orientation, disability or transgender (London Assembly, 2019, p. 2; see also, London Borough of Hackney, 2018). In 2019, for instance, there were 93 reports of anti-Semitic attacks. Hate crimes are not isolated incidents perpetrated by lone racists but reflective of a wider hostility toward minorities.

Wessendorf is not, of course, suggesting that race and class are entirely absent or that people are not cognizant of racial disadvantage (see, Foner et al., 2019). However, a more detailed example from Wessendorf in Hackney provides an entry point into questions about what is understood to be diversity and who has to perform (or not) the labor to maintain its narrative. It involves an "encounter" between (A) identified as a white British woman and (B) a Black British woman:

> At the next table sits an Orthodox Jewish man in traditional clothes. A, the white British woman, asks him 'excuse me, what do your side locks mean?' The man does not respond, but holds up his hand, palm facing towards her, indicating that he either does not understand or does not want to talk, shaking his head. She asks him again, but he shakes his head and wards her off with his hand. B says to A: "forget it, he won't talk to you, he won't explain it." Her companion gets annoyed: "why, I am just asking out of curiosity, I just want to know about his religious tradition, why can't he answer me, is it a secret society or what?" (Wessendorf, 2013, p. 413)

Despite acknowledging a possible religious reason for his refusal to interact, the man's refusal to speak clashes with the idea of everyday diversity. The encounter raises questions regarding how the interaction is unproblematized as "curiosity" aside from the fact that such questions may be considered quite rude and intrusive, or even culturally illiterate, given that the Haredi Jewish community in Stamford Hill, Hackney, are the third largest Chasidic Jewish community outside of Israel and New York. The community first settled in the area in the nineteenth century escaping the pogroms of Eastern Europe (Flint Ashery, 2018).

Supporters of Wessendorf have argued that critics of superdiversity have deliberately misread this corpus of work and then used specific examples of racism to challenge or disrupt this narrative, implying a form of bad faith in such arguments (Vertovec, 2019). However, I would return to Walcott's (2019, p. 365) earlier point that places diversity in the service of whiteness as a "collective lie" that is integral to arguments around diversity as a form of encounter. However, more questions need to be raised regarding frames of understanding and interpretation. How do we make sense of the everyday encounter situated within a wider discourse of European diversity that downplays the significance of colonialism? The critical race theorist Philomena Essed's (1991) influential work remains pertinent in this context. She shows how dominant viewpoints that assert a lack of racism in European countries make it difficult for minorities to understand or articulate our own experiences as ethnic and racial minorities. However, Essed also argues that everyday experiences of racism become articulated and given voice through the informal knowledge her respondents gained from Black family members and friends, and through their engagement within international movements and Black American cultures of resistance (see also, Fricker, 2007). "When discrimination is enmeshed in structures, or occurs under the immediate surface, it can often be expressed in every-day phrases or statements, often unconscious, which expose structures of supremacy and dominance, exclusion or non-belonging" (Skadegård & Horst, 2021, p. 12). How these are interactions unfold in the everyday encounter do not necessarily offer a clear window into how they are made sense of by individuals or the deeper incivilities they conceal.

For everyday diversity to "work" there is a need for a calibration of responses to what might be perceived by some as racial slights or micro-aggressions (Williams et al., 2021). How these interactions are made sense of in the moment may vary. However, the absence of a strong political conceptualization of ethnic and racial difference excludes ongoing deeper analysis of the interlinkages between diversity and forms of racism. The encounter described above also shows how cultural norms or expectations from minorities are not solely the gesture of a white majority. Instead, there is a necessity of performative forms of diversity or what is described as "the strong moral code of mixing in public, which the large majority of Hackney follow" (Olwig, 2013, p. 472). Rather, the discourse of everyday

mixing asks all to participate and not create difficulties or disruption by challenging dominant viewpoints (see, Ahmed, 2017 in relation to sexism). Specific minorities become visible at particular moments in the intersections of racial and ethnic identity, gender, cultural norms, and religion. The encounter within spaces of everyday diversity brings with it meanings about integration, not at the level of the nation-state but through presumptions about appropriate behavior in the day-to-day arena, including the right to question and expect an answer. Cultural competence and cosmopolitanism are loaded with Eurocentric notions where interactions remain more attentive to perceptions of comfortableness, awkwardness, or other "emotional" responses rather than situating them within structural inequalities.

For people of color, Hackney and other diverse neighborhoods may offer some respite from forms of everyday racism as they are visibly ethnically mixed spaces. The sociologist Sivamohan Valluvan (2016) draws upon his ethnographic work with young Londoners to note that convivial labor takes a multitude of forms to stabilize diversity. The practices of rendering difference mundane or unremarkable, rather than an unthought way of being, is a carefully crafted and reflective state. Valluvan (2016, p. 209) turns to Farima, a young woman with an Iranian background, who:

> [E]xpounds a picture of multiculture which is predicated on a stance towards difference as non-intrusive ('I am not a problem') and thereby unremarkable, as opposed to a stance towards difference as simply non-existent (liberal universalism), subsumed (integration) or formally recognized (multiculturalism).

Prior ethnic and racial distinctions are not erased within everyday diversity. Instead, they are implicitly based upon fixed notions of preexisting difference where difference must be normalized and stabilized. The geographer Junjia Ye (2019) describes the sorts of encounters of interest to diversity research as both "a low stakes sort of inclusion" but at the same time expressive of "norms; that is, the micro-tones of place-based, locally contingent modes of civility and codes of conduct" (p. 485).

The idea of 'feeling comfortable' in public space is an affective quality that white citizens habitually take for granted" notes geographer Anoop Nayak. In his examination of young British Bangladeshi youths, he found that they valued the idea of diversity but faced multiple racist interactions. These experiences affected their sense of belonging in public space and a wider polity showing how "the affective capacities of comfort are unevenly distributed, making them feel illegitimate subjects" (Nayak, 2017, p. 294). These distinctions complicate the assumption that different groups are not impacted by wider power relations and also emphasize how the normative dimensions of diversity create a barrier for those exploring the intersections with discrimination (see also, Noronha, 2021). The sociologist Thomas Sealy notes that despite people's individual capacity to mediate life in diverse spaces these interactions are not sufficient in "addressing the dynamics of racism, discrimination and what is occurring in these spaces" (Sealy, 2018, p. 700). Everyday diversity work foregrounds quotidian interactions but has given insufficient attention to the power dynamics of public space. The idea that space is "open to everyone" where no one group dominates exemplifies an everyday diversity narrative that does not consider sufficiently the differential representational and racial power of majorities.

Urban subjects of diversity

A key issue that emerges from everyday diversity research is whose understandings become centralized and whose are obscured in thinking about presence in urban space. The turn to diversity obscures a more complex and structurally unequal set of relationships between white ethnic majorities and Black and ethnic minorities. The notion of diversity is not the direct descendent of the colonial encounter but racial and ethnic categorizations and understandings are not innocent. The critical theorist Sara Ahmed proposes that "Diversity work can be thought of as will work; you have to become willing to adjust to a world that does not accommodate you" (Ahmed, 2012, p. 146). Ahmed emphasizes how diversity creates differential impacts on those made visible through it as "Bodies can be experienced in this way, as getting in the way, when spaces are not made 'accessible' to those

bodies" (p. 147). Diversity is more than a sense of co-existing difference but distributes labor unevenly because it connects to discourses of true or primordial belonging in place that work to exclude people of color. Diversity troubles a previous state of presumed homogeneity.

Diversity's opacity enables it to be simultaneously harnessed to "progressive" and "populist" politics, as well as being enrolled in neoliberal governance agendas and urban planning discourses (see for example, Raco & Taşan-Kok, 2020; Uitermark et al., 2005). The literary scholar Jodi Melamed considers that neoliberal diversity has led to anti-racist action being severely limited in its potential for action. Her comments are based within the U.S. context but raise important challenges to the intersections between normative examinations of diversity where "Under the mask of multicultural reference, race and racism remain central to neoliberal arrangements" (Melamed, 2011, p. 145). Diversity, whilst claiming to disturb or de-essentialize racial categories, may act to replicate them. As well as this, the subtle operations of racism and discrimination, are under-explored within everyday encounter.

Diversity's insubstantial nature means that it can become relegated to "background music" within the wider urban fabric on closer scrutiny. The geographer Mike Raco and colleagues (2018) examination of London finds diversity called upon as a frequent and seemingly inclusive terminology at city level. Their empirical work based in Haringey, North London, found that many residents spoke positively about diversity within their neighborhood but in fact moved there because it was one of the last affordable parts of inner London. Diversity was in reality an abstract concept to valorize the neighborhood but which was considered to have no significant impact upon everyday life. Elsewhere Raco has also explored the politicization of diversity discourses and their co-optation by governance and business interests. Celebration of diversity operates within the same spaces as increasingly entrenched urban inequalities (Raco, 2018; Raco & Kesten, 2018).

Diversity's emergence from the rejection of multiculturalism challenges claims for any particular forms of ethnic and racial recognition thereby recentering majority values and norms (Breen & Meer, 2019). The sociologist Arne Saeys et al. (2019) have emphasized how diversity in fact enabled conservative agendas to be promoted in the city of Antwerp with a dress code that excluded any religious symbols, including headscarves. The alignment of diversity with a set of apparently "neutral" values thinly conceals a European notion of cosmopolitanism. The idea that European values are neutral or progressive and thus worthy of imposition is demonstrated through ongoing legislative battles over citizenship ceremonies. In Denmark, there is a legal requirement to shake hands with the state representative in order to gain citizenship (Seemann, 2020). There have been cases of people who are part of the Muslim faith not being granted citizenship even though they met all formal obligations at the point of their ceremony in Denmark and Germany (Luyken, 2020; Peltier, 2020)

The longstanding work of ethnic and racial scholars has critiqued the ongoing problematic framing of minority groups. Stuart Hall, for instance, emphasizes that ethnic understandings have the capacity to draw on traditions and culture but these shifts and histories are selective. "People belonging to such *cultures of hybridity* have had to renounce the dream or ambition of rediscovering any kind of 'lost' cultural purity, or ethnic absolutism. They are irrevocably *translated* ..." (Hall, 1992, p. 310). Metropolitan urban space brings with it past imaginaries of race, ethnicity, and belonging which cannot so easily be erased through the presumed celebration of diversity. These legacies form part of a much longer history of racial encounter which may be sidelined in scholarship but which continues to mark the profound inequalities between Black and ethnic groups, their life experiences, their life chances, and their treatment by the state.

These inequalities framed the experience of many people from former colonies who were responding to a direct call from the metropole to address labor shortages. These communities held rights of citizenship alongside an invitation to work in vital industries or as part of national labor agreements to address shortages. Their attempts to settle within cities were met with hostility with their access to employment, housing, and other services and opportunities were restricted (see, Rex & Moore, 1967). Significant numbers found they could only access poor housing such as in "twilight zones," areas not prioritized for regeneration and blighted with unfit housing (Bristow, 1979). Communities of color were blamed for the dilapidated state of the "inner city" in Britain. These legacies remain and, in the

UK, most Black and ethnic minorities live in urban areas. Even whilst diversity narratives predominate, the reality is that race and racial prejudice significantly shape urban space (see, for example, Kadıoğlu, 2021 in relation to Berlin's school system).

The 2011 British Census revealed that 98% of all Black and Minority Ethnic people lived in urban areas with many concentrated in some of the worst housing in the UK (Sunak & Rajeswaran, 2014). Turkish workers coming to West Germany were heavily restricted in housing choices with many living in employer or state provided accommodation, including the re-use of prisoner housing from the Second World War (see, Miller, 2018). Other European countries including, France, the Netherlands, Sweden, and Denmark have all trialed forms of housing segregation and desegregation policies targeting visible ethnic minorities. Denmark, in particular, has proceeded with the highly problematically termed "ghetto policy" that enforces forms of integration on the basis of a distinction between "liberal" white Dutch people and visible minorities who are purported to not hold such values (Simonsen, 2016).

European metropoles are postcolonial cities connected to a longer imperial history and centuries of migration. The idea that Europe has only recently become diverse masks how it has engaged with ethnic and racial difference for centuries although often through the power of colonialism. This disconnection from an understanding of Europe's own history is further exemplified in political discourse which considers rural regions and towns unproblematically as predominantly white, even traditional and nostalgic spaces where "pre-diverse" ways of life exist in ways that misrepresent European history (see, Goodhart, 2017 for an example). Such narratives further locate Black and ethnic minorities as out of place in rural locations and thus renders them invisible outside of cities and major urban areas (see, Garland & Chakraborti, 2006).

The sociologist Jan Willem Duyvendak (2020) describes the mobilization of "nativist" discourse in Amsterdam that continues to distinguish between the truly Dutch and those with black and minority ethnic backgrounds. Instead, whiteness is centralized as a previous state of "normality" irrevocably altered through migration and diversity. Paul Gilroy's elucidation of conviviality placed it in tension with what he terms a "postcolonial melancholia," representing a white antipathy toward the changing citizenry of Europe. The post-colonial nature of imperial metropoles brings together Europe with its former colonial subjects who gained rights of citizenship or residence in new patterns of migration and settlement during the decolonial wave. European nations and their histories differ but have been shaped by migratory and trade routes for centuries, with a significant Black presence in Europe since the 1500s and a Muslim presence in Southern Europe since the 1200s.

However, the lack of connection with European colonialism in the understanding of ethnic and racial identities placed European knowledge and rationality at the center, and other presumed ethnic and racial groupings as outside European modernity (see, Chakrabarty, 2000). Ethnic and racial classifications marked colonial governance with "Classification here is not a benign cultural act but a potent political one" (Stoler, 2010, p. 8). These practices shaped understanding of racial difference that have proved to be one of the more powerful tenets of the European Enlightenment. Description and quantification forms part of the state's need to stabilize a particular political racial reality (Stoler, 2010).

Many European nations distinguish between white Europeans, white others and Black and minority ethnic Europeans. The terms non-native, non-Western, or second or third generation immigrants, or person with migration background proliferate in European data classification (see, Farkas, 2017). The concept of a migration background is also used in the Netherlands. The demographer Gerwin Van Schie (2018) demonstrates how the Netherlands deeply embeds racial difference through distinguishing between *authochthon* (native) and *allochtoon* (non-native). The latter group, allochtoon, were further subdivided into Western and non-Western backgrounds, until 2017 when the Census Office moved to the term "non-Western migration background". The children and grandchildren of "non-Western" migrants are not primarily framed as Dutch but an essentialized racial focus presumes that the history of someone else's arrival into the country forms a central component of their identity (Essed, 1991; Van Schie, 2018).

Yet the reification of these problematic categories has profound impacts for scholarship when categories are unproblematized. A recent study on the Netherlands published in this journal focused on whether fear of crime correlated with increasingly diverse neighborhoods. The authors demonstrated how the processes of ethnic enumeration reinscribe absolute difference thus: "It is, however, reasonable to expect that the effects of living in diversity are different depending on whether an individual is a native or not" (Glas et al., 2019, p. 738). Native, in this case, is defined as white Dutch, reflecting a series of assumptions about diversity being outside of Europe that create difficulties of adaption.[5] Unpacking these ideas enables us to engage with how research practices discursively relate to stabilizing ethnic difference recentering ethnic minorities and migrants as possessing an innate difference to "native" residents (see also, Musterd, 2005).

Decisions regarding identity classification are more complex and negotiated than an imposition by the State but they signpost how even the desire for "accurate" enumeration reinscribe a multitude of ethnic differences in tension with European whiteness. The linguistics scholar Finex Ndhlovu (2016, p. 36) emphasizes the importance of decolonial epistemologies to assist us in unmasking the ostensibly progressive language that surrounds difference as a:

> coloniality of power, which theorizes interrelations of the practices and legacies of European colonialism in social orders and forms of knowledge. It describes the living legacy of colonialism in contemporary societies in the form of social discrimination that outlived formal colonialism and became integrated in succeeding social orders and behaviours.

Racial and ethnic identification were intimately connected to ascribed behaviors and predispositions by colonial officials. Colonial epistemologies were used to justify spatial ordering leading to exclusions of non-Europeans from urban space and justifications for lack of public health and infrastructure. These racial and ethnic categorizations bring with them historical burdens mediated through European colonialism. Diversity, whilst mediated through everyday practices, is attuned to long-standing discourses of European belonging as central to whiteness as predicated on spatial and social norms (Home, 2013).

Defending spaces of diversity

How might a more critical lens on diversity that considers these continuing distinctions between White Europeans and Black and ethnic minorities further illuminate urban neighborhood dynamics? A growing field of North American work draws upon critical race theory and the centrality of white supremacy to the shaping of urban spaces (see, for example, Goetz et al., 2020). In contrast, there remains a relative absence within European urban diversity scholarship in regard to how whiteness acts to shape space (see, Pemberton & Phillimore, 2018; Pemberton, 2020 for notable exceptions).

The erasure of a much more complex European racial and ethnic history is politically important. Placing ethnic and racial others as outside of European nation-states gives credence to discourses of the struggle to accommodate these "new" forms of diversity (see, Foner et al., 2019). The public realm is constructed through such interactions not only through everyday negotiations but as reminders of their place within the city or the nation-state. These legacies have a close relationship to how claims for space by different groups are hampered by diversity discourse.

Understanding diversity means greater attention to how diversity discourse is layered over more longstanding racial tropes where a particular group is considered to take over a space and how these intersections connect with nationalist sentiments. For example, the sociologist Talja Blokland's (2003) thoughtful ethnography of a Rotterdam neighborhood highlights the complex ways in which ethnicity provides a resource to distinguish communities in terms of value and social mores. She describes how space is a key flashpoint through which ethnic and racial differences become delineated. The white Dutch working class people in the neighborhood held friendships and neighborly relationships with some Dutch minority groups. Yet at the same time they were also dismissive about cultural and religious practices such as the wearing of the veil. Blokland engages with how ethnic identities forms a set of

resources for different groups: "Ethnicity then might construct a field to separate others who claimed the same space." "Within locations" Blokland further elaborates that "the peer groups witnessed competition about who was in charge of the neighborhood: who defined what were acceptable practices, who needed to greet and who was greeted" (Blokland, 2003, p. 19). Blokland discusses the concept of "indifference" toward ethnic and racial difference but warns that "it is of crucial importance not to take this indifference as an expression of a tolerant community" (Blokland, 2003, p. 19). Diversity, as a concept, can be mobilized to confer cordial or non-conflictual relations within day-to-day conversation and interactions but simultaneously offers an opportunity to recenter whiteness when there are challenges over control or presence in space (see also, Breen & Meer, 2019; Lapiņa, 2020; Van Wyngaard, 2014).

These racially and ethnically embedded grammars of behavior shape the possibilities for urban spaces but require further exploration by urban scholars. They demonstrate how diversity is put under intense pressure when different groups seek to shape the use of space. A study of an Amsterdam neighborhood, for example, drew attention to how the change of management of a local community center was characterized by some within the white Dutch working class community as a form of dispossession with an Islamophobic rhetoric that the space was being taken over "by someone with a headscarf" (Hoekstra & Pinkster, 2019, p. 232). Such assertions draw upon rich vein of Eurocentric racial thinking that consistently denigrates the other as a problematic presence forcing change that marginalizes the ethnic majority. In these instances, diversity became a resource for white majorities to make claims about ethnic presence as a profound shift away from European norms. The rescaling of diversity to some conception that there are boundaries that delineate good or bad diverse groups or behaviors are not innocent and reveal ongoing claims to protect whiteness.

These critiques of diversity invite us to pay attention to how it is mobilized to protect European identity as white. Whilst ethnically and racially different groups are overtly a welcome part of diversity, the literature on everyday diversity reveals that assumptions about identity place barriers to action. There is implicit thinking that a form of "good diversity" exists as neutral and civil but in fact it is highly culturally determined. The sociologist Avtar Brah uses the term "diaspora space" to call for a more conceptually engaged understanding of how all identities are shifted through legacies of colonialism and migration. She reminds us that these spaces are not neutral but "where belonging and otherness is appropriated and contested" (Brah, 1996, p. 238). Only through rejecting nativist discourses and engaging with how "European-ness" is historically constituted as whiteness and as different (and better) than other ethnic and racial groups can we consider the weakness of concepts and policies of multiculturalism and diversity that continue to fix minorities as outside of European values.

Conclusions

In this paper I have explored everyday diversity discourse and how its limited connections to the legacy European colonialism obscure how ethnicity continues to be constructed in opposition to European whiteness. Whilst it may offer a countervailing narrative to political rhetoric that is highly critical of visible minorities, the existing hierarchies of race and ethnicity are not destabilized but reformulated into a seemingly progressive language. More nuanced attention is needed to how convivial labor places differential obligations on minority groups and individuals. As the geographer Divia Tolia-Kelly (2020, p. 591) explains:

> ... diasporised identities are disassembled and reassembled to form a "weave of differences" that refuse "authenticity," "tradition" and as such narratives of "origin" connected to blood and soil. ... Although, rather than being experienced at the territory of the colony, the conditions are experienced at the centre of imperial thought and cultural dominance, Europe.

Everyday diversity's apparent ordinariness masks the ways in which white European norms frame discourse about urban spaces. These limitations hinder a more conceptually engaged positionality that disrupts longstanding and problematic processes of racialization which continue to marginalize minorities.

The dominant European framing of diversity extends the binary between how Black and ethnic minorities are continuously "recognized" in ways that reaffirm difference from white (and "legitimate") European majorities. Whilst diversity discourse at first glance may seem to share similarities with intersectionality, there are important differences. Black feminist thought emerges from criticism of structural inequalities and has an anti-racist and anti-sexist praxis. In contrast, diversity has achieved popular recognition within the institutional arena as ways of recognizing and strengthening corporate diversity or addressing "imbalances" (see, Berrey, 2015).

At the same time as everyday diversity has emerged as an urban phenomenon, concerns have been raised that cities are not open or "amenable" to white majorities. Far Right political parties have increased their power across Europe and are bolstered by nostalgic narratives of the white nation-state. Support for these groups is invariably concentrated in predominantly white areas of cities. The sociologist Sivamohan Valluvan notes how an asserted failure to integrate, indicates "less about an ideal that is more inclusive in the sense of its democratic polity, and instead starts to rehearse an already established form of ethnic superiority as appropriate for a decidedly liberal sensibility" (Valluvan, 2019, p. 70). An examination of lived diversity needs to engage more with how spatial imaginaries of urban space fix ethnic and racial difference, drawing on a panoply of racist tropes that emerged from European colonialism.

Greater attention to more complex understandings of diversity does not necessarily offer a commitment to more nuanced forms of recognition. European diversity discourse's rejection of questions of racism means that it lacks capacity to engage with how power shapes identities and experiences. Despite reflection upon the complexities of urban categories, established ethnic and racial categorizations provide the descriptors for the individuals and groups that form part of the diverse city. Decolonizing the understanding of what being European is requires a far more expansive acknowledgment of the different histories that enable diverse groups to be "in place" or "out of place." These histories must be located within the Eurocentric legacy of colonialism and be attentive to how past practices of racial ordering imbue contemporary European understandings of racial and ethnic difference.

A precondition for more nuanced scholarship would also be a more thoughtful reflection on how language embeds difference. The terms "second" and "third" generation immigrants, for example, are deeply problematic. These temporal signifiers keep minorities in a state of suspended non-European identity. One wonders if the future will bring analysis of "fourth," "fifth," or even "ninth" generation minority groups. At what point do minorities move from a liminal state of arrival to a lived presence on their own terms? A more serious engagement is needed with the colonial racial encounter and its on-going implications for the continuing privileging of whiteness within urban diversity. The emphasis on diversity within everyday encounters obscures the legacies of colonialism within urban space. In contrast, situating diversity within the colonial legacies of European identity enables us to problematize these ostensibly progressive narratives.

Notes

1. Monolingualism of the other or the prothesis of origin, 1998 [1996] Stanford: Stanford University Press [Translated by Patrick Mensah].
2. London is Open https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/arts-and-culture/london-open; City of Amsterdam, Diversity Policy (www.amsterdam.nl/en/policy/policy-diversity); Helsinki website (www.hel.fi); City of Madrid official tourism website (esmadrid.com).
3. The recent reopening of the Brussels Royal Museum of Central Africa, for instance, following a five-year renovation to "decolonize" an institution, whose founder King Leopold II, had brought 267 Congolese people to the site as an "exhibition" in 1897 (Hassett, 2020).

4. There is no uniformity in the collection of data across Europe and only some countries run a census. There are also challenges to these terminologies as different European countries collect different data. The UK collects ethnicity data, France and Germany collect data on country of birth, the Netherlands and Sweden are interested in the country of birth of one's parents. Data is collected from registers in some countries. There is considerable sensitivity over the collection of ethnic data in Germany following World War 2 (see, Simon, 2012, "Collecting ethnic statistics in Europe: A review" Ethnic and Racial Studies, 35(8), pp. 1366–1391.) Also see, (Coghe & Widmer, 2015).

5. The state definition of non-natives are those ethnicized as Turkish, Moroccan, Surinamese, Antillean. These groups are mostly considered to represent non-Westerners even if individuals and their parents were born in the Netherlands.

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Disclosure statement

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