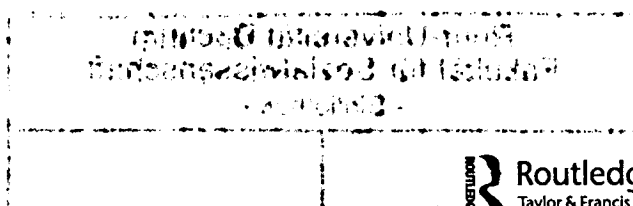

The Routledge Handbook of Critical European Studies

*Edited by Didier Bigo, Thomas Diez,
Evangelos Fanoulis, Ben Rosamond
and Yannis A. Stivachtis*



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Postcolonialism

Catarina Kinnvall

Introduction

When a narrative is constructed, something is left out. When an end is defined, other ends are rejected, and one may not know what those ends are. ... What is left out? Can we know what is left out? (Spivak 1990, 18–19).

Most postcolonial accounts of Europe and European integration are concerned with how narratives of Europe, the European Union (EU) and the West can be understood from a post-colonial perspective in which notions of empire, borders and historical trajectories cannot be divorced from current understandings of EU politics. In such accounts, what is left out, to speak with Spivak, is the idea that EU member states have largely purged the anxieties of their colonial pasts by forgetting how empire once structured Europe and its relations with the rest of the world and how it successfully has entrenched the myth of its own 'virgin birth' (Nicolaidis, 2014; Spivak 1999; Bhabra 2009). Here, it is important to point out that many of these accounts are more concerned with notions of Europe, eurocentrism, and European migration- and border politics rather than with the institutional, historical and geographic consolidation of European states into a European Union. The kind of 'entity' that can legitimately be called 'Europe', as Balibar (2009) has argued, is fraught with uncertainties and ideological conflicts and the European integration process continues to be caught in a process of integration and differentiation, simultaneously. Europe is, as W.B. Gallie noted already in 1962, an 'essentially contested concept'. A postcolonial perspective of Europe is thus not coterminous with a postcolonial perspective of the EU, even if they often overlap in accounts of foundational narratives, migration, integration, borders, citizenship practices and policies.

Postcolonial accounts of Europe tend to stem from a particular understanding of the Eurocentric basis of what we take to be the West and Western civilisation. At a most fundamental level, postcolonial theory explores the continuities and discontinuities between colonial pasts and postcolonial presents. It is both a cultural phenomenon that can be empirically studied, and a political and intellectual project for confronting and rewriting historically developed knowledge structures (Shome and Hegde 2002). In this regard, postcolonial theorising is concerned with occidentalism, described as a particular form of 'non-European' engagement of western counterparts that rarely reflects upon the normative underpinnings of such engagement (Buruma

and Margalit 2005). Occidentalism displays the same logic as Eurocentrism as it tends to overlook the 'interactive, co-constitutive complexity of here and there, now and then' (Hooper and Kramsch 2007, 529; see also Venn 2000). In academia, and especially in the field of international relations (IR), a focus on postcolonial understandings of Europe and the West not only moves us beyond established critiques of realist, liberal or constructivist theories and their preoccupation with the state as a sovereign body, but also towards a thorough investigation of the pervading white mythology of IR as a discipline – what Hobson (2007) refers to as the 'Westphalian' narrative of much IR theory – that 'renders racist hierarchies and racism invisible in the world while simultaneously issuing racist Eurocentric explanatory models of the world' (ibid: 93). Postcolonial criticism is thus about 'decentring' or 'provincialising' Europe in order to revisit the 'construction of European identity' through historical memory (Fisher Onar and Nicolaïdis 2013; Chakrabarty 2007), a critique not entirely dissimilar from Spivak's (1999) suggestion to change the title of an Essex conference in 1992 from 'Europe and Its Others' to 'Europe as an Other', documenting and theorising the itinerary of Europe as a sovereign subject (Kinnvall 2016).

In this chapter I start by providing an outline of the historical and intellectual development of the field of postcolonialism and postcolonial ideas about Europe and European identity. This is followed by a discussion of its implications for studies of European integration and EU politics, where I outline some of the major claims of these bodies of literature and their main contributions to the field. Finally, I make a number of suggestions for the continued relevance of postcolonial analysis for understanding contemporary and future developments in Europe and the EU, with a particular emphasis on migration, integration and border politics in the light of the presence of postcolonial subjects in European space.

Postcolonialism and European identity: Historical and intellectual developments of the field

The intellectual origins of postcolonial thought go back to the writings of Frantz Fanon, Gayatri Spivak, Homi Bhabha, Judith Butler, Edward Said, V.Y. Mudimbe, Stuart Hall, Ashis Nandy and Partha Chatterjee, among others, as well as more recent work by for instance Chandra Mohanty, Julia Kristeva, Etienne Balibar, and Lila Abu-Lughod. Without going into the details of these accounts, they all converge in their focus on universalism, eurocentrism, and the vision of the 'other', as explicated in studies of colonialism, imperialism, dominance, hybridity, cultural stereotypes and racism, with a more contemporary focus on multiculturalism, migration and diaspora politics. Postcolonial accounts detail how in the age of exploration and colonial conquest western European countries gradually conceived of themselves as part of a civilisation, what Stuart Hall describes as 'the West against the Rest'. 'The Other was the "dark side" – forgotten, repressed and denied; the reverse image of enlightenment and modernity' (Hall 1992, 314). Societies, they claim, were thus ranked along an evolutionary scale from 'barbarism' to 'civilisation', identifying the other with nature – the 'primitive' in contrast to the 'civilised world' (Hall 1997; Mudimbe 1988).

At heart is the 'writing of the nation' (Bhabha 1990) by colonial powers in cultural essentialist terms. This specifically involves questioning the idea of the desirability of the nation-state, as grounded in a notion of an essentialised universal subject, as the form through which self-governance, autonomy, self-respect, and justice are to be pursued (Kinnvall 2016). This claim goes together with poststructural notions of anti-essentialism together with their critique of modernity (Seth 2000; Diez 2004; see also Caterina Carta's chapter on poststructural discursive approaches in this volume). In her insistence on deconstruction Spivak (1999), for instance, examines the processes through which we naturalise personal history and desire into general truth, thus dismantling the

very tradition of western thought that has provided the justification for European colonialism and neo-colonialism. This modern subject is described as the source of knowledge guided by Enlightenment principles of reason and science, but also by the 'urge to shut the other out into the opacity of the unknown alien, to be excluded or reduced to the status of a beast of burden and treated accordingly' (Comaroff and Comaroff 2005, 127). In this regard the postcolonial is not a thing of the past: The traces of the colonial state have not withered away as sovereignty in the postcolonial world has often remained provisional and partial, and at times even despotic and viciously violent. As Jean Comaroff and John Comaroff (2005, 127) write:

Identity struggles, ranging from altercations over resources to genocide, seem immanent almost everywhere as selfhood is immersed – existentially, metonymically – into claims of collective essence, of innate substance and primordial sentiment, that nestle within or transect the polity. In short, homogeneity as a "national fantasy" is giving way to a recognition of the irreducibility of difference.

This national fantasy is closely connected to imaginations of territory and borders as bounded spaces, and often hinges on an obsession with the limits of sovereignty as defined in territorial terms. The ways in which the state and the subject have been imagined as essentialist bodies have for many postcolonial authors also been associated with 'the subject of colonial modernity' which refers to a particular body – 'male, elite and especially European and "white"' (Fuss 1994, 23; Spivak 1999). Feminist postcolonial writers have thus problematised the image of the Western and white European man that came to underlie conceptions of the East as it is opposite in terms of an effeminate powerless oriental other. In these accounts, the western man was simultaneously a conqueror and a knowledge seeker, while knowledge itself was both feminised and sexualised. Orientalist accounts thus pictured the colonised woman as unable to speak and known only through European writers (Mohanty, Russo, and Lourdes 1991) – or the 'subaltern other' to speak with Spivak (1999), in which she describes how the English male colonisers were collectively represented as the protector, the saviour of Indian women from an oppressively patriarchal Hindu society: 'how white men were saving brown women from brown men' (1993, 93). Postcolonial criticism is thus concerned with the sociopolitical construction and consolidation of white masculinity as normative and the subsequent racialisation and sexualisation of colonised peoples (Mohanty, Russo, and Lourdes 1991; Kinnvall 2016; see also Abels and MacRae's chapter on gender approaches in this volume).

The colonial subject is always 'overdetermined from without', Fanon (1952) writes. 'It is through image and fantasy – those orders that figure transgressively on the borders of history and the unconscious – that Fanon most profoundly evokes the colonial condition' (Bhabha 2013, 118). As a condition it has been explored through Fanon's discussion of negritude; through Mudimbe's ideas around the concepts of ethnocentrism and race, and through Bhabha's (1984) accounts of the irony of imitation and hybridity. In *Black Skin, White Masks*, Frantz Fanon recounts his problematic relationship with the negritude movement aimed to create pride in being black, by exploring how his subjectivity as a colonised other was constructed where a politics of white assimilation contributed to his self-fragmentation. In *The Intervention of Africa* (1988), Mudimbe similarly outlines the birth of epistemological and cultural ethnocentrism as based on universal knowledge claims originating in Europe where the ideal way of thinking and behaving is always viewed from the lenses of Western consciousness, as well as from Eurocentric cultural and social principles. Similarly, Bhabha explores in the *Of Mimicry and Man*, (1984) the irony of imitation as founded in racial prejudices where, no matter how hard one tries to imitate the colonisers, the racist structures make assimilation an impossible venture. Here Bhabha

argues that the colonial mimicry is 'the desire for a reformed, recognizable Other, as a subject of a difference that is almost the same, but not quite' (1984, 86). This focus on the 'writing of the nation' and a subject created, evolved and measured through western imperialism and knowledge construction is also at the heart of postcolonial understanding of Europe and European integration.

Postcolonial perspectives of Europe largely converge on the idea that imperialism has seldom been understood as an aspect of European civilisation, despite the fact that it has been crucial to its very construction (Bhambra 2009; Hansen 2002; Hansen and Jonsson 2012; Polat 2011). As Spivak has argued, postcolonial theory makes absolutely clear that the term 'civilization' is part of 'Eurocentric strategies of narrativizing history, so that Europe can congratulate itself for progress' which in contemporary terms invokes the 'culture of capitalism' (Spivak 1999, 91 in Manners 2016, 77). By glossing over its imperial past, an idea of Europe is created in which unity in diversity prevails, focused on what keeps Europe together in the face of non-European values, cultures and citizens. As Bhambra (2017a, 35) maintains: 'There's a way in which we speak about empire as a state form that already exists, without talking about the processes that enable empire to come into being'.

This is also the story of European identity as read through Europe's external relations. As a story it tends to lack an exterior and rely on universal categories, what Derrida calls *catachresis*, and has been used to represent groups who are more or less internally divided, such as women, workers, or the colonised (Spivak 1999). This, Stuart Hall (1991, 18) argues: 'tells us more about how cultural identities are constructed – as 'imagined communities', through the marking of difference with others – than it does about the actual relations of unequal exchange and uneven development through which a common identity was forged'.

The story of European identity is difficult to separate from the idea of a cosmopolitan Europe associated with the post-war project, the image of a peaceful Europe, open to other cultures and continents and able to have mutual and peaceful dialogues (Bhambra 2009, 2016, 2017b; Hansen 2009). Underlying such cosmopolitan understandings of Europe is the notion that all human beings belong to a single moral community that transcends state boundaries or national identities (McCormick 2010). It is an emphasis on liberal values and the reimagining of European identity and culture as propping up particular understandings of an economic and political union. Emerging from a world of war, chaos and toxic nationalism is a clear narrative structure that presents reason as the basis for the post-war construction of the EU. 'It rejects or is agnostic about material power as the basis for organising political communities and governing. ... It is a narrative that is rooted in universal principles that are seen to be the basis for a different kind of international actor and international system' (Della Sala 2018, 270). As Spivak (1999, 93) has emphasised, 'it is not just Eurocentric communitarian strategies that are problematic, but also the 'culture of capitalism' which, as a result, also evokes a wider critique of neo-liberal cosmopolitanism'. As a particular form of neo-cosmopolitanism, (Bhambra 2016), it reflects an underlying postcolonial concern that such a cosmopolitan Europe will attempt to 'civilise the world (again)' (Manners 2016). Instead, Bhambra (2016, 157) maintains, there is a need to replace this notion with a post-colonial cosmopolitanism that would expose 'contemporary forms of exploitation of those represented as "outside" Europe'. To provide more adequate and inclusive accounts of such 'others', she says, historical connections must be interlinked with contemporary issues shared by all.

Postcolonial European union studies: Claims and contributions

The foundational narrative of the birth of the union is almost always told in relation to the 'decline' of the state and nation in the international system. ... The EU constantly projects its foundational narrative as universal and one that can be the basis for promoting democracy, economic prosperity, and resolving conflicts (Della Sala 2018, 270).

Even today interpretations of European integration often suffer from what Patel (2013) has referred to as 'asymmetric ignorance' in which the EU is seen as a kind of gold standard with its alleged exceptionality serving as the yardstick of interpretation of non-European life-worlds (Chakrabarty 2007). This idea of a universal Europe has repercussions for the ways in which the foundational myth of the EU is told as it was emerging from its own 'chaos' of two world wars and the hyper-nationalism of the inter-war period (Della Sala 2018). From a postcolonial perspective of European integration (see e.g. Behr and Stivachtis 2016; Bhambra 2009; Hansen 2002; Fisher Onar and Nicolaïdis 2013; Della Sala 2018; Zielonka 2016), this foundational myth largely ignores how European states, over the past 500 years, have conquered and colonised virtually every single corner of the world in one form or another. It also tends to mask 'Europe's current complicity in the production of exploitative and oppressive relations within as well as beyond its newly minted frontiers' (Hooper and Kramersch 2007, 527), and the combination of its continued colonial legacy in terms of institutions, and sustained exploitation through globalisation (Manners 2016). More recent scholarship of the EU has reiterated this legacy through emphasising the colonial bequests of the EU (Hansen and Jonsson 2012; Hooper and Kramersch 2007), the postcolonial move to Europe (Kinnvall 2016, 2019; Kastoryano 2010), EU 'as an empire' (Behr and Stivachtis 2016; Bhambra 2009; Polat 2011), and current EU postcolonial relations (Adler-Nissen and Gad 2012).

Many authors have also dealt explicitly with external perceptions of the EU in which the postcolonial has figured at the margin (e.g. Chaban et al. 2013; Fioramonti and Poletti 2008; Lucarelli and Fioramonti 2010; Bachmann 2011), focussing on the macro-dynamics of EU external policy-making beyond established territorial dimensions. Lucarelli and Fioramonti (2010) consider for instance political and economic elites, civil society organisations and the media by looking at other global powers, the Middle East and the developing world, as well as at international agencies and media, to provide insights about attitudes of the EU that may differ from EU policy makers' assumptions. Bachmann (2011) deals with the political instruments used by European actors to project their geopolitical vision in a development context with a particular focus on how development cooperation is organised and how Europe positions itself in the international development industry (see Bachmann and Bialasiewicz's chapter on critical geopolitics in this volume), while Chaban et al. (2013) investigate regional and issue-specific variation in external perceptions of the EU as a global power and an international leader. From a postcolonial perspective, these authors are credited for providing valuable insights into external perceptions of the EU, but critiqued for being unable to depart from a static, homogenous and Eurocentric view of that 'external' world (see e.g. Hooper and Kramersch 2007, 527), as well as for their inability to recognise how Eurocentrism survived European imperialism. Accounts such as these, Fisher Onar and Nicolaïdis (2013) argue (see also Nicolaïdis, Sebe, and Maas 2014), tend to overlook the EU's 'neo-colonial' behaviour in its external relations. Due to attitudes that echo the era of European imperialism, the EU is accused of being oblivious to negative outcomes in the 'non-European world', whether in the context of Euro-African trade agreements, World Trade Organization negotiations or the International Criminal Court.

Some EU scholars have also looked closely at the notion of empire. In their joint edited volume, *Revisiting the European Union as an Empire*, Behr and Stivachtis (2016) ask whether the EU can be understood as an empire and what kind of empire the EU is? Here, Behr (2016) deals with the question of political violence in relation to 'governing from a distance', in which he asserts that EU policies are ignorant of contextual, culture-specific factors and are inevitably neglecting situated knowledge and practices and are, therefore, intrinsically violent. Stivachtis (2016) similarly approaches 'the governance from the distance' issue, by concentrating on the norms and values of the EU and on EU conditionality, developed due to pressure

of international anarchy and the need of certain states to maintain close relations with the EU. In this, he argues, the EU's norms, rules, and practices are transmitted, globally, in three ways: Through EU's Enlargement Policy, the implementation of the European Neighbourhood Policy, and through the EU's Development Policy. As a result, he argues, the EU constitutes a modern form of empire that contributes towards the creation of a global order compatible with the EU's vision and interests.

Other works within European integration studies focus more directly on what kind of 'entity' or subject the EU actually is, often in relations to various others, where the EU has been described as a 'postmodern polity' (Ruggie 1993); a 'post-sovereign state' (Waever 1996); a 'civilian power' (Duchêne 1972); a 'normative power' (Manners 2002), or a global actor more generally. According to Diez (2005, 314), debates about the character of EU's identity as a global actor tend to ignore or underestimate the 'power' that lies in the representation of the EU as a 'normative power.' In particular, he argues that such a representation works both as a precondition for other actors to agree on norms set by the EU, and for constructing an identity of the EU against an image of 'Others' in the 'outside world'. Without going into detail of these debates, the importance of situating any discussion of Europe as a global actor in its postcolonial context cannot be overstated (see discussion of EU as a global actor in Ian Manners' chapter on critical social theory in this volume).

The fact that the original members of the European Economic Community (ECC) were also former colonial and imperial powers adds to this picture, with France, the Netherlands, and Belgium entering with colonial possessions, while Germany and Italy had lost their colonies due to wartime defeat. Later member states, such as the UK, Spain, and Portugal were also former colonial powers, with the UK still having significant colonial commitments as it joined (Bhambra and Holmwood 2018). This has led a number of postcolonial scholars to argue that the idea and practice of 'Europe as a model' reflects a hybrid strategy of 'amnesia, redirection and atonement on the part of public figures, intellectuals and broader publics' (Fisher Onar and Nicolaïdis 2013, 293). As Fisher Onar and Nicolaïdis (*ibid*) have argued, the European Community was not only born out of a desire for a radical break with war and nationalism, but also out of a desire for continuity: 'the yearning to manage collectively a colonial world that was escaping its Member States individually' (see also Hansen 2002). This foundational narrative of a beginning and a 'virgin birth' relates to the universalism described by Della Sala (2018) above, as it conceals a traumatic past in favour of a greater union between the peoples of Europe.

As discussed at the outset, the EU and Europe are not coextensive, and any attempt to define a particular European self-understanding has to consider the variety and diversity of polities within Europe. However, the idea of modernity as the birth of a European civilisation is there in the debate on the EU as well, with Delanty (2003) arguing that Europe must be regarded as a 'motif of modernity', where the relationship between European national states and the EU is reflected in the EU becoming a symbol appropriated by national discourses. Modernity as a colonial phenomenon thus constitutes a particular form of colonial governmentality that continues to define itself in relation to its 'shadow boundaries'. As Kramsch (2006, 293) explains:

In this sense, for the British, French and Dutch the colonial arena was not just a foreign territory separate from the metropole but a true 'laboratory of European modernity', a theater within which a certain metropolitan European order and rationality was made 'visible' and intelligible as it worked its way in and through colonial space before looping back to its respective motherlands.

From this perspective, the building of a European Community could be viewed as a way for colonial powers to reconsider the futures of their empires in which European integration, at least partly, offered a way for these powers to make up for and adjust to the changing economic and political circumstances of decolonisation (Kinnvall 2016). Grievances associated with the empire thus offered an opportunity to exchange the grievances associated with the loss of empire – damaged national pride, international prestige, being humiliated, and defeated by those seen as ‘inferior races’ – for a new beginning, a new sense of national direction and a new purpose in a ‘New Europe’ (Hansen 2002, 494; Gilroy 2005).

However, the EU has not only been debated in regards to its internal others (a theme returned to below), but also in regard to its internal/external others, to refer to enlargement and its eastern dimension. Todorova’s (2009) *Imagining the Balkans* emphasises for instance Europe’s orientalisng of the Balkans at the same time as the same Balkan is subtracted from its postcolonial imaginary by claiming the Balkans as ‘predominantly Christian’ and void of any colonial legacy. The EU-Turkey deal has similarly been viewed as an attempt to solidify the differentiation between those postcolonial subjects seen as ‘redeemably, racially, and geographically ‘European’ and designated for EU inclusion’ while ‘all Others must remain outside’ (Rexhepi 2018, 932). Highlighting the experience of Eastern Europe, also points to a tendency of postcolonial critique to be dominated by the spatiotemporal dimension of South Asian or African postcolonial studies, while other colonial experiences on the periphery of Europe have remained unexplored (ibid; see also Rico 2005). This is also the focus on an emerging postcolonial literature on the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP), in which the aim is to show how the EU is reproducing neo-orientalism in its encounter with the Maghreb (see e.g. Dimitrova and Kramsch 2017).

This has led a number of postcolonial writers (e.g. Hansen 2002; Polat 2011; Kastoryano 2010) to argue that EU is in the grip of the nation-state: That ‘the EU, in its efforts to overwhelm the nation-state, has been unsettled and shaped via a number of hybrid demands, as symbolised in the imagery tied to the nation-state, which the EU has incorporated: a European flag and a hymn, currency, citizenship, a constitution, and so on’ (Polat 2011, 1260). Here the argument is that the EU has only paid lip service to what would be the European *demos*, where attempts to reach out to the public are only ways to resist criticism against its lack of democratic authority. In such accounts, the EU is only a reflection of an elite-led integration process in which external others have been replaced by internal ones. As Balibar (2003) has noted, to be poor and non-white in Europe today is not a good situation, as it often means overexploitation and insecurity. In this, he points to how a dominant form of European secularism has become a form of resistance to real multiculturalism as many ‘cultures’ are considered too religious to be acceptable.

Rather than seeing the EU as a case of exceptionalism, Balibar (2003) uses Frederic Jameson’s original notion of a ‘vanishing mediator’ to account for an EUtopia or myth where the EU becomes the anti-systemic mediator – a ‘transitory institution, force, community ... that creates the conditions for a new society by rearranging elements inherited from the very institution that has to be overcome’ (in Manners 2016). This EUtopia is different from that envisioned by other postcolonial writers who tend to see it as a specific image that the EU seeks to project onto the rest of the world – a narrative of protrusion, constructed on the bases of what many within the EU would like it to be (Nicolaidis and Howse 2002). Instead, Balibar’s EUtopia resembles more Bhabha’s call for a postcolonial cosmopolitanism. There is a need, he says, to critically assess the limits of the capacities of Europe to influence and mediate the conflicts and historical processes that are changing the structure of the world, but there is also a need to explore the possibilities for Europe to use its own fragilities and

indeterminacies – ‘its own “transitory” character, in a sense – as an effective mediation in the process of bringing about a new political culture, a new pattern of politics as such, in our context of acute national and international crisis’ (Balibar 2003, 334).

Europe and the EU: Migration, integration, and postcolonial borders

So how is a postcolonial perspective on European integration and European identity still of interest for contemporary European politics and European integration? Postcolonial analysis, I maintain, can add to our understandings of postcolonial subjects in European political space, specifically in a context of border policies, migration, integration, and multiculturalism. As argued elsewhere (Kinnvall 2016, 153; see also Mezzadra 2006) ‘the European imaginary lives on not only as institutional practices in postcolonial societies, but as unequal power relations in European societies in which narratives of autonomy and separation have become closely linked to narratives of security and survival’. These narratives are not only about the physical survival of Europe as territorial space, but equally about the cultural survival of Europe, in which identities, nationalities and religions are being delineated and clearly defined. A postcolonial perspective can thus help us to understand how the process of othering taking place in European political space.

Julia Kristeva’s work on the ‘self as other’, for instance, provides a neo-Lacanian psychoanalytical approach for appreciating how the other is always part of the self – an abject foreigner. ‘Abject. It is something rejected from which one does not part, from which one does not protect oneself as from an object’ (Kristeva 1982, 4)

The foreigner is within us. And when we flee from or struggle against the foreigner, we are fighting our consciousness – that “improper” facet of our impossible “own and proper” ... To discover our disturbing otherness, for that indeed is what bursts in to confront that ‘demon’, that threat, that apprehension generated by the projective apparition of the other at the heart of what we persist in maintain as a proper, solid “us”. (Kristeva 1991, 191–2)

Across Europe we see how an increasing number of people are turning to nationalist, xenophobic, and ultra-conservative far-right movements and parties. Behind this seems to be a belief that such configurations will somehow solve their political, economic, cultural, and ideological uncertainties by providing simplified solutions to complex questions. The attraction of these parties and movements, and the hatred expressed in recent EU-wide discourses, can be read from a postcolonial and psychoanalytical understanding as an abject-foreignness in questions of immigration, European integration, white supremacy, homophobia, and imperialism (Bhambra 2017b; Kinnvall 2018). It is a particular kind of emotional governance that cannot be separated from imperial pasts and fascist and anti-democratic ideas and values and which has as its foundation the preservation of whiteness as its key concern. As Bhambra (2017b) has discussed in relation to the Brexit debate and the election of Donald Trump, underlying these events is an emotional and methodological whiteness.

The skewing of white majority political action as the action of a more narrowly defined white working class served to legitimize analyses that might otherwise have been regarded as racist. In effect, I argue that a pervasive “methodological whiteness” has distorted social scientific accounts of both Brexit and Trump’s election victory and that this needs to be taken account of in our discussion of both phenomena. (Bhambra, 2017b, 214)

This emphasis on whiteness is also at the heart of postcolonial psychoanalytical accounts of European integration, especially for understanding the role of the unconscious, as for instance in the British desire for a 'return' to the comforting familiarities of a post-World War II imperial 'homeland' (Manners 2018). As Gilroy (2005) has argued, psychoanalytical approaches can be used to grasp Britain's postcolonial melancholia at the loss of empire and how this translates into support for Brexit. 'Postcolonial melancholia has become a major approach to understanding the (re)production of identity and difference in the Brexit debate since 2016, with Andrews (2016) arguing that "colonial nostalgia is not just confined to Brexiteers" and Akala (2017) asking "how can Britain move beyond its postcolonial melancholia, selective memory, and national forgetting... to understand the roots of Brexit?"' (Manners 2018, 1223). It is a melancholia that is bound up with a particular form of European nationalism, a nationalism not directed outwards towards other countries, but inwards towards national or (by proxy) EU establishments, towards feminists or supporters of multiculturalism, and towards migrants and minority populations. It is within this context that the so-called 'migration crisis' has been used to substantiate a 'race to the bottom' (Kinnvall 2019) by introducing strict border controls and citizenship rituals, thus justifying a dangerous illusion that ethnic diversity is a problem to be solved.

The development of EU policies on security, migration, and discrimination is thus clearly related to bordering practices among movements and parties on the right. Compared to the 1980s when European integration was largely supported by these movements, most of them became increasingly EU-skeptic from the 1990s and onwards. Hence, the Maastricht Treaty and the Treaties following it were portrayed as favoring multinational companies and disregarding national small businesses and farmers (Geddes 2003; Neal 2009). This nationalistic economic approach was complemented by one focusing on the negative effects of open intra-European borders as well as of pure supranational attempts to handle migration from third countries. Most far right rhetoric also relies on what Held and McGrew (2000) refer to as 'globophobia', in which economic globalisation is rejected on the basis of neoliberal policies and mass migration, and where cultural globalisation is opposed because of its potential for destroying nations' cultural distinctiveness, while political globalisation is discarded due to a conspiratorial belief in a mythical US-led New World Order (Kinnvall 2015).

As discussed in many postcolonial accounts of Europe, this is where the politics of memory comes in – especially as related to far-right populist and centre-right movements – where collective emotions, such as love for the nation, or hate, fear and contempt for the stranger other become central in the narrative construction and consolidation of collective identities (Kenny 2017). The institutional and the emotional are here brought together through racist narratives of 'imaginary protection' from the immigrant 'other', often manifest in fetishism for 'pure' identities. For populist leaders, it is about channelling and governing emotions to reduce anxiety, defuse anger, relieve guilt, and fulfil illusory needs for pride, attachment, and desire. In a postcolonial sense it involves illusory narratives of past greatness, transmitted to new generations in search of answers to their own anxieties, while simultaneously defining those who have taken this 'greatness' away – the establishment, the immigrants, and the Muslims (Kinnvall 2018).

Far-right populists respond to this logic of anxiety by providing a picture of the state (and the nation) as stable, uniform, and strong in line with the Eurocentric narrative of sovereignty, where those deemed not to belong are portrayed as enemies – as homogenous others. It is, therefore, no coincidence that far right populist and some centre-right parties and movements have both biological and cultural racism as a rhetorical source of their imaginary nations. Whiteness, as Seshadri-Crooks (2000) has argued, is not only the saviour of an imperial past, but is also closely related to existing masculinity norms where heteronormative values often characterise

the political rhetoric. Hence, we should not be surprised that anti-feminist values often go hand in hand with demands to forbid the veil or other specific items of clothing associated with particular groups (Kinnvall 2018). The unveiling of the Muslim woman is thus a strategy closely connected to hegemonic masculinity and whiteness.

Even if the EU is often used as a punching sack in these stories or narratives, as the Brexit debate is evidence of, it is interesting to note how anti-EU populists have in many ways changed tactics in terms of their relationship with the EU. Instead of consistently maintaining that their respective societies should leave the EU, we see how many populist European parties are set on reforming the EU from within as evident from the 2019 EU parliament elections. From having portrayed the EU as mainly an external enemy opposed to the nation and the will of the people, increasingly the debate has been about migration where the EU is accused of being unable to prevent migrants from entering Europe. To this can be added an imagined fear that multiculturalism and ethnic diversity will weaken the 'own' ethnic community and, as a result, a demand for a stronger Fortress Europe with more obstacles put in place to prevent migration. 'The boat is full', 'migrants are a threat to *our* culture', become narrative shortcuts to a fantasy in which immigrants and minority communities are narrated as not being 'proper' nationals, as 'stealing jobs', as 'bogus' economic migrants, 'criminal foreigners', and 'welfare parasites' (Hansen 2002; Kinnvall 2019).

Conclusion

Rather than limiting postcolonial analysis to (post)colonial societies or to EU's external relations in a more formal sense, it is important to consider how Europe and the EU can be understood both temporally, EU and Europe in relation to their imperial past, and spatially, EU and Europe in relation to the periphery of Europe. However, it is equally important to pay attention to the subjective dimension of Eurocentrism and how it plays out in relation to Europe's and EU's internal subaltern others – those 'outsiders' who exist on the margin, while being spatially inside are met with the hostilities of an abjective longing for a nostalgic past. The postcolonial is no longer outside of Europe but has moved into European political space and is challenging Europe from within. In this, the narrative of a beginning is being challenged through a narrative of plurality and hybridity, in which multiple others are demanding to be treated as subjects of their own. In Spivak's terms, it is about giving the subaltern a voice that is not already prescribed through a homogenous past and through white nationalism. This is also why it is so important for centrist democratic parties in Europe to turn away from alliances with far-right fascist movements and provide alternative narratives of Europe, the EU and of diverse, heterogeneous communities. To make democracy viable again, the myth of white nationalism must be dismantled and prevented from gaining power at any level of society.

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