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To cite this article: Doron Eldar (2022): Re:membering Europe – the empty pedestal and the space for Black belonging, *Atlantic Studies*, DOI: [10.1080/14788810.2022.2028544](https://doi.org/10.1080/14788810.2022.2028544)

To link to this article: <https://doi.org/10.1080/14788810.2022.2028544>



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Published online: 26 Jan 2022.



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# Re:membering Europe – the empty pedestal and the space for Black belonging

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## ABSTRACT

Following the removal of various monuments commemorating colonial figures, this paper introduces the Empty Plinth as epitomizing postcolonial Europe's identity crisis. As Europe negotiates new discursive foundations for an increasingly multicultural society, this paper argues for a re-membering of Europe through a materialization of Black narratives in the European memoryscape for their potential to: 1) tackle white ignorance and exclusionary nativism by uncovering Europe's contingency upon other(ed) geographies, 2) contribute to creating/fostering a *Black sense of place* in European cities, and 3) addressing Europe's identity crisis and lay new conceptual foundations for a hybrid and inclusive "Europe."

## KEYWORDS

Postcolonial Europe; monuments; afropean; heritage; Black geographies

## Introduction

Public monuments and memorials have the capacity to produce and reproduce articulations of collective heritage and memory which in turn shape who belongs to the collective and who is a member of the public sphere.<sup>1</sup> It is therefore not surprising that monuments commemorating colonialists and enslavers became the symbolic focal points for many of the Black Lives Matter (BLM) demonstrations that took place following the murder of George Floyd in May 2020. These protests – and municipalities' response to them – left many pedestals across numerous European cities empty. These empty plinths can be seen as epitomizing the current crisis of postcolonial Europe where it is no longer clear what symbols can be held on a pedestal to reflect an increasingly diverse public with many having roots in former colonies and holding collective memories that directly challenge those of the hegemonic, colonial metropole.

Indeed, if the statues protested projected narratives of modernity and enlightenment that form the discursive foundation of "Europe" – then the BLM protestors confronted Europe with the fact that these celebrated traditions were "predicated on the rule and exploitation of non-Europe that always resided symbolically and territorially within it, yet was always disavowed."<sup>2</sup> This confrontation leaves Europe in search of new foundations where the absence of symbols speaks to what Nicholas De Genova refers to as

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“the European question,” a question signifying an identity crisis that “identifies European-ness itself as a racial problem – a problem of postcolonial whiteness.”<sup>3</sup>

The idea that the empty pedestal functions as an apt representation for this moment was also voiced by Bristol’s mayor Marvin Rees, where protestors toppled a statue of enslaver Edward Colston. In an act of unsanctioned counter-memorialization that can be thought of as “guerilla memorialization,”<sup>4</sup> artist Marc Quinn placed the sculpture *A Surge of Power* immortalizing Black activist Jen Reid on the empty pedestal. Mayor Rees, however, ordered the newly erected monument to be removed and justified his decision by arguing that the empty plinth serves Bristol well as a city currently facing a “crossroad.”<sup>5</sup>

While Quinn’s intervention as a white and non-local artist deserves critical problematization,<sup>6</sup> the image of Jen Reid with her head held high and a raised black power fist successfully reflected the urgent need to honor Black citizens, residents, and former imperial subjects in the European cityscape. In other words, it called attention to the fact that removing symbols of white supremacy is not enough; there is also a need to actively recognize Black people as producers of the European space and an inseparable part from the national narrative –as people who deserve a place in the city. *A Surge of Power’s* removal, and the justification for it, highlighted the unequal position from which one can lament the “crossroad” signified by the empty pedestal and ponder the “European Question.” A Bristol resident’s response to the removal of Reid’s statue states this powerfully: “the empty plinth says more than if the statue [of Colston] had remained. It says we cannot upset the racists. It says black lives are invisible.”<sup>7</sup>

The struggle over the European public space and collective memory brings to light what Serena Scarabello and Marleen de Witte view as the two major tendencies present at this “crossroad” moment. On the one hand, there is xenophobic nativism that rejects the diversification of Europe. On the other, they note the emergence, or rather uncovering, of “a Europe that is culturally and racially plural and hybrid.”<sup>8</sup> They explain how new generations of Europeans of color offer a “Europeanization from below,” which they conceptualize as “a bottom-up emergence of new, inclusive formulations of European belonging. Disrupting postcolonial amnesia and asserting hyphenated identities, they are redefining the idea of ‘Europe.’”<sup>9</sup>

Central to the redefinition of Europe, I argue, is the uncovering of what Stephen Small refers to as “Black Europe.” For Small, “Black Europe” is not about the presence of Black people in Europe, but rather about the fact that Europe, through colonialism and enslavement, relied on Africa and Africans for its self-production.<sup>10</sup> Projects that work to uncover Europe’s “Black” foundations break away from the myth of “white Europe” and open up the meaning of Europe to multiplicity. While this paper focus on the uncovering of “Black Europe,” it acknowledges, and makes references to, the existence of Arab Europes, Asian Europes, Jewish Europes, Romani Europes, Muslim Europes, Latin American Europes, and so forth.

These Europes in themselves are plural and intersecting, producing hard to define, ever-changing configurations. A recognition of these dynamic intersections at the heart of Europe provides an excellent ground for solidarity and productive, intercultural memory-negotiations. By engaging with one another, marginalized narratives of the various “Europes” can uplift one another, highlighting memory’s multidirectional potential rather than its oft-perceived functioning as a competitive zero-sum game.<sup>11</sup> The uncovering of “Black Europe” thus is an inseparable part of the wider project of excavating

Europe's hybridity and contingency upon other(ed) parts of the world and its own disavowed "others."

In this paper I utilize the idea of the empty pedestal to anchor the discussion concerning this contemporary "crossroad" moment and search for new foundations. I argue why European nations and municipalities must not only dismantle the colonial modalities once held on this pedestal, but also use the spaces created by these removals for the materialization of Black narratives in the European cityscape. To this end, I will present three overlapping theoretical and practical arguments. The first argument concerns these spatial interventions' potential contribution to tackling white ignorance and exclusionary nativism. The second argument concerns these monuments' potential contribution to a creation/fostering of a Black sense of place in European cities against the backdrop of stigmatization, residential segregation, and being treated as "out of place." Lastly, I will argue that these monuments can help answer "the European Question" by laying new conceptual foundations for Europe beyond the nation state. To reinforce the merits of the arguments, I will follow with addressing potential critique before turning to the conclusion. Prior to the first argument, however, I will begin by briefly clarifying what I mean by "Europe," and "Black" or "Afro" Europe.

## Europe

The decision to write about *Europe* rather than specific ex-imperial European states may seem reductive. Indeed, not only does "Europe" include a diverse body of nations and ethnic groups, it is also unclear what are its boundaries. Europe's fuzzy eastern bound, its several "overseas" extensions (discussed below), and increasingly externalized border regime make Europe hard to define as a singular entity both as an idea and even on the most basic territorial terms.<sup>12</sup> Moreover, not all European states share a colonial past, and among those who do, this colonial past varies greatly in both temporal and spatial scopes.

One can think of Europe as above all an "imagined geography" rather than a factua-lized entity.<sup>13</sup> Nonetheless, as De Genova asserts "if Europe remains an abstraction, it is crucial all the same to recognize it as a real abstraction, produced and continuously sus-tained by sociopolitical relations."<sup>14</sup> Due to the real implications of the European abstrac-tion, and without denying the heterogeneity of the continent (which in itself was central to imperial motivations), it is imperative to discuss *Europe* as a whole for several reasons.

Europe, rather than specific nations, is oft constructed as a "cradle of civilization."<sup>15</sup> While this construction obscures the savage brutality with which European might was achieved, it speaks to the fact that Europe as a whole was deeply influenced by the colo-nial project. Within this context, Steve Garner argues that it is less relevant whether various European nations were colonial powers or even colonies themselves. What matters is "that they were all white nations or proto-nation in a world where that has auth-orised de facto superior positioning in global social and economic hierarchies."<sup>16</sup>

Moreover, all European nations were enriched by the imperial project in one way or another. For example, from the onset of Spanish and Portuguese colonialism, as Eduardo Galeano notes, "*Latin America was a European business*" with Spain controlling a mere five percent of the trade with its colonies, and the remaining 95 percent belonging to other, allegedly non-colonial states.<sup>17</sup> Even without direct control over colonized land and resources, non-imperial states benefited from access to plundered goods brought back to Europe, making the distinction between imperial and non-imperial states

immaterial. Furthermore, under the EU and the EEA, trade policies with former colonies, the wealth former European empires obtained from them, and the borders erected to protect it, are shared between ex-imperial and non-imperial European nations alike.<sup>18</sup>

In addition to resources, European unification facilitates shared articulations of European heritage as part of a project of *European identity* formation.<sup>19</sup> Under the rubric of the European Heritage Label (EHL)<sup>20</sup> and European Parliament's House of European History (EPHE),<sup>21</sup> little significance is attributed to European colonialism in explaining European history in the past and present. Left out are the EU's core members' colonial projects and their demises' centrality to the process of European integration and identity formation.<sup>22</sup> Lastly, even European nations that are not part of the EU (such as Norway and Switzerland) partake in the Union's security policy apparatus by which they actively participate in border practices that constitute who is "European" by determining who belongs in Europe and who is excluded from it.<sup>23</sup>

The shared borders of the European Union and its affiliated states also inform *racial* exclusion and belonging *within* Europe. Before the free mobility that the constitution of the "Schengen zone" offered EUropean nationals, a German in France could be perceived and legally understood as a "foreigner." Under the rubric of the Schengen, a German in France is no longer a "foreigner" to the same extent as white foreignness across the Schengen is diluted. While white foreignness is not gone, (particularly in the case of Eastern Europeans in West and Northern Europe), this dynamic renders Europeans of color hyper-visible and suspect of foreignness.<sup>24</sup>

In addition to the centrality of race as a constituting construct in European belonging, European nations also share a tendency to disavow racism as foreign, particularly American.<sup>25</sup> Common to various European nations is the propensity to claim exceptionality when confronted with charges of racism and lingering colonial modalities.<sup>26</sup> Speaking of *European* racism and coloniality brings to light these issues as overarching concerns that cannot be displaced to an "elsewhere."<sup>27</sup> The evidence supporting the cross-European need to address racism and coloniality is found in the marginalization, discrimination, and containment of Afro-descendants within particular (overwhelmingly urban) enclaves across varied circumstances throughout Europe.<sup>28</sup> Through their marginality, however, Black people across Europe organize and resist, leading efforts to make better lives for themselves and a better Europe for all.

## Black Europe

"Black Europe" is a porous, dynamic, contested, and hybrid category that is therefore hard to define.<sup>29</sup> Identifying who are "Black Europeans" or "Afropeans" is difficult because of the diverse body of people such categorizations may seek to contain. Moreover, given that the category "Black" is socially constructed, its meaning changes across space and time, making the task of identifying those who self-ascribe to this categorization more difficult. For this reason, it might be useful to think about the African diaspora in Europe that Kwame Nimako and Stephen Small divide into four types: "(1) Black Europeans of African descent, (2) the Afro-Caribbean in Europe, (3) continental African diaspora in Europe, and (4) African Union diaspora in Europe."<sup>30</sup> Nonetheless, even with these sub-divisions, self-identification and intersectionality reflect the ways in which "Blackness" defies borders.

For Jacqueline Nassy Brown “Black Europe is not locatable; it is a *discourse* on location.”<sup>31</sup> “Black Europe, like Europe before it,” Brown writes, “points outwards in many ultimately unmappable directions. If Europe has never stayed within its own geographic boundaries, why should we expect Black Europe to do so?” Brown remarks are not only relevant to past European imperial expansion, but also to the contemporary borders of the EU.<sup>32</sup>

The EU’s nine “Outermost Regions” include islands in the North Atlantic, the Caribbean the Indian Ocean, and South America. One can add to this list Spanish Ceuta and Melilla in North Africa and 13 Overseas Countries and Territories islands located in the Atlantic, Antarctic, Arctic, Caribbean, and Pacific regions who continue to be governed by their colonial sovereigns (Denmark, the Netherlands, and France). Writing in relation to the largely Black populated overseas French territories in the Caribbean, T. Sharpley-Whiting and Tiffany Ruby Patterson conclude that “Europeanness, and more specifically Black Europeanness [...] is unequivocally a trans-continental identity.”<sup>33</sup>

Nonetheless, due to the fact that Black Europeans (whether they are in the Guadelupe or Amsterdam) belong to particular nations states, Nimako and Small doubt “Black Europeanness” is a unified identity category, transcontinental or not.<sup>34</sup> They argue, however, that while “Africans in the diaspora are separated by citizenship” they are “united by history, memory and race; markets and cultural forces can transcend citizenship. This is all the more relevant since history, memory and culture without production or material base are empty.”<sup>35</sup> Small’s articulation of “Black Europe” provides a material base for history, memory, and culture.<sup>36</sup> If Aime Césaire noted how “not an inch of” the enriched world is “devoid of my fingerprint,”<sup>37</sup> Black Europe can be seen as a way to remove the whitewash covering these imprints.

The work of making Black Europe visible is the work of uncovering Europe itself as Black Europe. Traveling across Europe in search of Afropean identity Jonny Pitts writes:

As a member of Europe’s black community, this Europe I speak of is all part of my inheritance, too, and it was time to wander and celebrate the continent like I owned it. A continent that has frequently, to quote Césaire’s protégé Frantz Fanon, “woven me out of a thousand details, anecdotes [and] stories ...” A Europe that, as I would see, was populated by Egyptian nomads, Sudanese restaurateurs, Swedish Muslims, black French militants and Belgo-Congolese painters. A continent of Cape Verdean favelas, Algerian flea markets, Surinamese shamanism, German reggae and Moorish castles. Yes, all this was part of Europe, too, and these were areas that needed to be understood and fully embraced if Europe wanted to enjoy fully functional societies. And black Europeans, too, need to understand Europe and to demand participation in its societies, to demand the right to document and disseminate our stories.<sup>38</sup>

To uncover Black Europe is thus to write it into European heritage and disseminate its stories with and within the European landscape. As the following section lays out, this uncovering reconceptualizes Europe as an imagined geography bearing the imprints of many – as a geography that many can make claims to.

## Tackling exclusionary nativism

It is impossible to quantify the influence that other geographies and civilizations had on Europe, as historians argue that Europe’s exploitative practices of colonization and enslavement formed the foundation for modernity itself.<sup>39</sup> Materially, Europe relied on its

colonies and slavery for the development of capitalism,<sup>40</sup> the industrial revolution,<sup>41</sup> the construction of the European landscape,<sup>42</sup> and the formation of the European Union.<sup>43</sup> Discursively, Europe relied on the construction of its colonies as a juxtaposing “other” for its own identity formation.<sup>44</sup> As Franz Fanon writes:

For in a very concrete way Europe has stuffed herself inordinately with the gold and raw materials of the colonial countries: Latin America, China, and Africa. From all these continents, under whose eyes Europe today raises up her tower of opulence, there has flowed out for centuries toward that same Europe diamonds and oil, silk and cotton, wood and exotic products. Europe is literally the creation of the Third World. The wealth which smothers her is that which was stolen from the underdeveloped peoples. The ports of Holland, the docks of Bordeaux and Liverpool were specialized in the Negro slave trade, and owe their renown to millions of deported slaves.<sup>45</sup>

It is for the centrality of violence in laying the foundations for our modern global economy that Sven Beckert refers to what is commonly called the “age of mercantilism” as “war capitalism.”<sup>46</sup> Indeed, considering the extent of exploitation and theft carried out by Europe for its self-production, one can conclude that the European landscape itself “is every bit as much a landscape of destruction as it is a landscape of production.”<sup>47</sup>

Nonetheless, the streets of postcolonial European cities today hardly bear any physical reminders that connect them to the former colonies upon which their development depended. This is the case not only because European states are temporally and spatially distant from the colonies and plantations that fueled their economic growth and wealth creation, but also because these historical connections were intentionally erased from public collective memory<sup>48</sup> and by extension, from the landscape of commemoration.<sup>49</sup> This erasure renders those subjected to Eurocentric knowledge production susceptible to the belief that Europe’s “development” is a result of purely *internal* processes of European ingenuity and labor.<sup>50</sup>

The myth of a “white Europe” which “developed” independently can be seen as what Charles Mills calls an “invented delusional world, a racial fantasyland, a ‘consensual hallucination’.”<sup>51</sup> In reference to his theorization of “the racial contract,” Mills explains that:

on matters related to race, the Racial Contract prescribes for its signatories an inverted epistemology, an epistemology of ignorance, a particular pattern of localized and global cognitive dysfunctions (which are psychologically and socially functional), producing the ironic outcome that whites will in general be unable to understand the world they themselves have made.<sup>52</sup>

The rise of nationalist and separatist movements across the EU represents one arena in which white signatories themselves fail to understand the world they made. Among these nationalist movements, Brexit exemplifies the dangerous consequences of white imperial nostalgia as built into national heritage.<sup>53</sup> As if predicting Brexit, Stuart Hall urged for the diversification of British heritage and warned that by continuing to “misrepresent Britain as a closed, embattled, self-sufficient, defensive, ‘tight little island’,” Britons will not be prepared to succeed “in a global and decentered world.”<sup>54</sup>

Importantly, the purified and colonial construction of “European heritage” does not only exclude the “non-European” world that produced it, but also the less powerful nations within Europe.<sup>55</sup> To qualify for the EU’s “European Heritage Label” these nations do not only have to adjust their history, heritage, and culture to the EU’s dominant

articulation<sup>56</sup> but also find themselves as agents of the “European” vs. “non-European” binary as they are required to prove their “Europeanness.”<sup>57</sup> The contemporary appeal of nationalistic agendas and nativist demagoguery across Europe demonstrates that tackling white ignorance is not an issue of concern for Europeans of color alone.

Without providing white Europeans the opportunity to understand the world Europe created (to use Mills’ terminology), white Europeans themselves may pose the gravest threat to the “European project” that claims to champion liberal peace, human rights, and cosmopolitanism.<sup>58</sup> The contemporary “resurgent ultranationalism and neofascism” reminds of the extent to which “white Europe” poses a threat onto its imagined self and its “others.”<sup>59</sup> Many scholars evoke the link between the atrocities Europe committed in its colonies and the violence Europe inflicted upon itself and its internal “others” (as well as the apathy and/or disregard with which they were treated). W.E.B Du Bois who, for example, powerfully argued that WWI violence was nothing but a natural state for European culture given its imperial atrocities and hunger for colonial possessions.<sup>60</sup> Aimé Césaire further argued that WWII Nazism gave Europe a taste of what it nurtured and legitimized abroad.<sup>61</sup> Europe’s ongoing failure to engage with its overseas past and present has also been linked to its ultranationalist response to the continent’s decline from global significance (its “twilight”). As aptly put by Achille Mbembe, contemporary Europe is simply “overtaken by the malaise of not knowing where it is within and with the world.”<sup>62</sup>

The making invisible of other non-European geographies’ contributions to the European project does not only undermine the standing of Europe itself by propagating nativist neofascism, but it also works to perpetuate global inequality and facilitate exclusion and death. As Lars Jensen observes, Europe’s “increasingly inward looking and at times even myopically nationalistic [societies’] ... primary sense of selfhood appears to be reflected in an ability to keep out the Global South.”<sup>63</sup> Bearing the centrality of this exclusion to contemporary Europe in mind, consider that while up until the 1870s, the main factor determining a person’s income was their class, by 2000, the single most important factor in determining a person’s income was their geographical location.<sup>64</sup>

The radical transition from roughly even proto-capitalist state civilizations across the world, to one where location is a proxy for global class, can be seen as a result of Europe’s exploitation of the rest of the world<sup>65</sup> and its establishment of a capitalist world order that maintains structural exploitation.<sup>66</sup> Barnko Milanović points to two grave implications rising from the fact that location became a primary determinant of class.<sup>67</sup> The first concerns the near impossibility of creating global class-based solidarity when entire nations benefit from the ongoing division of labor. The second is the fortification of borders as a way for enriched countries to maintain their wealth from the global poor whose best chance to improve their income is by migrating to a different country.

The fortification of “Fortress Europe” cannot be understood without considering the role race plays in the ways in which nativism constructs those born outside of Europe as alien to it.<sup>68</sup> In the context of colonialism and empire, European border and exclusion practices are especially problematic. As Gurminder Bhambra points out, by basing historical belonging in *national* terms, European countries erase the connection of *ex-imperial* subjects to the former imperial state.<sup>69</sup> This omission allows European countries to justify denying those they construct as alien (e.g. as “immigrants” and “refugees”) the rights state subjects (citizens) are entitled to. Moreover, the perception of European

nations as disconnected from their former colonies reinforces European (white) supremacy by obscuring the root causes of inequality between nations which propagate migration and refuge.<sup>70</sup> With the absence of facts relating to the root causes, inequality is explained by the “inferiority” of the people inhabiting “underdeveloped” places, an understanding which bears explicit racial logic.

Note that this alternative, ahistorical explanation for inequality does not only maintain “white innocence”,<sup>71</sup> but also racializes space. The racialization of space constructs geographies themselves as hierarchical, dividing nations into those capable of civilization and those who “lag behind”.<sup>72</sup> This imaginative account of geography and history results in a temporal map where “beyond Europe was *before* Europe.”<sup>73</sup> This construction, in turn, works to further legitimize the exclusion of “non-European” bodies from Europe<sup>74</sup> and justify imperial plunder of these “inferior” places.<sup>75</sup> Moreover, it positions those who come from these places as slightly less human (i.e. in need of “civilizing”) a construction that helps explain the current articulation of indifference towards the estimated 22,951 deaths and disappearances in the Mediterranean caused by the European border regime since 2014 alone.<sup>76</sup>

The role of critical heritage in tackling these violent modalities is therefore hard to undermine. As Johanna Turunen summarizes:

The history of European colonialism lives on in capitalism and European racism, as well as in the exclusionary narratives of Europeanness and in Eurocentrism at large. It prevails in the disconnect between colonialism and the “immigration crisis”, which is not so much a crisis of immigration, but a crisis of postcolonial Europe coming to grips with its colonial past. The migrants dying at Europe’s borders are powerful examples of the extent to which the EU is ignoring the fundamental dissonance between its values and its actions ... [Critical] engagement with Europe’s colonial past ... could fundamentally contribute to opening up space for solidarity.<sup>77</sup>

Monuments and memorials that actively reconnect the European landscape to the landscapes that made it possible (and continue to) open this space by reminding Europe of its place both “within and with the world.” By doing so, they suggest that “becoming European is at the same time to become a part of the world.”<sup>78</sup> By revealing Europe’s history and contingency upon other places, monuments function as spatial interventions that can

be employed to challenge fantasies of the newly embattled European region as a culturally bleached or politically fortified space, enclosed off to further immigration, barred to asylum-seeking, and willfully deaf to any demand for hospitality made by refugees and other displaced people.<sup>79</sup>

Black monuments and memorials that challenge nativist claims and exclusionary bordering thus can also aid in creating space for belonging for Black subjects within Europe who are constructed as foreign to it.

### **Creating a Black sense of place – belonging in the city and the nation**

While this discussion centers on the broader (and admittedly, fuzzier) entity of “Europe,” experiences of exclusion and efforts to cultivate belonging take place in particular localities whose specific contexts must be considered. Therefore, before returning to the subject of “Europe” we must first consider two central contexts within which

belonging and exclusion are experienced - the nation and the city. The focus on the national scale is important because, as Nimako and Small point out, Black Europeans belong to particular nation-states<sup>80</sup> and it is this affiliation to the nation-state that grants one a set of rights. Therefore, what is at stake when one's belonging to a particular nation is questioned, is not only the subjective feeling of "being at home," but also one's entitlement to the state's protection.<sup>81</sup> The city, in turn, represents the lived-in setting in which daily experiences of exclusion and efforts to cultivate belonging take place, making it an appropriate avenue for consideration.

The materialization of Black narratives in the urban public space can aid in cultivating belonging and unsettling exclusionary practices through the creation of a *Black sense of place* - a literal and imaginary place created through Black creativity and resistance.<sup>82</sup> Underlying the significance of these projects, Angolan artist Kiluanji Kia Henda speaks of his planned memorial to enslaved people in Lisbon, initiated by the Association of Afro-descendants (DJASS):

Lisbon as a cosmopolitan city, is also composed of communities from the former colonies. This memorial, although it is a symbolic representation of a tragic moment for humanity, is nevertheless an important element to strengthen the feeling of inclusion. Regardless of their origin, even though they are a minority, people of African descent are also Portuguese, it is important that their history is represented in the public space.<sup>83</sup>

Against the backdrop of "European racialization" that stresses the impossibility of people of color belonging in Europe,<sup>84</sup> Henda's vision also points to how commemorative representations of historically excluded bodies and narratives have the ability to claim both physical space in the city and discursive space for belonging in the nation.

The significance of this recognition for the feeling of national belonging is hard to undermine. This dynamic is evident in Danish-Caribbean writer and activist Sade Yde Johnson's remarks concerning the statue erected in Copenhagen by US Virgin Island artist La Vaughn Belle and Danish-Trinidadian artist Jeannette Ehlers. The statue honors Mary Thomas, one of the leaders of the Fireburn revolt in the former Danish West Indies and the first Black woman in Denmark to have a statue in the public space. As Johnson notes:

The statue of Queen Mary is the first monument in Denmark that at the same time celebrates and honors a black woman and the enslaved who fought slavery. She changes my relationship to the story because the statue writes me into the story. Queen Mary mysteriously revives my sense of Danishness because she connects the historical traumas I carry in my body.<sup>85</sup>

Statues depicting Black narratives and bodies can also normalize and even celebrate the presence and claim to space of the demographic they aim to represent.<sup>86</sup> As such, they "open up" the city by establishing revisioned *microgeographies* of belonging.<sup>87</sup> Monuments of Black narratives can therefore be seen as a physical manifestation of what Philomena Essed refers to as the work of "grounding "black" experiences and definitions of reality in national stories-past and present."<sup>88</sup> In the process, they can aid in closing what Michelle Lamont refers to as "recognition gaps" which she defines as "disparities in worth and cultural membership between groups in a society. These gaps can be closed through the social process of destigmatization."<sup>89</sup>

The use of creative resistance for placemaking against a history of stigmatization, confinement, and displacement is central to Black geographies.<sup>90</sup> Black geographies, Katherine McKittrick argues, is where the “locations of black history, selfhood, imagination, and resistance are not only attached to the production of space through their marginality, but also through the ways in which they bring into focus responses to geographic domination.”<sup>91</sup> This response to domination includes producing alternative sensibilities, narratives, and demands for recognition.

The growing presence of former colonial subjects and citizens from the margins of empire at the colonial metropole also meant growing demands for public recognition of “an overseas past that belonged not simply to them but to the nation at large.”<sup>92</sup> Writing collective memory and heritage of the margin into the center requires institutional change and active effort to create space for knowledge producers who carry perspectives from the margins.<sup>93</sup> Hall notes about the British context that creating that space from the margin within the center demands a re-writing of both what it means to be British and who this category includes.<sup>94</sup>

While focusing on national identity, this re-writing inherently opens and blurs the borders of the nation-state by illuminating its contingency and hybridity. This tension between local, national and transnational is clearly reflected in Alan Rice’s account from the process behind erecting the monument *Captured Africans* by Kevin Dalton-Johnson in Lancaster:

we were a part of a wider movement of localism that disdained a monoglot national narrative that refused to give up nostalgia for the imperial past, and were aware too of the importance of transnational approach to a memorial that would be truly post-imperial.<sup>95</sup>

In addition to expanding the boundaries of the nation, the articulation of memories from the margins at the center, provide counter-memorials with the potential to create what bell hooks calls spaces of “radical openness” where the very categories of included/excluded are challenged.<sup>96</sup> Following hooks, these spatial interventions can be conceptualized as “a message from that space in the margin that is a site of creativity and power, that inclusive space where we recover ourselves, where we move in solidarity to erase the category colonised /coloniser.”<sup>97</sup> This dynamic is reflected in Melat Nigusie’s, Afro-Belgian director of the Beursschouwburg arts center, conceptualization of Brussels. Nigusie’s rejection of the “center’s” epistemic interpretation of the city allows her to turn Brussels from a site of exclusion and hypervisibility to a site of belonging and resistance:

When I walk these streets, I feel very confident like I own this city. You make this city using money from Congo then this is an African city. This is as much an African city as it is a European city. So I feel very confident walking down the street; like yeah I’m Black and you’re looking at me funny but I belong ... Everywhere I go I claim that space and I own it ... I never feel like I don’t belong because I’ve told myself over and over I’m implicated in every cobblestone here.<sup>98</sup>

While rejecting the “center’s” epistemic position, hooks still welcomes those who occupy that space as she invites them to “enter” the space of the margin: “Let us meet there. Enter that space. We greet you as liberators.”<sup>99</sup> Notably, subaltern Black collectives create their own spaces for radical openness throughout Europe whether hegemonic Europe aids in facilitating their creation or actively works to destroy them.<sup>100</sup> City-scale monuments for Black counter-memories can therefore be seen as ways to create radical openness

through “local and specific interventions [that] can contribute to a counterhistory of cultural relations and influences from which a new understanding of multicultural Europe will doubtless eventually emerge.”<sup>101</sup>

This moment of a European “crossroad” presents an opportunity to embrace and support these spaces that nurture multicultural Europe. Examining this moment of crisis through European *undecidability*, Barnor Hesse argues that “a decision must be taken on the idea and symbolization of Europe, where issues of representation arise in the face of competing, contested and alternative possibilities.”<sup>102</sup> Hesse continues:

This undecidability is what impregnates Europe when the colonialities, migrations, settlements, and racialisations that signify incubation of Black Europe can no longer be aborted from Europe’s representations of its progeny. It invites us to engage Black Europe’s disavowed histories and geographies, which now translate as unsettling multiculturalisms, vibrating between racial assemblages of “Europeanness” and “non-Europeanness.”<sup>103</sup>

Hegemonic Europe is now faced with a pending decision. Is it willing to welcome the margin at the center – in its public spaces and spheres? Is Europe willing to accept the invitation to be liberated?

## Re-membering Europe

The crisis of Europe with which this paper began must be understood in its postcolonial context. As discussed, the great investment European nations had in their colonies was not only material but also discursive. The loss of empire thus meant a loss of national pride and identity which Gilroy famously termed “postimperial melancholia.”<sup>104</sup> It is therefore not surprising that decolonization (or other processes such as the end of slavery) was also often accompanied by violent and expensive efforts to maintain imperial control, investment in diplomatic institutions to sustain economic and cultural zones of influences and the establishment of new alliances including the EU.<sup>105</sup> It is within this postcolonial context that contemporary Europe is experiencing “a pervasive sense of a loss of global centrality and an accompanying anxiety of what Europe as merely another global region means for the inherited European privileges – economically and culturally.”<sup>106</sup>

Europe’s transformative efforts to recover from decolonization did not only generate new symbolic and economic foundations for European nations but also created an imaginary break between them and empire. This artificial break worked to undermine questions of accountability (e.g. can democratic Portugal be held accountable for atrocities that took place under Salazar? To what extent can a supranational body as the EU bear specific responsibilities?) and disconnect European nations from their entanglement with empire and its subjects (as discussed above). Within this sanitized and anxious landscape, narrating and commemorating colonialism and enslavement “bursts open the national narrative and force[s] a confrontation with the history of empire”<sup>107</sup> – a confrontation that tackles Europe’s postimperial, melancholic identity crisis.

Needless to say, the removal of colonial monuments and the erection of new ones are only a fraction of the processes needed for the formation of an inclusive and racially just Europe. Nonetheless, Adom Getachew stresses the significance of this process: “This is a decolonization of the sensory world, the illusion that empire was somewhere else.”<sup>108</sup> Making empire visible in the European public space is crucial for postcolonial Europe

as it continues to be governed by colonial sensibilities and selective amnesia and thus in need of decolonization.<sup>109</sup>

Central within these colonial sensibilities is the understanding of Europe as an essentialized territorial entity that developed independently of the rest of the world (as discussed above). Within this context monuments that link Europe to the landscape of empire uncover Europe's hybrid foundations in a way that fosters what Doreen Massey conceptualizes as a *progressive sense of place*.<sup>110</sup> "What gives a place its specificity" Massey writes, "is not some long internalised history but the fact that it is constructed out of a particular constellation of social relations, meeting and weaving together at a particular locus."<sup>111</sup>

The reading of "place" as a manifestation of dynamic constellation bears implications for the way we narrate national histories. For once, it implores us to consider "the possibility that the borders of the nation may represent a rather arbitrary point at which to pause in our efforts to comprehend the past."<sup>112</sup> Instead of attempting to narrate European history from the confinement of territorial, *national* borders, Paul Gilroy offers a methodological framework to account for the spatially dispersed past of what we refer to today as a nation-state.<sup>113</sup> Building on the work of Donna Haraway, Gilroy's notion of "webbed accounts" highlights the necessity of historical perspectives from the vast, global network implicated in a territorially confined area such as the UK.<sup>114</sup> This account reveals how the temporal and spatial "webs" inform "national" histories and exposes the nation's hybrid and dynamic place within these webs. Given the effort to narrate "Europe" as a cohesive entity, Elizabeth Buettner takes a similar approach when she calls for the EPHE to take "on board not only "events and processes" but also peoples and cultures originating from beyond Europe as equally crucial to Europe's past, present, and future."<sup>115</sup>

The recognition of Europe's hybridity and contingency upon other places can also aid in provincializing Europe<sup>116</sup> and pluriversalizing it.<sup>117</sup> Recognizing the role of other people and places in the production of the European space dismisses Eurocentric notions of linear "development" and re-narrates the "development" and "modernity" in a manner that reveals the coloniality and violence embedded within them. This reframing of "Europe" and its foundational narrative is symbolically reflected in the removal of colonial monuments. As aptly put by Jill Strauss:

Just as the empty pedestal can be thought of as a break in constructed history and memory, it can be an interruption in the cycles of silencing and marginalization as well ... the removal of a statue while leaving the base in situ provides an opportunity to create a space for re-mem-bering, reclaiming the past, and making visible a previously hidden history.<sup>118</sup>

The empty plinth therefore poses an exemplary platform for the "re-telling of history of humanity and knowledge from the vantage point of those epistemic sites that received the "darker side" of modernity."<sup>119</sup>

For Gilroy, the urgent need "to step boldly into the past" and re-tell history is necessary for the *future* of Europe.<sup>120</sup> As he explains, this re-telling is not only to "establish where the boundaries of the postcolonial present should fall," but also "to enlist Europe's largely untapped heterological and imperial histories in the urgent service of its contemporary multiculturalism and its future pluralism."<sup>121</sup> Indeed, the failure to enlist these histories is detrimental to the efforts to create a new, *transnational* European identity because they

exclude “exactly those groups central to the continent’s changed, transnational culture and from whom, against all apparent odds, one might most reasonably expect a constructive intervention.”<sup>122</sup> As Fatima El-Tayeb concludes: “only a European public that incorporates these voices, as well as its own repressed history, might indeed become postnational and inclusive.”<sup>123</sup> Monuments and memorials that tell counter-history and re-connect Europe to time and space are therefore not a mere deconstruction of Europe, but an opportunity to “rebuild Europe through recognition of its multicultural identity and heritage.”<sup>124</sup>

It is crucial to remember that the process of rebuilding Europe does not end in its reconceptualization as a multicultural, dynamic, and contingent place. Rather, recognizing “where it is with and within the world” should implore Europe to assume responsibility for the role it plays in global processes and their local manifestations.<sup>125</sup> As Hesse notes: “marking Europe’s historical and colonial entanglements with ‘non-Europeans (non-white)’ histories would mean reformulating the European idea, shifting the explanatory resonance of its modernity from racial ethicality and presumptive universality to postcolonial accountability and contested hegemony.”<sup>126</sup> The current European “crossroad” thus reflects not only a crisis of postcolonial European identity, but a crisis to the European-made world order and way of thinking.

From mass migration to the environmental crisis ensued by disaster capitalism, it is evident that “Euro-American epistemologies are exhausted.”<sup>127</sup> It is no wonder that more calls are heard these days to “decolonize” and “abolish” various institutions, structures and practices. New ways of thinking are needed, and the empty plinth signifies an opportunity for their manifestation.

While spatial interventions of Black narratives offer an important avenue for new ways of seeing history, geography, and the nation-state, the particular form of the monument has been subject to various critiques. Therefore, before concluding the paper, I will turn to address several key arguments against monuments. In doing so, I wish to strengthen the arguments put forth in this paper for Black monuments in Europe.

## Addressing potential critique

One central critique of the late twentieth century “memory boom” with its growth in efforts to erect monuments and memorials is its representation of a “memorial mania.”<sup>128</sup> The critique that relegates the desire for the materialization of collective memories in the public space to the realm of the irrational, however, undermines the significant strides for equality that enabled those suppressed to have their voices heard.<sup>129</sup> As Capdepón, Sierp, and Strauss write: “when places hold multiple and often opposing memories, the question of whose histories are remembered and publicly shared, or marginalized and excluded, becomes crucial for understanding social dynamics and political change.”<sup>130</sup> Rather than “mania”—the fact that multiple groups now seek representation in the public space may denote a more mature democracy and pluralized public.

The contestation over and removal of monuments, however, reinvigorates a second relevant critique - their material fixity and aspiration for permanence.<sup>131</sup> Critics may argue that the monument’s fixed nature inherently contradicts the progressive reading of “place” as dynamic and ever-changing, whereas alternative, ephemeral commemorative practices (e.g. light projection and temporary installations)<sup>132</sup> are more aligned

with the progressive understanding of “place.” This line of critique portends that counter-memory projects in the form of monuments and memorials can in fact be counterproductive to the goal of “opening up” space rather than closing it.

*Ceteris paribus*, the recognition of a hybrid and changing nature of both *place* and the *public* legitimizes the call to do away with fixed monuments and instead prioritize the ephemeral and dynamic vernacular of public art and memorialization. However, since our society is not one in which “all other things being equal,” applying the same critique to projects dedicated to narratives that have been violently erased and undermined is suspicious and intellectually compromised. Responding to the curious timings of post-structural and post-modern “pronouncement of the ‘death of the subject,’” feminist scholars wondered “whether it had occurred just when the male, white, subject might have had to share its status with those formally excluded from subjectivity.”<sup>133</sup> Similarly, one can speculate if the call to do away with fixed monuments might have to do with the male, white subject being asked to share the public space and memory with those who were formerly excluded from it.

The monument has also been critiqued for its representation of a modern (and thereby colonial<sup>134</sup>) way of remembering,<sup>135</sup> unlike memory work based in ritual, music, song, storytelling, art, and dance. These forms of remembering locate the body as the ultimate site of memory, by which they both refuse to “outsource” memory to objects and reject the western ontology that separates the “present” and the “past.”<sup>136</sup> Those concerned with this critique may question whether counter-memory work in the form of monuments and memorials be considered truly “counter” and decolonial. This critique, however, risks undermining the various ways in which monuments inform bodily remembering. One can imagine that the bodily experience of, for example, protesting for Black lives from a statue immortalizing King Leopold II is significantly different from the experience generated by a protest taking place by a statue immortalizing Toussaint Louverture.

The embodied function of monuments answers another critique of the monument, one that charges it with “invisibility.” The central role monuments play in protests calls attention to the privilege hidden in this assumption - invisible to whom exactly? Moreover, the fact that a monument can be invisible to some challenges us to consider the extent to which the narrative it represents is ingrained enough to render it invisible.

Importantly, advocating for monuments does not mean rejecting other ways of remembering, but rather it offers an *additional* avenue for memory work, specifically one that speaks the language of the hegemon. Since the ability to materialize narratives of collective memory in the public space requires power, a situation in which Black narratives negotiate their place in the built landscape may be indicative of a changing balance of power, one in which the subaltern also has a claim to space in hegemonic articulations of the public.

The messy metrics of power relations reminds us that the question of which stories warrant monuments in the public space and which do not is a context-specific and complicated question to answer.<sup>137</sup> This complexity, however, should not result in a categorical opposition to statues, memorials, and monuments. Instead, it should encourage an engagement with a set of considerations, such as “who are monuments for?” and “whose city it actually is?” as offered by Lubaina Himid.<sup>138</sup> Answering these questions helps identify the distinction between “subaltern claims to more genuinely shared public space” versus “efforts of the dominant to ratify their stranglehold over it.”<sup>139</sup>

Unlike reproductions of dominant narratives, claims to a “more genuinely shared public space” are to the benefit of *everyone*.<sup>140</sup> For Himid, a monument that acknowledges the sacrifices forced upon those who made the city possible allows some visitors to ask forgiveness and others to forgive. It is this intention behind monuments that enables the city to live up to its aspired greatness.<sup>141</sup> With this aspiration for greatness that Black monuments offer Europe, I will now turn to conclude the paper.

## Conclusion

The empty plinth reflects white Europe’s contemporary crisis and its inability to locate itself “within and with” this “global and decentered world.” By utilizing the space created on the pedestal to materialize subaltern claims for a “more genuinely shared public space,” Black monuments connect the European landscape to the landscape of empire. Through revealing Europe’s hybridity and contingency upon other geographies, these Black monuments inherently speak to a progressive notion of “place” that draws a “new map of Europe.”<sup>142</sup> As Hesse notes, the hard to define “Black Europe”- with its plurality and dynamism, offers such an open-ended map:

Black Europe is rhetorically unsettling for the official map of Europe. As a not yet sedimented signifier, Black Europe exposes the tracks of well-traveled human geographies of displacement and disavowed liberal-colonial assemblages of race, traditionally obscured under the historical imprint “Europe.”<sup>143</sup>

At the heart of the historical imprint of Europe, European-ness itself is revealed as a racial problem signified in the current crisis as a “problem of postcolonial whiteness.”<sup>144</sup> To attend this problem an overarching question must be addressed - why is it that *Europe* needed to be constructed in the first place and what sustains that need today?<sup>145</sup>

The BLM-led removal of statues honoring enslavers, alongside Black artists and organizations’ efforts to tell “new” stories, greatly aids in addressing this real and perpetual crisis of “Europe” - the Problem of Whiteness. Underlying this problem “is not merely that whiteness is oppressive and false,” David R. Roediger argues, but rather that “whiteness is *nothing but* oppressive and false.”<sup>146</sup> More specifically, Roediger explains, “Whiteness describes [...] not a culture but precisely the absence of culture. It is the empty and therefore terrifying attempt to build an identity based on what one isn’t and on whom one can hold back.”<sup>147</sup> The empty plinth confronts Europe with the void of Whiteness, its “twilight,” its unanswered “European Question.” By doing so, it offers an incredible opportunity for liberation, for a new identity that is based on multiplicity, hybridity, and the right to belong.

## Notes

1. Mitchell, *Cultural geography*; Mitchell, “Politics of Memory”; Johnson, “Cast in Stone.”
2. Hesse, *Black Europe’s Undecidability*, 297.
3. De Genova, “The European Question,” 79.
4. Rice, *Creating Memorials*, 15.
5. Langfitt, “The Protests Heard,” para. 32.
6. The controversy around Quinn’s intervention reminds of Alan Rice’s cautioning that “guerrilla memorialization is not necessarily always positive and that our memorial sites cannot be left entirely to those whose knowledge of the appropriate gesture might be grossly out of kilter with the site’s historical resonance.” Rice, *Creating Memorials*, 42.

7. Howard, "Removing the Statue," para. 6.
8. Scarabello and de Witte, "Afro-European Modes," 317.
9. Ibid.
10. Small, "Theorizing visibility."
11. Rothberg, *Multidirectional Memory*, 32–34.
12. Hansen, "European Integration"; De Genova, "The European Question."
13. Said, *Orientalism*; Gregory, "Imaginative Geographies."
14. De Genova, "The European Question," 77.
15. Ponzanesi and Blaagaard, "Name of Europe."
16. Garner, "Injured Nation", 408.
17. Galeano, *Open Veins*, 24. (emphasis in the original)
18. De Genova, "The European Question,"; Bhambra, "Postcolonial Europe"; Hansen, "European Integration"; Hansen, "Name of Europe."
19. El-Tayeb, "European Others"; Hansen, "European Integration." (my emphasis).
20. Turunen, "Geography of Coloniality."
21. Buettner, "Inclusions and Exclusions."
22. Hansen, "European Integration."
23. Balibar, "Europe as Borderland."
24. De Genova, "The European Question"; El-Tayeb, *European Others*, xxxii–xxxiii.
25. Essed, *Forward*.
26. Essed, *Forward*; Buettner, *Europe after Empire*; Small, "Theorizing visibility."
27. Essed, *Forward*, ix; Buettner, *Europe after Empire*, 14; Jensen, *Postcolonial Denmark*, 12; Small, "Theorizing visibility," 1194–1195.
28. Small, "Theorizing visibility"; European Union Agency, "Being Black."
29. Wekker, "Another Dream"; Essed, *Forward*; Small, "Introduction."
30. Nimako and Small, "Theorizing Black Europe," 229.
31. Brown, "Discourse on Location," 209. (emphasis in the original)
32. Ibid.
33. Sharpley-Whiting and Ruby Patterson "Conundrum of Geography," 89.
34. Nimako and Small, "Theorizing Black Europe."
35. Ibid., 235.
36. Small, "Theorizing visibility."
37. Césaire, *Notebook*, 21.
38. Pitts, *Afropean*, 7–8.
39. Mignolo, *Preamble*.
40. Williams, *Capitalism and Slavery*; Galeano, *Open Veins*; Robinson, *Black Marxism*; Quijano, *Coloniality of Power*.
41. Inikori, *Africans and Industrial Revolution*.
42. University College London, "Legacies."
43. Hansen, "Name of Europe"; Hansen and Jonsson, "Another Colonialism."
44. Said, *Orientalism*; Small, "Theorizing visibility"; Massey, "Places and their Pasts"; Mbembe, *Black Reason*.
45. Fanon, *Wretched of the Earth*, 102.
46. Beckert, *Empire of Cotton*, 26.
47. Mitchell, "Cultural Landscapes," 788.
48. Bhambra, "Limits of Cosmopolitanism"; Blaut, *Colonizer's Model*; Trouillot, *Silencing the Past*; Mills, *The Racial Contract*; Suárez-Krabbe, "Pluriversalizing Europe."
49. Rice and Kardux, "Confronting Ghostly Legacies."
50. Blaut, *Colonizer's Model*; Mills, *The Racial Contract*; Massey, "Places and their Pasts."
51. Mills, *The Racial Contract*, 18.
52. Ibid.
53. Virdee and McGeever, "Racism, Crisis, Brexit."
54. Hall, "Whose Heritage?," 10.
55. Turunen, "Geography of Coloniality."

56. Ibid.
57. Imre, "Whiteness in Post-Socialist Eastern Europe," 82.
58. Bhabra, "Limits of Cosmopolitanism"; Bhabra, "Postcolonial Europe."
59. Gilroy, *After Empire*, 161.
60. Du Bois, *Souls of White Folk*.
61. Césaire, *Discourse on Colonialism*.
62. Mbembe, *Black Reason*, 7.
63. Jensen, *Postcolonial Denmark*, 14.
64. Ibid.
65. Blaut, *Colonizer's Model*.
66. Quijano, *Coloniality of Power*.
67. Milanović, *Global Income Inequality*.
68. Nimako and Small, "Theorizing Black Europe"; Small, "Theorizing Visibility"; Hansen, "Name of Europe."
69. Bhabra, "Limits of Cosmopolitanism."
70. Jensen, *Postcolonial Denmark*, 4.
71. Wekker, *White Innocence*.
72. Mills, *The Racial Contract*.
73. Warf and Arias, "Reinsertion of space," 3. (emphasis in the original)
74. Mills, *The Racial Contract*; Bhabra, "Limits of Cosmopolitanism"; De Genova, "The European Question"; De Genova, "The Migrant Crisis"; Buettner, "Postcolonial Migrations."
75. Mitchell, *Cultural Geography*.
76. Missing Migrant Project, "Total Dead and Missing."
77. Turunen, "Geography of Coloniality," 208.
78. Passerini, "Europe and its Others," 133.
79. Gilroy, *After Empire*, 155–156.
80. Nimako and Small, "Theorizing Black Europe."
81. Yuval-Davis, "Politics of Belonging," 197.
82. McKittrick, "Black Sense of Place."
83. Kiluanji Kia Henda quoted in Soares, "Eu crio arte," para. 4.
84. Goldberg, "Racial Europeanization."
85. Johnson, quoted in Consolata Namagambe, "Cast in Stone." para. 11.
86. Schütz, "Rewriting Colonial Heritage."
87. Adisa-Farrar, *Black Consciousness*; Till, "Approaching Place-Based Practice"; Pitts, *Afropean*.
88. Essed, *Forward*, xii.
89. Lamont, "Addressing Recognition Gaps," 421–422.
90. Hawthorne "Black matters"; Bledsoe, Eaves, Williams, and Wright, "Introduction."
91. McKittrick, *Demonic Grounds*, 6.
92. Buettner, *Europe after Empire*, 6.
93. Hall, "Whose Heritage?"
94. Ibid.
95. Rice, *Creating Memorials*, 45.
96. hooks, "Radical Openness."
97. Ibid., 36.
98. Nigussie quoted in Adisa-Farrar, *Black Consciousness*, 36.
99. hooks, "Radical Openness," 36.
100. Blakely, "Emergence of Afro-Europe."
101. Gilroy, *After Empire*, 161.
102. Hesse, *Black Europe's Undecidability*, 297.
103. Ibid., 297.
104. Gilroy, *After Empire*, 98.
105. Evans, "Colonial Fantasies."
106. Jensen, *Postcolonial Europe*, 135.
107. Getachew, "Let's Remake It."

108. Ibid.
109. Buettner, *Europe after Empire*; Turunen, "Decolonising European minds."
110. Massey, "Sense of Place."
111. Ibid., 28.
112. Gilroy, "Ethnic Absolutism," 118.
113. Ibid., 118–119.
114. Ibid.
115. Buettner, "Inclusions and Exclusions," 147.
116. Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe*.
117. Suárez-Krabbe, "Pluriversalizing Europe."
118. Strauss, "Empty Pedestal," 132.
119. Ndlovu-Gatsheni, *Decoloniality*, 492.
120. Gilroy, *After Empire*, 155.
121. Ibid.
122. El-Tayeb, *European Others*, 18
123. Ibid.
124. Bhambra, "Limits of Cosmopolitanism," 399. (emphasis added)
125. Massey, "Places and their Pasts."
126. Hesse, *Black Europe's Undecidability*, 296.
127. Ndlovu-Gatsheni, *Decoloniality*, 492.
128. Doss, *Memorial Mania*.
129. Araujo, *Engaging the past*.
130. Capdepón, Sierp, and Strauss, "Museums and Monuments," 5.
131. Mitchell, "Monuments, Monumentality, Monumentalization."
132. Lee, "#Takedown."
133. Sharp, "Postcolonial Engagements," 67.
134. Mignolo, *Preamble*.
135. Nora, "Memory and History."
136. Massey, *For Space*.
137. Rao, "On Statues."
138. Himid, "Monument talk," 274.
139. Rao, "On Statues."
140. Himid, "Monument Talk," 275.
141. Ibid.
142. Gilroy, *Map of Europe*, xii.
143. Hesse, *Black Europe's Undecidability*, 291.
144. De Genova, "The European Question," 79.
145. Almond, "Deconstructing Europe."
146. Roediger, *Towards the Abolition of Whiteness*, 13. (emphasis in the original)
147. Ibid.

## Acknowledgements

I would like to thank the anonymous reviewers for their insightful comments and incredibly helpful suggestions. I am grateful to the organizers and participants of the 2021 Nordic Summer University Study Circle "Racialization, Whiteness, and Politics of Othering in Contemporary Europe" and the organizers and participants of the 2021 Memories Studies Association Forward workshop for their thoughtful feedback on earlier versions of the paper.

## Disclosure Statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

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