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CHAPTER 12

Racialization and the Public Spaces of the Multicultural City

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The language through which contemporary cultural diversity in the multicultural city is described has become increasingly problematic. In part this problem of description is nothing particularly new. The validity of the paradigm of 'race relations' sociology (Miles 1982, 1987; Rex and Mason 1986; Banton 1987), the status of the analytical concept of 'race' (with or without inverted commas) and the orientalizing roots and routes of academic regimes of scrutiny through which ethnicity becomes visible, have all taken vocabulary as ethically contentious and analytically moot. More recently, Paul Gilroy (2000) has called powerfully to move beyond race-thinking towards the abolition of what he describes as 'raciology'.

This chapter attempts to consider how these challenges might make us think differently about how we come to think and discuss the multicultural cities of the twenty-first century. The chapter is rooted in a number of research projects in contemporary London at the Centre for Urban and Community Research at Goldsmiths College.[1] It speaks directly at the level of the political contestation of the multicultural city but in a manner that is rooted in the banal empiricism of social research that makes the insertion of the times and spaces of the urban into the abstractions of cultural or political theory an imperative. The register of voice is attempting to argue the salience of the traces of historicity and spatiality in making sense of the multicultural city but also to problems that I believe are universal to cities of the twenty-first century across the globe. In order to do so, the chapter suggests that the notion of mutability of racial subjects that is at the heart of most concepts of racialization must be

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set within its context. The concepts of historicity and spatiality are consequently essential to a contextualization of the theoretical language of racialization. This is nowhere more clearly demonstrated than in the contemporary metropolis.

Conventionally, the focus on processes of racialization appeals to a set of analytical perspectives that emphasize the contingent construction and deployment of ideologies of racial difference in politics, in the labour process, and in patterns of collective consumption (Miles 1989; Malik 1996; Solomos and Back 1996; Back and Solomos 2000). It is certainly the case that languages of race tend to imply a more coercive sense of the processes through which collective subjects are generated. In contrast, both in its anthropological histories—and its more contemporary deployment in identity politics—cognate notions of ethnicity have tended to stress processes of sentiment, affiliation, and identification that circumscribe processes of cultural reproduction.

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However, a couplet that echoes a binary comparison of the voluntarism of ethnicities (new and old) with the determinism of collective subject-making in race rhetorics may be equally problematic. The modern self as much as the ethnic group is generated through framings of power and subjectivity that describe limits of individual autonomy and freedom (Rose 1999). The body of the individual as much as the collective bears traces of history constructing identity and refracting identification through regimes of performativity and scopic regimes of visibility (Butler 1999; Moore et al. 2003). Such thinking qualifies the degree to which racial or ethnic identities can be measured within a straightforwardly deterministic calculus.

Yet the recognition across a range of scholarship that a descriptive framing may be suitable in one place and time and not at another does tend to shift emphasis on to the contexts in which languages of cultural difference become significant. In particular, the privileging of contact between different cultures and values in debates around notions of hybridity and creolization has tended to raise the stakes when considering the sorts of cultures that are being 'mixed' and the sorts of novelty that emerges in the worlds of twenty-first century capitalism. The city plays an increasingly significant role in conceptualizing these dynamics. In this sense the multiculturalism of the cities of the twenty-first century is both demographically inevitable and politically challenging. Demographies of difference are concentrated in city space as the societies of the 'north' fail to reproduce their populations and economic change drives the motor of migration. Normative models for the organization of the self, the

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family, the community, and the neighbourhood stretch beyond the boundaries of the nation-state through diasporic world links and transnational forms of identification. And as the transformation of societies across the globe progresses apace the world witnesses both an accelerated pattern of urbanization and a concentration of patterns of cultural difference in the increasingly dominant form of the cosmopolitan metropolis.

Mainstream political theory has cast these debates of citizenship, belonging, and identity largely within the theoretical terrain of the construction of the public realm. In such a context migrant minorities are variously incorporated, licensed, excluded, or assimilated within the conventional polis (Kymlicka 1995; Parekh 2000). However, the problem of thinking through the interplay of contemporary urbanism and processes of racialization is that the conventionally narrated notion of the 'receiving society' defining 'racial groups' through forces of racialization in the crucible of the metropolis is subverted by the simultaneous transformations of both racial identities in flux and the globalizing metropolis itself.

Political theory has debated at length the possibilities for the public sphere to become a site for deliberative democracy to negotiate the political settlement of the city (Arendt 1958; Habermas 1991; Benhabib 1992, 1996; Calhoun 1992). As Richard Sennett has described, it has been less adept at a coming to terms with a notion of the public realm that stresses the visual order of the metropolis and the plural urban worlds stressed in Simmelian theorization of city life (Sennett 2000). The very complexity of the spaces of the city challenge the degree to which the metropolis can be rationalized or subjected to a singular moral order or governmental rule (Boyer 1983). In this context, the existence of processes of 'race-making' or racialization within the city pose some important challenges both to the value of the term itself and its deployment in the cosmopolitan stews of hope and despair that make-up most of the twenty-first century metropolises.

Social Policy, Racialization, and the Multicultural City

It is in this sense that this chapter attempts to address the problems of living together in conditions of multicultural urbanism. If the multiculturalism of the cities of the twenty-first century is both demographically inevitable and politically challenging then we must address simultaneously problems that are both ethical and analytical.

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Ethically, we need to consider what it means to live in cities that are constituted by communities that may be the products of both different histories and histories of differences that bear the imprint of colonialism, slavery, and domination. *Analytically*, we need to recognize also that such communities may be constituted through globalized networks of sentiment and allegiance. Just as the economic drivers of contemporary capitalist globalization challenge the sovereignty of the nation-state the flows of labour as well as capital creates transnational networks of culture and people.

Across the world the city provides a privileged arena in which such challenges are realized. So this contribution to this volume on racialization is also written from a position which believes that an engagement with the structures of government is inevitable. There is a tendency in some literatures (from both the left and right of the political spectrum) to romanticize the world beyond the boundaries of the state and to promote the virtues of civil society and community mobilization. Keith (1995*a*, *b,* 2004) has suggested that it is important to understand that such civil society forms are framed within regimes of governmental power and that such romance might limit rather than progress our movement towards cosmopolis.[2] Alternatively, the disciplinary rise of cultural studies in the academy has tended to focus attention on the cultural dynamics of the production of the multicultural, at times distracting attention from the institutional forms of governance within which multiculture is set.

In the allure of the contemporary global city cosmopolitanism, diversity and difference shimmer for a moment. Racism, nationalism, ethnic cleansing, and xenophobia return as urban nightmares. Indeed, the challenge of discussions that link urbanism to race, multiculture, and forms and norms of intolerance is that both the subject (the city) and the object (multiculture) of debate keep on disappearing before our eyes only to resurface in different forms.

The city appears so solid until we look for its boundaries. The streets appear to offer certainty until we find the beach beneath the cobblestones, the secret narratives of the hidden spaces of private lives, and alternative public spheres of association and dissent. When history is the voice of the powerful, geography is the prerogative of both the explorer and the mapmaker. We do not always wish to take such voices and such cartographies for granted. The chronology of a Sydney or a London appears to offer the reassurance of a historical ordering of things. This happened and then that. Until you realize that as Peter Ackroyd (2001) has described with the capital of the United Kingdom and Peter Carey (2001) with Sydney the city has a

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biography that suffers always from the unreliable and imperfect flaws of the narrator. In contrast, the historiography of the city tells us how chronology has been used to make sense of the city and that *histories* are normally written by the winners, the voices of the dispossessed relegated to the marginalia.

Similarly, though rarely acknowledged, the demography of most of the major metropolises of the twenty-first century is in large part a product of migration. These migrations can come from the same country (as with the migrant growth of the first industrial metropolises) or they may bring folk from across the globe to a New York or to a Hong Kong. The categoric certainties of this demography may appear to offer an alternative register of a kind. The transnational movements are locked into patterns of urban residence and city labour markets, creating the classic patterning of jobs, homes, and power marked by the mosaic of multiculturalism. The city variously accommodates, assimilates, or stigmatizes these racialized patterns through its form. The multicultural city mosaic (of Shanghai or Karachi or Bombay as much as London or Chicago or Sydney) is classically subjected to the institutional logics of the melting pot and the reproduction of segregation and the ghetto. But both the exigencies of exogamy and the more prosaic realities of cultural flows that subvert ethnic boundary markers disrupt such narratives. The hybrid forms of multiculture and the increasingly hyphenated forms of demographic mixing challenge a rubric that makes the city visible as a competing arena of ethnic cultures precisely because these cultures do not stand still to be photographed, analysed, and measured.

So we search for a vocabulary that captures the changing cartography of the multicultural city. We are aware that the very act of description potentially ossifies and so such a vocabulary needs to be careful about its categoric forms. And we are aware that we write in the shadow of all the other people that have written about cities and have written about multiculturalism and the processes of race-making that even created its own subdiscipline of studies of *race relations*. So much in the shadows that the deep meanings that attach themselves to the shape of the city and the lexicon of urbanism form part of our cultural present. An urban sensibility structures the very act of writing about the city.

In this sense in social policy terms we need to understand how multiculture is made problematic in urban policy and the occasions and the reasons when it is not. This is not a revised form of the race relations situations of an earlier Weberian formation. It is instead to focus attention on *the manufacture* of both the problems of social

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policy and the speaking positions of those who become its subjects and seek to address them. Both are historically and geographically contingent. In this sense a juxtaposition of multiculturalism and integration as logical opposites is analytically flawed because the latter depends on an articulation of the former.[3]

At some places and times 'the problem' within policy discourse ties ethnicity to demography (as in debates that describe escalating numbers of asylum seekers or putative flows of migrant labour in the newly expanded European Union). At other times and places the problem within policy may invoke cultures that cover geographically discrete demographics (as in the normative challenges of Islamic faith or the loaded calculation of black single parenthood). At other times again as Solomos' work has repeatedly described policy discourse around issues as diverse as employment practice or policing may generate racial difference through regimes of racialization (Solomos 1988, 1993).

Even in the official statistics that probably underenumerated migrant flows, London accommodated an increase in its population by almost a million between 1991 and 2001. This passed almost without comment in the decade in which it happened but has become a major topic of concern in the early twenty-first century. How much was this due to the high proportions of Canadian, Americans, Australians, and South Africans (re)settling in the city and who bore the markers of a certain kind of whiteness? But how much also was this caused by the sense in which many of the migrations of Lithuanians, Muscovites, and refugees from international traumas in the Baltic and the horn of Africa were rendered invisible by the spaces of the city?

What is undisputable is that we are confronted by a situation in which the certainties of academic disciplines that take (often implicitly) the nation-state as the principal building bloc of 'sociologies' or histories or politics or cultural anthropologies are challenged by the messiness of the contemporary city. The social organization of city resources may sit *babushka doll* like within neat hierarchies of central, regional, and local state power but flows of culture, capital, and population subvert such taxonomies. And what is argued here is that the very vocabularies that are used to capture these new realities confront some very old problems within the loose array of writing and thought that we might call *urbanism*.

Specifically, we need a new heuristic compass with which to navigate the contemporary city. Historically, we might place cities research on a spectrum that crosses the west–east of conventional

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and critical literatures. Conventional urban studies approaches tend to reify the social and economic order of the city (and strive to maximize its functionality and optimize its working form). Critical analysis in contrast seeks to undermine this naturalized ordering of buildings and people (and expose their patterned artifice as inscriptions of injustice and reified inequalities of power and capital).

The phenomenon of patterns of residential settlement and cognate debates around gentrification exemplify this contrast between the conventional and the critical. Critical struggles to reduce the processes of gentrification to the Ricardian rent curve vie with a boosterist urbanism that narrates the city as a site of consumption and measures successful growth precisely in terms of enhanced capital valorization of residential preferences in the new districts of Jerusalem, Los Angeles, or Paris. But such a spectrum is necessarily two-dimensional in nature. It cannot adapt to the transnational challenge of globalization and the ethical challenge of multiculture.

To do so demands insertion into both urban studies academic debates and public concern with the future of the multiculture of globalizing cities a second spectrum. It is fundamentally a product of moral philosophy and it challenges both economistic and cultural readings of the urban. It runs north–south between communitarian and liberal traces of moral philosophy but it is realized in the cities of multiculture in ferocious debates that our west–east spectrum cannot locate.[4]

The spectrum creates a tension between the strange and the familiar and relates particularly to how we come to know the city and how we valorize either its *knowability* or its *anonymity*. The city has long been a site in which newness comes into the world. It has historically been the crucible of economic, political, and cultural change precisely because old values and old orderings are disrupted by the tumult of city life. This produces the quintessentially urban horrors of populist fanaticism as well as the metropolitan potential for enlightenment critique. The city is consequently paradoxically or ambivalently located between these tensions, the sites of the city that display the most intense forms of intolerance are commonly also those that demonstrate the potential for the most intimate forms of cultural dialogue. To be analytically plausible or ethically useful an understanding that privileges the notion of racialization consequently must be able to account for such agonism and paradox.

We need to recognize that the polar north and related points east, west, and south provide a compass *for* but not a road map *towards* the good city. They identify a constitutive tension in the ordering of

city life that sits agonistically within its frame. The additional (north–south) dimension speaks to some of the fundamental tensions in moral philosophy but it also resonates within cartographies of contemporary multiculturalism. Significantly, the choreography of the debates within contemporary moral philosophy and those in multiculture are homologous with long-standing arguments around how we consider the ethical markings of the spaces of the city. Unless we understand how the city draws together, displaces, and explodes these tensions we will continue to misrepresent the challenges multiculturalism poses to an understanding of contemporary urbanism. Most significantly of all such tensions speak directly both to the social policy questions that figure how we might *organize* the multicultural city and also to the academic questions that address how we might *know* it.

At one extreme the city has commonly welcomed *the strange* and the *unknowable*. The migrant, the refugee, the indigenous culture, and the newly arrived potentially see the city differently. Seeing the niche market or the scope to innovate as well as challenging the received wisdom and ascendant hierarchies of power, the arrival of new people and migrant groups in the city potentially renews its lifeblood. The discursively ephemeral may suddenly become symbolically central. The hidden histories of colonialism and empire, slavery and suppression of native peoples may resurface from their cells in the subconscious of the city. But they do not do so straight forwardly.

In contrast, the communitarian sense of *the familiar* unit of the ethically *knowable* and the moral legitimacy of the neighbourhood speaks directly to debates that confuse the west–east typologies of what might conventionally be described as reactionary (coded as politically *right*) and progressive (coded as politically *left*) urbanisms. The sets of values that privilege the speaking positions of minoritarian voices may rapidly have to defend the ground on which their claims are being made. The right to police arrivals in such a (real or metaphoric) neighbourhood challenges such speaking authority. This speaks directly to urban policy concerns in terms of property rights, gender relations, schooling, visible sexualities, the control of subsidized rental residence (through state or social landlord provision), and the rights of cultural recognition in the market place of employment law and practice. The liberal indifference to the markers of identity likewise speaks directly to the rights to avoid discrimination, racial harassment, the symbolic and real violence of cultural intolerance. Crudely, our compass is complicated by this

new spectrum. We can see both a right-wing and a left-wing communitarianism in the multicultural cities of the twenty-first century. The right of neighbourhoods to be turned into Business Improvement Districts and police themselves and the right of local communities to take self-governing actions against the homeless, the anti-social, and the badly behaved appeal to the traditional constituencies of the right. The sense of community grassroots organization against property capital, protests against road extensions, building on green land and school closures speaks to the traditional agendas of the left. *Both* are communitarian in *both* their moral stance and their invoked urbanisms. They share ethical roots but differ significantly in their city visions and political routes.

But equally the right to be freed from state restrictions against wearing particular clothes or to exercise personal religious preference and the right to limit the state's power to arbitrary violence and to police the spaces of the city tends to be celebrated likewise on the left. Yet alternative strictures that limit state interference in the markets that structure the spatialized city realizations of Ricardian rent curves, the imperatives of global capitalism or government interference in market relations speak to a liberalism that few on the left would identify as their own. Straightforwardly, this cautions us to be more careful with our vocabulary. There is a liberalism of the left and of the right. Neoconservatism is not necessarily best identified as neoliberal and cannot be subsumed in catch-all notions such as the revanchist city when we are identifying the enemies of progressive urbanism.

The extra dimension of this moral compass becomes more not less complicated by the realities of city multiculturalism across the twenty-first century globe. Recognitions of the rights of indigenous and native peoples and migrant minorities sit squarely within the fourfold tensions of critical urbanism, functional city building, communitarian valorization and stigma, and the problem of liberalism. It does not always sit easily. The case in favour of migration for the benefits of the economy of the city play against reactionary debates on the threats of migration to constructions of solidarity. They speak also to more complex debates about which cultural rights of migrant minorities should be recognized and which suppressed by the governance structures of the well-run city.

These are traced through the way economic and social change are realized and managed in the city. But equally significantly, the extra dimension of the north–south of our compass is complicated yet further by the dimensionalities of urban space and city temporalities.

Can the rights of recognition of Islamic schools in twenty-first century London, Paris, or Brisbane be spoken about in the same register that gave church schools state recognition of Jesuit education in England or in the deep-rooted enlightenment anti-clerical voice of the nineteenth century France? Are the sites that are cherished as migratory zones of transition—metaphorical Ellis Islands of multiculture—to be naturalized for these processes of change or analysed for their contingency. The East End of London is sometimes spoken of in these terms. In the vernacular for some it has always (always is such a plastic adverb) been the site where migrant minorities arrive in London and then move on again. There is a sense of it as a space of *the changing same*. Reassuring narratives of assimilatory tolerance follow each other in centuries old succession and frame our understanding of the space itself and its setting within the city. But how does such fleeting transition sit with the aggressive gentrification of the same city spaces in the late twentieth century. Alternative narratives would render the spaces of today's East End visible as the logical frontier of capital appropriation, even as scholars such as Neil Smith have taught us to be careful about the deployment of the metaphor of the frontier itself (Smith 1991, 1996).

The Mutability of Cosmopolitan Racial Subjects

Demographic fractions of a city population do not constitute communities. Communities are built, imagined, performed, and fought for; frequently in struggles for justice and resources *against* the state. Commonly, such identities rest also on resistance to other forms of dominance in the city ranging from the spatialization of capital to the populist will of the people. In this context, a striking feature in contemporary literature about multicultural cities is a tendency either to privilege culture (at the expense of institutional context) or to privilege demography (at the expense of the significance of meaning).

To the extent that an analysis of racialization implies a stress on notions of becoming rather than being this separation of culture from institutional form and demography from cultural production may be empirically predictable but is invariably analytically problematic. Empirical academic studies potentially reify minority presence through ascribed ethnicities that are monitored, counted, and measured in terms of demographic penetration of political systems, employment profiles, and attempts to promote equal opportunities. Such measurement may be pragmatically progressive and politically

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defensible but inevitably it highlights the 'border problems' of definitions of demographic fixity that reveal the absurdity of racial languages enshrined in policies of affirmative action and census monitoring (Goldberg 2002). Likewise, study of cultural production that privileges creativity that emerges from dialogue between traditions in the arts or in everyday life implicitly argues against the taxonomies of either ethnicized or racialized pigeonholes. But such arguments may undermine the case for institutional recognition of forms of cultural racism in the institutions that govern precisely these activities.

The contingencies that are explicit in such dilemmas lead logically to a focus on the sites in which the markers of race and ethnicity become significant in defining life chances, and other social and ethical outcomes. In this sense, it is essential to link the historical transition of racialized categories to the places in which their descriptive power is relevant at one moment and changes over time.

In a related sense the interplay between the spaces of the city and identity politics has the capacity to generate arenas of cultural identification and ethical contest. Alexander Negt and Oscar Kluge argued that it was possible to describe such self-autonomous arenas of debate and deliberation as a proletarian public sphere (Negt and Kluge, 1993), a concept that Paul Gilroy has developed productively to consider the routing of black diasporic cultures through the *alternative public spheres* of the city (Gilroy 1993*a*, *b*). Drawing on Gilroy, in this sense it is possible to conceptualize how community struggles have produced 'alternative public spheres', commonly in the cultural realm: in youth culture, in musical culture, in voluntary and religious associations. These arenas are political, though they are not always seen as such (Back and Keith 1999; Bach et al. 2003). They do not fit straightforwardly within the conventional languages of political science. They are most readily seen as Goffmanesque framings of social and moral life. Erving Goffman's metaphor of the stage and the dramaturgical analysis of ethnographies of such worlds is an essential tool in rendering comprehensible the complexities of city life (Goffman 1974). It is in the dance hall that gender politics is most clearly performed, in the church and the Mosque where faith-based transnational identities are deliberated, and on the football field where forms and norms of masculinity may be contested.

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Crucially, the demographic make-up of the alternative public sphere may be marked by specific fractions of ethnicity but the key characteristic of the multicultural city is that it is in such spaces that new identities are generated and new solidarities are formed. In this

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sense, the spaces themselves become constitutive features of the manner in which racial identity is defined. Both the (successful or unsuccessful) reproduction of social values or norms and the emergence of new ways of seeing and thinking through patterns of creolization and hybridity are quite literally site-dependent.

Migration to cities of the capitalist north brings together cultures from across the globe. An analytical focus on the patterns of creolization and hybridization in the work of authors such as Appadurai, Back, Bhabha, Gilroy, and many other scholars in cultural studies and have produced both important debates about the performative nature of intercultural dialogue and also significant concerns about the terms and limits of such processes. Simultan-eously, studies in political science and sociology have considered the degrees to which individual migrant minorities (and sometimes migrant majorities) have succeeded within the institutional networks of city politics, education, welfare, class formation, or different economic sectors (Modood 1997; Runnymede Trust 2000). In the former literature 'the cosmopolitan' assumes a sign of cultural transformation through mixing, in the latter the cosmopolitan stands as a valorized sign of reified diversity. Yet there are problems with both a decontextualized account of the powers of creolization and with histories of migrant minorities that plot their relative successes and failures by privileging the temporalities of generational change and advance. Such problems can be addressed through a consideration of the spatialization of both performativity and institutional form.

The Historicity and Spatiality of the Racialized City

Context and description become important drivers of academic analysis of racialization in a register of voice that foregrounds the salience of the traces of historicity and spatiality in making sense of the multicultural city. It is essential to place the mutability of racial subjects within the times and spaces of the city on which such identities are staged. To exemplify through the British context it is relevant to consider the identification category of black as both politically and analytically a significant sign of cultural difference at some times but not at others. Barnor Hesse has explored the manner in which the temporalities of the post-1945 Windrush generation potentially narrates a misleading uniformity of the Caribbean experience in the United Kingdom (Hesse 1993). Generalization of the Fordist labour demand of those years and the settlement of the British black experience is meaningful at times but can inadvertently

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downplay the significance of other settlements and histories that reach back further, not least in the port cities of Liverpool, Bristol, and London. The typology of Barbadian, Jamaican, Guyanese, Nevis, and other small islands is likewise contingently significant. The term 'Asian' in a British context used to capture demographic fractions from across the (some time twice) migrant diasporas of the Indian subcontinent is similarly both contested and at times meaningful. The badge of Islam similarly again both unites and divides.

In the United States, the Hispanicization of cities at some times appears analytically meaningful, at others masks a cartography of 'new' and 'old' migrations that bear the imprint of different economic moments of the late twentieth century and very different political trajectories of homeland and settlement (cf. Davis 2000) between demographies that cross Mexican, Central American, Puerto Rican, and the Spanish-speaking Caribbean diasporas. The contested vocabularies through which this process is described foreground slightly different invocations of ethnic identity that stretch across the nuances of Hispanic, Latino, and Chicano appellations.

It is precisely the mutability of racial subjects that makes the urban arena simultaneously both exciting and dangerous; the scene of Les Back's metropolitan paradox on which both the most extreme moments of racial terror and intense forms of intercultural dialogue are staged (Back 1996: chapters 5 and 6). The increasingly diverse nature of contemporary cities has to be understood as taking place through this process of staging and place-making of the neighbourhoods of the city. The city is constituted both as a cartography of sites through which communities identify themselves in the migrant metropolis and as spaces that are appropriated in the performance of community-making. Both these forms of spatialization literally *take place* within specific regimes of national, transnational, and local governance and power that mark their constitution.

To take just one example in the area of Deptford in south London the genesis of a sense of a black community can only be understood in terms of struggles that were simultaneously local and global. In the 1970s, Communist Party Black South African exiles from apartheid South Africa worked alongside West African migrants and African Caribbean churches in the campaign against SUS, the police criminalization of young black men under the Victorian common law of suspicion (Keith 1993). The area witnessed a number of racial attacks and fire bombings, some associated with National Front activity. In 1980, in a case many suspected involved horrific arson thirteen died at a party in the New Cross Fire in this part of London. The wave of

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resentment spread out across the city in subsequent months and in 1981 a national march from the inner suburbs to the central areas of the West End of London made the black spaces of the inner suburbs visible in the political heart of London. These individual struggles and campaigns structured the emergence of a sense of community that was specifically staged in Deptford but also appealed to a metropolitan sense of blackness that confronted British racism.

The ethical resolutions of multiculture are challenged and reconfigured both spatially and institutionally. Consequently, the public spaces of the city and the institutional structures of democratic power are racialized both demographically and culturally. Across the United Kingdom a sense of struggle is historically linked to a debate about the nature of 'representation' whereby the penetration of the political apparatus of the state and representative politics is contested alongside the representation of black and migrant minority subjectivities in the expressive cultures of music, literature, clothing, and sport.

Equally pointedly, in a mainstream European and American context the fragility of categories of whiteness becomes visible under closer empirical scrutiny. There is not a point in the history of London when cultural differences have not played a significant role in shaping the life of the city. Masked by a historical gaze that normally erases such conflicts it is possible to narrate London's biography through the lens of ethnic difference. The struggles between Vikings and Danes resulted in a prefigured residential apartheid in the city, rural migrations from the Celtic fringe were embossed in place names and communal strife and the religious moments of dissent and riot through centuries were invariably culturally inflected. Peter Ackroyd has even argued that for much of the eleventh to the thirteenth centuries the capital represented the heart of Saxon merchant resistance (as city state) to Norman aristocratic dominance of the fledgling nation-state (Ackroyd 2001).

To the present day in the city there is a beating of the bounds of Catholic Wapping that are marched on the Feast of the Virgin Mary, distinguishing the area from the Jewish territory north of the Highway. Throughout the early decades of the twentieth century violent conflict characterized relations between these two turfs but in the early twenty-first century they appear echoes of an anachronism. As Stedman-Jones (1989) has described the white 'Eastender' was culturally defined in a manner that conflated such racial differences.

It is against such histories that it is important to consider the particular development of the recent past. The acceleration of migrant flows and the global reach of migrant labour in the twenty-first

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century markets makes the current city different in degrees of multicultural complexity rather than different in kind from its historical counterpart. But what has changed is the manner in which transnational links of globalized culture challenge the assumed or explicit normative models of assimilation. Assimilation rests on the appeal of the homogenizing force of the nation-state. The twenty-first century city may or may not outlive the nation-state but its multicultural nature disrupts the national political settlement analytically and challenges the straightforward sense of a national culture ethically. And against the setting of mainstream (national) cultures and conventional (national and local) political participation migrant communities have historically created for themselves discursive sites through which newly localized versions of culture and politics develop.

In such settings cultural production is marked by both homeplace and site of settlement. In comforting narratives of Whiggish assimilationism the Italian community in the United States create pizza that is subsequently reexported back to mainland Italy. Bangladeshi 'lascars' or seamen invent the curry in London that eventually becomes the national dish of the United Kingdom, displacing the quintessentially English fish and chips that historically owe their lineage to the combination of French pommes frites and Jewish traditions of frying fish that characterized the East End of the city in preceding decades.

More powerfully, in the interstices of state and civil society the city facilitates the genesis of alternative public spheres. In the manner of Negt and Kluge's description of the proletarian public sphere migrant minorities struggle to build their known sites of association and discussion. These may provide the arenas in debating societies and working class associations for the circulation of transnational and diasporic constructions Jewish international socialism that followed the work of Rudolph Rocker through twentieth century Whitechapel (Gidley 2002) or the exilic politics that runs from Marx and Lenin to the colonial struggles of migrant Africa and Asia in early twentieth century London. And just as London's colonial past was characterized by sites of diasporic dissent and exchange of ideas, its post-colonial present provides us with both the high profile work of the Finsbury Park mosque and the low profile work of women's politics in the Bengali run Jagonari Women's Centre in Whitechapel. Each in turn becomes a deliberative arena for the mediation of the forces that impose racialized identity and the discursive construction of new forms of collective identification. They

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are spaces through which the history of the present is contested in the language of contemporary urbanism.

For the purposes of this chapter, two features remain important about such changes. *First,* the city itself becomes a *theatre* of many different—and sometimes irreconcilable—sets of cultural values, ideologies of the economic and the political, dynamics of social change. The dramaturgical metaphor links directly with the centrality of a Goffmanesque understanding of the mutability of racial subjects already considered. The nature of such cultural incommensurability provides a central organizing principle of much post-colonial and post-structural social theory. In particular, it informs the notion of a cosmopolitanism of hybridity and creolization promoted in the work of Homi Bhabha (1997; Bhabha et al. 2000). Similarly, Salman Rushdie has described the capacity to foster and subsume such incommensurable realities as the defining feature of the city and the central thematic of his own work (Rushdie 1991).

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Second, the staging of such debates within the theatre of the city changes the cultures that distinguish migrant minorities in the first place. Diasporic communities are changed by the very processes of cultural reproduction and cultural dialogue in which they are implicated. In France the everyday lives of the banlieu so strikingly demonstrated in Kassiewitz's film La Haine restructure the nature of Moroccan, West African, and 'indigenous' French urban culture. In Birmingham, Manchester, and London in the United Kingdom the communities of the former Commonwealth reclaim the nature of what it means to be black, Jamaican, or West Indian; Sylheti, Bengali, or South Asian as 'new ethnicities' emerge that are articulated through *the spatialization of culture* within the city. But simultaneously what is risibly described at times as the 'host' culture changes likewise. Similarly, the Hispanic takeover of the American metropolis makes sense within the categorizing imperative of the narration of the 'Magical Urbanism' of Mike Davis but this very categorization, contingently both false and valid, obscures both the demographic discontinuities between Mexico and El Salvador and the city habitus of specific communities of new migrations (Davis 2000).

Performativity and Racialization

In this sense we return to the tension that exists between the reassuring voice of the communitarian and the idealism of liberal individualism. In a volume that considers processes of racialization such

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tensions are best understood through a consideration of the process of manufacture that is central to the term.

How race becomes visible might structure our thinking about the nature of processes of racialization. Many authors that have written about the public sphere—Richard Sennett (1977, 2000), Hannah Arendt (1958), Iris Marion Young (1990)—have stressed the right of the citizens of the city to create and define the polis through deliberative debate and creative performance in the present. But the city invariably testifies to the presence of the past within its contemporary form. The manner in which these traces of other times and different spaces become relevant depends on the constitution of arenas of debate and resource allocation in the city. Configurations of life chances relate directly to the historical imprint of city settlement and employment. Educational chances are determined in part by the quality of local schools, life expectancy in part is dictated by the quality of housing stock into which you are born. The middle class use their cartographies of the social to promote disproportionate access to the welfare state; the ethnic enclave is potentially both a testament to institutionally racist exclusion and a source of social capital and networking. And the multicultural imprint of the city is itself a legacy of the processes of (frequently collective) consumption through which segregation occurred in residence and the division of labour was racialized. Concentration promotes a voting bloc that may generate access to political power, dispersal may signify assimilatory success but renders invisible presence itself. So in both its spatialities and its historicities the appeal to move beyond race, to end raciology is continually rebutted as much by legacy as by intent.

Through a liberal lens, the rights of self-organization and relative autonomy valorize state subsidized religious education but may balk at the degree to which a communitarian moral calculus is inscribed in the teaching of Catholic, Jewish, or Islamic schools. Through a communitarian lens the settlement and marketing of one part of East London as Banglatown in the 1990s is potentially an act of strategic essentialism. It can be seen as a self-defence mechanism for a community of interest to contest the displacing forces of gentrification that make the area too expensive to live in. Yet it may also ossify a particular notion of community values within it. In work with colleagues young Bengali women aged 13–14 expressed to Back, Cohen, and Keith their preference for the 'racist space' of the Isle of Dogs to the surveillance of Banglatown, its open spaces relatively free of the patrician gaze and community regulation (Back and Keith 1999).

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Through a communitarian lens, the self-organization of migrant communities against the injustices of racist intolerance depends on an appeal to a sense of sentiment that defines certain kinds of racialized solidarity. Yet in appealing against police malpractice, state-sponsored discrimination in housing allocation or disproportionate exclusion from schools the fundamental basis of appeal can become that of liberal individualism. The right for markers of individual difference not to matter is in part an appeal to a progressive liberalism that valorizes the equal treatment of all. Yet to the extent that such campaigns for the rights of the city appeal to forms of state regulation of the city itself they must appeal to a notion of governmental practice in a liberal register. The ambiguity of this position recurs in the politics of the multicultural metropolis and the racialization of city spaces.

As the twenty-first century city becomes more complex, the pluralization of processes of racialization sits uneasily within the city. An appeal for 'no borders' marks certain claims for the free movement of labour and endorses the creation of new migrant minorities in cities of affluence. This appeal to freedom of movement is at times shared by the liberal left and also the neoliberal right. But to the extent that cities appeal to a sense of common sentiment, a shared identity that prefigures political deliberation over the allocation of welfare services and employment chances such a register may speak against certain collective interests. A communitarian sense of geographical scale (such as the neighbourhood) or ethnic solidarity (and identity) may feel less sanguine about such rapidly changing urban forms. It is this context that the reassuring certainties of the couplet black and Asian to describe the multicultural world of twentieth century British cities is challenged by new migrations of the 1990s boom years, particularly in London.

It is why the debates on migration rapidly become more complex in the cities of twenty-first century Europe and North America. When we understand the agonistic politics of the liberal and the communitarian that define the multicultural condition some seemingly perverse debates are clarified a little. In the United Kingdom in 2004 the easier categorizations of race are subverted by debates around new migrants arriving from Eastern Europe. Scholars on the left—including Marxist economist Bob Rowthorn—have questioned whether such migrant flows threaten processes of welfare reform by undermining the legitimacy of the welfare state (Rowthorn 2003). But the appeal from the British left to a common sense of social solidarity is premised on an appeal not only to an anachronistic notion

of nation building but also a curiously Kantian sense of communal loyalty. This particular clock cannot be turned back. A return to what Ali Rattansi (2004) has identified as a new assimilationism is both analytically and ethically flawed.

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Ostensibly abstract debates have a populist resonance that replays many of the histories of the 1960s. An understanding of the racialization of the public spaces of the city is instructive to frame both their popular appeal and their analytical value. The public spaces of the contemporary city are characterized by forms of both rationality and sentiment that transcend national boundaries. The spaces of cultural difference in the metropolis in this sense do not configure within the nation-state but cut across it. Transnational sentiment and cosmopolitan challenge create the city as a site where the rational interest of the urban (e.g. the demand for migrant labour in contemporary London) do not necessarily correspond with the articulated sentiment of the nation (e.g. in the auction of populist hostility to new migrants and asylum seekers).

Conclusion

This chapter has suggested that the notion of racialization is helpful in understanding the multicultural metropolis but only contingently so. There is a danger that the term itself implies a much greater sense of certainty than reality delivers. If we take from Simmel the centrality of the flux of the city in challenging the editing processes of rationality we begin to understand the importance of context in structuring processes of identity manufacture and the manner in which racisms construct racial boundaries. Inflected through the spaces of the city, both the creativity of processes of hybridization and creolization and the enduring scars of raciology and pernicious intolerance can be seen as simultaneously realized rather than juxtaposed.

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ENDNOTES

1. See www.goldsmiths.ac.uk/cucr.
2. The point being made here is that (after Foucault) we need to consider how regimes of governmentality map the transactional boundary state and civil society in ways that facilitate the emergence of some forms of social movements, domination, and resistance but do not allow others.
3. On 3 April 2004, Trevor Phillips, the head of the Commission for Racial Equality argued that multiculturalism and integration were mutually exclusive

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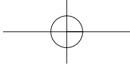

because 'Multiculturalism suggests a separateness' (*The Times*, 3 April 2004, p. 9). His statement reified the demography of multiculture while simultaneously diminishing its ethical challenge.

4. In this sense, Richard Rorty has argued that the tensions between the communitarian and the liberal structure debates in contemporary moral philosophy and run through the identity, loyalty, and difference. See 'Rorty, R. (1998) 'Justice as a Larger Loyalty', in P. Cheah, and B. Robbins (eds.), *Cosmopolitics: Thinking and Feeling Beyond the Nation*. Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press.