

Seeing Whiteness Through the Blizzard: Issues in Research on White Communities. Roger Hewitt

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In the UK, as in other parts of Europe, some migrant whites are accepted as non-threatening, others are not. Currently Bulgarians and Romanians, despite accession to the EU, are only accepted into the UK following scrutiny of occupational status and other attributes. Other nationalities enter more freely. The candidates for these suspect migrant categories change frequently. A few years ago it was Kosovan Albanians and Czech Roma refugees that populated anxious national discourse. Less needy 'white ethnics' like Russians, Lithuanians and Latvians were more cheerfully received in London, while Poles, long established across the UK in various strata since World War II, confused popular discourse by containing high-achieving professionals alongside skilled, hard-working but needy workers who threatened white workers in the building and decorating trades.

In some discourses, of course, all of these are equally 'outsiders', and many white European migrants at this stage in history, are not yet as accepted as African Caribbeans as a normal, if not equal, part of the British social fabric. In the new Europe most of the recent white migrants are not assimilated and are attempting to enjoy new capitalism, being sojourners for work and/or pleasure, part of a fluid cosmopolis rather than a permanent part of any stable multicultural society.

Our conscious as well as tacit knowledge of racial discourse construction is immense – we have seen so much of it – and in truth many of its contradictions and putative ironies are very simple matters: populations and their governments like immigrants who contribute something useful to the general good and don't threaten. They are hostile to those who they believe take resources away and who they believe are threatening in some way. If immigrants are of a different colour or culture the terms of how that judgement is made have in almost all cases been modulated by other factors, including racist ideologies. So somehow hacking away at the social and political foundation of these 'additional factors' has been important for groups deemed to be different from some 'mainstream'. Hence the pre-occupations of many

of the American 'whiteness studies' authors, producing books and articles with titles like – *How the Irish Became White* (Ignatiev, 1995) *How the Jews became White Folks...* (Brodin, 1999); *Displacing Whiteness: essays in social and cultural criticism*, (Frankenberg, 1997) *Whiteness: a Critical Reader* (Hill, 1997); *The Making and Unmaking of Whiteness*, (Rasmussen et al, 2001); and, more recently, *After Whiteness: Unmaking an American Majority*, (Hill, 2004.)

'Whiteness' itself (i.e. physically being 'white') is not the issue. It is more some concept of the ideal social contributor/non-threatener, sought by the majority that is the object. Many non-white societies have their own versions of the same concept, but 'whiteness' here in these uses stands in a metaphorical relationship to one particular historically constructed expression of the social contributor/non-threatener - i.e. 'citizen' - and often, as in the past, this citizen is augmented with the idea of 'born to rule' or 'standard by which all others are judged' or 'grid through which all things should be perceived'. This is the realm of the long history through which a cultural hegemony of 'whiteness' was achieved: the constructed 'whiteness' analysed by such early pioneers as Richard Dyer, (1988; 1997); Vron Ware (1992); David Roediger, (1991) and Ruth Frankenberg, (1993.)

There have been other previous theoretical proxies for this ideal before 'whiteness' *per se* became so clearly identified. The long-established American notion of the WASP (White Anglo-Saxon Protestant) for years did the same popular-level theoretical work as indicating a dominant viewpoint and sector of interest. To be accepted by WASP society was part of a process of cultural divestment and acquisition for which some were better equipped than others. Long before David Roediger's work on white working-class consciousness and racism, *The Wages of Whiteness*, gave birth to the flood of whiteness studies, DuBois pointed out how the benefits of racial division for those classified as white were bodied forth as economic reward. What Roediger brought to the surface was the megalithic notion of 'whiteness' that transcends any particular manifestation of it and becomes manipulated to position people, black and white, in their relation to it.. However, these proximate concepts of 'mainstream' culture, 'WASP power' and the 'wages of whiteness' have never benefited *all* whites, or at least not all whites equally, and some, I have argued, have benefited not at all. (Hewitt, 2005: 124-5; also Hartigan,

1999; Wray and Newitz, 1997) This may be related to the potential contradiction between the ‘wages’ and the ‘profits’ of whiteness alluded to by Thomas Sugrue in his important study of racism in Detroit during the 1940s and 50s (Sugrue, 1996a; 1996b) which I will return to below.

There are, of course, two sides to this kind of benefit/wage, so that the social distribution of dis-advantage also needs to be taken into account. Some of the least benefited/waged whites may still be better off, economically and in terms of status, than some minority ethnic group member ‘of color’, as they say in the USA. At the same time there are many members ‘of color’ in minority ethnic groups who are better off on all counts than poor whites. Clearly the literal meaning of ‘white’ tends to undermine the simple metaphoric meaning of white=empowered and the great turbine of migratory movements across Europe continues to demonstrate the instability of any certainty over the value to be placed on ‘whiteness’ alone.

Despite the theoretical problems with the utility of the concept of ‘whiteness’, from almost any academic or political angle, since the early 1990s there has been a strong flow of academic work purporting to exploring ‘whiteness’, its construction, power and urgent need of destruction. This latter, sharply anti-racist trend was sewn in Roediger’s second book on these themes, *Towards the Abolition of Whiteness* (Roediger 1994). Here Roediger argued beyond his original economic historian’s analysis of how white Irish workers in the South had come to have a class-conscious stake in racism, towards the need for cultural/political intervention. This theme was picked up with a vengeance by the left-libertarian group the Race Traitor Collective, who argued for the ‘abolition of whiteness’ from within – hence the ironic use of ‘race traitor’ (Ignatiev and Garvey, 1998.) This represented a swift movement from Roediger’s insights into a form of anti-racism which had so little chance of actual success it could have been designed by its enemies.

One major difficulty with the concept of the ‘abolition of whiteness’ as argued for by the Race Traitor Collective, is that, although seeking political expression, its insights about ‘whiteness as a destructive ideology’ are expressed in a language that is inaccessible beyond specific academic discourses and/or an already committed anti-racist politics. Like some other well-intentioned forms of anti-racism, it hopes that

working-class whites will make some sociologically implausible leaps over words like 'whiteness' used in counter-intuitive ways, and concepts which seem to suggest the necessity of self-loathing, towards a new race-free tomorrow. Paradoxically what this does is to appear to essentialise whiteness. It should be clear from many titles in the torrent of 'whiteness studies' texts, that the analysis and language of early 'critical whiteness' works have been seriously misunderstood, within academia and beyond, opening the floodgates to a multitude of 'understandings'. Thus 'whiteness studies' and the more Marxist/post Marxist 'critical whiteness studies' became blurred sometimes permitting strange bedfellows. One paradigmatic example of this confusion is the edited collection *White Reign – Deploying Whiteness in America*, (Kinchloe et al. 1998) which, despite a few valuable contributions, allows the use of the term 'whiteness' to become lamely equivalent to 'racism' (any racism), whilst simultaneously backing away from any but the most familiar, traditionally liberal analysis. Thus an old, inadequate and in truth very 'white' idea of opposition to racism can posture under the banner of the more radical language of critical whiteness studies – even its title craftily borrowing the tough-sounding, heavy-handed ironies of CWS – but have no 'critical' purchase whatsoever. Furthermore, the emphasis on groups that have 'become white' – Roediger's latest book *Working Towards Whiteness: How America's Immigrants Became White* (2005), re-iterates this theme – re-enforces a notion of a monolithic and re-ified 'whiteness', conflating social reality with ideological template, racialising class relationships and re-investing the politics of 'race' and anti-racism with another heavy dose of essentialism, of which it already has enough. Meanwhile the nature of global societies, the growth of the world wide web and the migration turbine itself already erode any permanent pantheon of old white gods. Things fall apart. There is something bigger than 'whiteness'.

If 'whiteness studies' bombast in the USA has exhausted itself and a more respectabilized, staid version staked its claim to academic incorporation - as well as whiteness studies being taught in a reported thirty-plus US universities, there is a web-based *Journal of Critical White Studies* in the pipeline - the blizzard still needs to be seen through when it comes to some empirical matters. There is a great deal that gets in the way of actual studies of white communities when they are situated within multi-'racial' societies. This problem in fact pre-dates but has not been helped by nearly two decades of 'whiteness studies' development.

The truth is that examining white communities in multicultural societies has always been fraught with complexities. The United States, being the migration magnet it has been since the 19th century, has, inevitably, been in the thick of it and Europe may have much to learn about what to avoid as much as what to embrace - if history allows such choices. Classics of American sociology, Herbert Gans' *Urban Villagers* (1962) and Richard Senett's *Hidden Injuries of Class* (1972), both focussed on white working class Italian Americans, and, where they touched on racism and the racial attitudes of their subjects, did so in matter-of-fact, unelaborated ways. By the time the hunt for practical remedies to specifically racial rather than class-based inequalities was underway, indicating the predicament of white working-class communities became a less innocent matter. One of the first books to draw attention to 'white ethnics' was an essentially polemical, counter-narrativising volume by Michael Novac, *The Rise of the Unmeltable Ethnics*. This book was a very early attempt to spark a 'new ethnic' consciousness amongst eastern and southern European white immigrants to the USA. Novac, writing against the mirage of an 'American melting pot', took up the cause of the Poles, Italians, Greeks and Slavs at a time when the political assertion of white ethnicity was unheard of. He argued that WASP culture had dominated the notion of American belonging and needed to be challenged. His book opened on a biographical note:

My grandparents, I am sure, never guessed what it would cost them and their children to become "Americanized". In their eyes, no doubt, almost everything was gain. From the oppression experienced by the Slovaks in the Austro-Hungarian empire the gain was liberty; from relative poverty, opportunity; from an old world, new hope.

But, he asked:

What price is exacted by America when into its maw it sucks other cultures of the world and processes them? What do people have to lose before they can qualify as true Americans?
(Novac, 1972, p.xxxiii)

His answer was their culture - including their (non-Irish) Catholicism.

Novac's account of WASP-driven Americanization sounds very much like a rehearsal of the 'whiteness' arguments, with 'Americanization' doing the work of the 'becoming white'. But at this point a fork appears. The 'whiteness' of these 'unmeltable ethnics' was not analysed as integrated with the dominant WASP model because the communities in question were working-class and were not theorised as benefiting

from racism. Negative attitudes to blacks found amongst these groups were analysed by Novac as consequences of the competition for work and other scarce resources such as housing. They also came to be seen by later writers as a divide and rule tactic of a thriving capitalism still able to profit by a self-competing, low-wage workforce that guarded entry into trade unions along racial lines, as well as specific work *places* through ethnically-based niches. Thomas Sugrue's detailed study of the relationship between black, Polish, Italian and other white workers in the Detroit motor industry prior to the mid 1960s riots, showed how the vulnerabilities of all the workers to changing deployment strategies by management was the context of the exploitation of blacks within the weakest and most dangerous points in the production process (Sugrue, 1996a).

In an interesting exchange with Bruce Nelson (1996) Sugrue(1996b) argues that focussing exclusively on the cultural operations of 'white' identity can distract from the fundamental economic dimension. In a sense the 'benefits'/wages of racism were more of a facilitating component in the process of *profit* generation. The real benefits were had at the top, less at the bottom, of the 'white' pile. Whiteness studies sees itself as having moved on from such putatively 'vulgar Marxist' analyses towards giving cultural structures greater autonomy and agency and the kind of analysis hinted at by Sugrue has not seemed to interrupt its forward progress. Yet both culturalist and economistic accounts continue a muted dialogue in the margins of the culturalist whiteness studies mainstream.

If the reasons for whiteness studies' air-brushing of economic analysis are being sought, one further factor must surely be that other risen star of the 1960s - feminism. It is an important fact that feminists were amongst the first to perceive the cultural hegemony of the very idea of whiteness (Rich, 1979; Bulkin et al 1984). Well used to dealing with the self-satisfactions and authorial judgements of patriarchy and masculinities, they were ideally attuned to the hegemonic modalities of cultural whiteness. Thus the earlier feminist insights into whiteness as ideology linked it to the gestalt of features enabling male dominance apparently in perpetuity, in western societies. The rise of the combined independent race theorists/activists and feminist theorists/activists during the 1960s-1970s prepared the ground for the strong focus on hegemonic cultural whiteness that was to emerge in the 1980s/early 1990s.

For me as an ethnographer these theoretical issues are of fundamental importance in exploring the trail that weaves from the complex changes that occurred for the white working class in the UK and the USA during the last third of the 20th century. The early phases of this encompassed responses to the changing emphases in western societies from industrial to informational economies. The decline of industrial areas, the growth of the middle-classes, the expansion of higher education and information technologies *simultaneously with the equalities revolution*, propelled class relations, race and gender into a completely new dynamic. For social snapshots across this period to become intelligible, a strong theorisation taking account of and historicising these developments is necessary.

It is not simply that 'whiteness' as an ideology has adapted, showing a protean capacity to retain its position through change, as some have argued. It is not at all clear that whiteness in itself is of any use to the processes that have come to constitute the new order of social, institutional, cultural and economic relationships evident globally. With so much of the manufacturing workforce for US and European products laying in the third world and many well-paid, high-tech experts and IT entrepreneurs coming from non-white countries and from non-white minorities within Europe and the US, the range of functions for the hegemonic notion of 'whiteness' may be dwindling to very little. Furthermore, the cultural erosion of 'whiteness' at street level, through the long emergent and genuinely protean process of cultural mixture and cross-over, have also achieved much to put distance between contemporary urban populations and the old rigid conceptions. (Hewitt, 1986; Hartigan, 1999; Ware and Back, 2001; Harris, 2006.)

Despite these changes to social life there is much uncertainty about what this means politically and how far they qualify the theorisation of 'whiteness' in relation to racism. Different dialects of anti-racism/whiteness 'abolitionism' exist side by side. The fact that both feminist and anti-racist activists have been alert to the deep issues of empowered whiteness charges the political field with both benefits and liabilities. On the one hand these analyses have been of fundamental importance to better understanding the workings of racism. On the other hand they have also placed attempts at well-rounded accounts of the predicament of the white working-class

across the period of international economic transition into a zone of political ambiguity and anxiety to the extent that even addressing the re-positioning of this group can become fraught with prejudices and posturings. Thus Doug Henwood could rightly complain in the late 1990s:

I've had feminist economists tell me that deindustrialisation and deunionization were mainly the concerns of white guys, of little interest to the non-white, non-males who staff the service economy. I once watched in awe as a New York City tenant lawyer exclaimed, "Good!" when she was shown statistics about declining white male incomes [...] Of course, the average white person is better off than the average non-white person, those of Asian origin excepted, and black people are disproportionately poor. But that sort of formula hides almost as much as it reveals; most officially poor people are white, and these days, a white household should consider itself lucky if its income is only stagnant, rather than in outright decline. (Henwood 1997:178)

The UK witnessed similar economic trends over the same period, and the profiles of the educational careers of young whites from poor homes hold out little hope that, for this group at least, rescue is at hand. Research I conducted in the central London borough of Camden into 'under-achievement' amongst white working class families vividly demonstrated to me the decline of families from generation to generation over the past three decades. The once well-established large employers of local workers in telecommunications, transport, printing and other industries gradually reduced their work forces or moved outside of the London area altogether. These were replaced by an expansion of leisure, hospitality and culture industries. In 2005 when the research was conducted unemployment in the borough was below 6%, its lowest since the 1970s, and there had been an increase of nearly 5% in jobs in all occupations since the late 1990s. The largest increase had been in semi-skilled and un-skilled jobs, particularly in hotels and restaurants. However, within the picture of economic buoyancy and commercial growth in this lively area of London, the predicament of the poor whites appeared like the skeleton at the feast.

The families we studied had already fallen into difficulty during the 1980s when the effects of economic re-structuring had begun to bite and before the largest influx of immigrants had taken place. Those who were now the grandparents, who had grown up with the benefits of well-established social and family networks for the provision of work opportunities, had become dislocated, and their network resources had been

obliterated. The familiar trades and employers were no longer there and little emerged in their actual lives to replace the combination of jobs and contacts that had once seemed to them to make educational qualifications a superfluity. While the newer migrant settlers subsequently had their own quite separate kinds of problems to overcome, those connected with restructuring *per se* had their impact primarily on the indigenous white population. Now over 40% of the population of Camden hold university degrees; employers in central London increasingly specify minimum qualifications and the demand for keyboard skills is increasing yearly. As a result of the educational underachievement amongst this group the local council commissioned research, followed by a programme of remedial activities across its schools to address the problem (Myers, 2004).

The difficulties of this group were derived from the transition in the local economy itself, rather than from any absence of new jobs. Over two generations, knowledge about work practices had declined within families. Informal apprenticeships within family and social networks were more rare, single motherhood amongst adolescents was running at very high rates, while attitudes to the attainment of educational qualifications remained stuck in the past. This group were very poorly equipped to adapt. One of the architects of a major regeneration programme in the area explained to me that many white working-class school leavers had no conception of what was necessary to get themselves to work on time, to be regular and reliable or to organise their lives at the most elementary level. Where construction workers were required, the logic for those employers having to show local social benefits when conducting major works did not lie in employing such youngsters. There were equally needy but far more skilled and disciplined migrant workers available.

This profile of white working class youth in the borough was re-enforced by interviews with workers from an advice centre for 16-25 year olds. This agency had contacts with over 4,000 young people each year, over half of whom were from black and ethnic minority backgrounds, yet the workers there told me they experienced white working class young people *as the most needy group of all those they dealt with*. Whilst many refugees and asylum seekers had a strong sense of starting a new life and were very able to seize on the suggestions the advice-workers gave to them, the white young people had little sense of goals or of how to achieve them.

Whatever the remedies might be for this group in Camden, the picture of educational underachievement and employment failure are far from restricted to this London borough. Similar patterns have been observed in other London boroughs as well as in other parts of the UK, prompting the *Economist*, citing research conducted by Richard Bertoud of the Institute for Social and Economic Research at Essex University, to report recently:

Poorly qualified whites face two problems. First, education trumps ethnicity. It takes only a dash of additional qualifications to enhance the job prospects and pay of a black or Asian person. And the competition is hungrier for qualifications: whites are less likely to stay at school beyond the age of 16 than any other group. (*Economist*, 'British Race Relations' October 26th 2006)

In the UK in 2005 white teenagers entitled to free school meals (i.e. those in families on various forms of benefit) did worse in their GCSE examinations than equally poor members of any other ethnic or racial group (Bertoud, 2005). In some parts of the country the comparative profile of such poor white children is extremely stark. The point I wish to make here is not that *all* working class whites are worse off economically than black and minority ethnic groups. It is that political and social analyses based on a notion of 'whiteness' as inevitably constituting economic reward are simply untenable in the face of the facts about the poorest whites in the post-industrial period.

The reason why there has been some resistance to accepting such arguments about the white working-class has been more to do with strategies in community and race politics than to do with disputes over the actual facts of the case - whether in the UK or the USA. For some, drawing attention to the plight of even a sub-set of white workers or the unemployed is thought to undermine the case argued over many years yet still invisible to some, about the impact of racism on life chances for black people. Furthermore, even where the validity of white poverty is accepted, it is feared that these arguments will be seized upon by right-wing apologists to attack the anti-racist struggle, regardless of there being no contradiction in acknowledging *both* racism and white poverty. This kind of thinking plays directly into the hands of anti anti-racists,

displaying all the distortion of reality commonly attributed by the political right to the left.

It is not just in the area of comparative immiseration that some have experienced difficulties taking a serious sociological look at white groups. In other areas, particularly where a backlash amongst white groups to developments in the politics of black rights has been linked to social and economic features, some observers on the left have been either luke-warm or downright hostile. It was perhaps not surprising that Novac's book *Rise of the Unmeltable Ethnics* should have provoked the ire it did. Much was ill thought through and clumsy and so the truths about liberal WASP contempt for white working class ethnics and the useful profile of the white ethnic perspective were easy to dismiss as designed to qualify black claims. Whether it was the bruising for this book Novac got from the left - of which at that time he considered himself a member - that subsequently drove him into the arms of nascent neo-conservatism, or whether he was already on his way, is irrelevant here. It was another example of an opportunity for a broad-based analysis of the social, cultural and economic conditions of racism being shirked in favour of a much easier, guilt and morality-based account. It seems that anything that could be imagined, from some hypothetical racist point of view, to undermine the black claim for social justice, should be attacked as supportive of the racist system.

A major strut in this way of thinking, certainly in several US writers on the left including some whose stance over race I am generally in agreement with, is the ingredient of white guilt. By this I mean the necessity of *white feelings of guilt* to the achievement of the eradication of racism. This reduction of social phenomena to the aggregate of personal feelings could be an effect of creeping individualism but to seek to base social policy on the achievement of mass emotions seems wantonly to seek failure. It is a predictable avenue for theorists of the right to parade down, of course. Thus Nathan Glazer's *Affirmative Discrimination* (Glazer 1975) actually produced arguments about the non-responsibility of white ethnics for slavery. These seemed to attempt more than explaining why Italian, Irish, Slav etc. need not/do not feel any responsibility (because they weren't in the US until after slavery). They were produced as justifications for not supporting affirmative action programmes in the present as well, because the apparently crucial element of guilt is missing!

Oddly Steven Steinberg in his otherwise excellent book *Turning Back: The Retreat from Racial Justice in American Thought and Policy*, exhibits exactly the same tendency when he argues the inescapability of white guilt and uses it as fundamental to his argument in favour of affirmative action and quotas. Thus he attacks whatever, 'absolves the nation of responsibility for coming to terms with its racist past' (Steinberg, 1995, 155, 173). He is keen to rescue white guilt as a mobilising force, assuming that feeling personally guilty for slavery and racism is required of whites if policies and practices are to change. This is a unique way of approaching policy-making. Perhaps it should be extended to public health issues? A similarly personalised approach to addressing racism also underlies George Lipsitz's book *The Possessive Investment in Whiteness* (Lipsitz 1998.) Powerful though it is, its underlying emphasis is on getting white people to 'acknowledge their possessive investment in whiteness'; bringing people to personal realisation that will lead to the eradication of racist structures, either by sheer aggregation or by impact on politicians. But these road-to-Damascus moments for whites cannot surely be what social change hangs on?

There appears to be considerable discomfort at examinations of the perspectives of white communities that fail to emphasise the 'guilt' of their racism enough to attempt instead to make it sociologically intelligible - as if to do so were the same as to condone it. Steven Steinberg again (I regret to say) in his review (Steinberg, 1988) of Jonathan Rieder's excellent ethnography of Canarsie in the 1970s, *Canarsie: The Jews and Italians of Brooklyn Against Liberalism*, (Rieder, 1985) was grudging in his comments. He was unable to actually locate any endorsement of racism, but attempted to evaporate the pungent reality and complexity of Rieder's ethnographic descriptions by hinting that no true-sighted account was to be had without reference to the underlying class alignments that brought about the 'surface' phenomena. Indeed, there was a palpable sense that Steinberg was disappointed that he had been unable to nail Rieder more effectively. It is sad that discussing white communities should bring about such embarrassment and induce, as it so often seems to, paroxysms of display activity designed to convey to any committed anti-racist who might be reading that the writer, for one, is not racist, not complicit in 'whiteness'.

I do not believe that it has been any easier in the UK than in the US to research white communities and their race-related utterances and actions. However, my sense of research in the UK is that things are improving, as the grip on real life beyond the contortions of race-thinking inevitably gets firmer. In truth the 'whiteness studies' blizzard that we saw in the US has impacted on the UK far less, perhaps because it had a thinner pre-history. And although there have been some strained imports from across the Atlantic, there has been well-balanced work conducted in the European historical context both in the cultural sociology/cultural history tradition and in the field of social policy and economics, some of which have been alluded to above (See also Ware and Back 2001). In the USA there are also still works of real value being produced taking theoretical cognisance of 'whiteness' approaches. Thomas Guglielmo's *White on Arrival: Italians, Race, Colour and Power in Chicago 1890-1945* is an important example of such work (Guglielmo, 2003).

Now across Europe a multiplicity of 'white ethnics' jostle with the white natives for jobs and housing, and do so in the context of non-white ethnic diversity from Africa, the Middle East, the Far East and South America. Patterns of 'group conflict' sometimes arise. At one end of things Irish, Polish and Czech Roma gangs brawl with each other in parts of south and north London and members of well-established once-refugee groups distance themselves from newer arrivals. At the other end Arab elites, Russian entrepreneurs and Indian finance brokers share a common competitive interest in the activities of the London Stock Exchange. Whatever changes have been occurring to the positioning of 'blackness' - and people of African or African Caribbean and African American heritage have not benefited equally from global cultural shifts - the meaning of 'whiteness' in contemporary European urban environments is very far from hegemonic. This is not to say that effectively, away from the most networked urban centres and in rural towns, 'whiteness' of the old kind does not live on hardly challenged. It does, and there is plenty of scope for comparative research into ideological 'survivals' uncoupled from their motors. Neither does the breakdown of old 'whiteness' mean that different forms and levels of legal status will not superimpose configurations of some 'racial' grid on the other configurations of colour, language, religion and so on. It does mean serious challenges for socially committed research. In the absence of political posturing, the culturalist analysis of the developments under heightened migration in Europe and

beyond will have no shortage of material to work on, no shortage of contradiction to explore as these new realities play themselves out.

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