Call for Papers:
‘Racism and Anti-Racism: from the labour movement to the far-right’
A Two-Day Conference to be held at the University of Glasgow, 5-6 September 2014

The first decades of the 21st century have seen two worrying developments for anyone concerned with opposing oppression:

- the continuing mutation and expansion of racism into new ‘cultural’ forms, above all in the form of a virulent Islamophobia; and
- the electoral consolidation of parties of the far-right, who are not always fascist, but committed to deeply reactionary positions on most social issues, above all in relation to migration.

These two developments are distinct, but overlapping. On the one hand, racism is more widespread than on the far right, institutionally embedded over centuries in even the most notionally liberal states and exerting an influence even in the labour and trade union movement which might be thought to have most to lose from the divisions which it engenders. On the other hand, the far-right almost always includes racism among its repertoire of mobilising issues, but has politics which extend beyond it.

The plenaries and workshop sessions will interrogate:

- racism in all its multifarious forms;
- the new far-right of the neoliberal era (i.e. mid-1970s onwards), in both its fascist and non-fascist aspects, particularly its growing electoral impact; and
- how the different varieties of racism and the far right can be challenged on the ground, and by whom.

Although our focus is international, no conference held in Scotland during September 2014 can avoid the fact of the independence referendum. While the national question is not our subject, any discussion of racism inevitably has to deal with its role in national formation, particularly in the case of the imperial powers of which Britain was once so preeminent. Themes which we hope to address in relation to Scotland are the reality (or otherwise) of claims that it suffers less from racism than England or other areas in Western Europe, and the reasons why, to date, it has remained relatively immune to the electoral appeal of the far-right.

We invite proposals for individual papers or panels from both established academics and postgraduate students, but also from those involved in addressing racism on a practical basis in advocacy groups, community campaigns, anti-racist mobilisations and trade unions. Proposals should be no longer than 250 words and submitted to both organisers (neil.davidson@glasgow.ac.uk and satnam.virdee@glasgow.ac.uk) by 16 May 2014.

Themes which the conference might address can include, but need not be restricted to the following:

Racism
- Racism, class and globalised capitalism
- Racism and neoliberalism
- State racisms, in particular the racialization of migration and asylum
- Anti-Muslim racism and the appropriation and mobilization of feminist discourses
Racism and the ‘white’ working class
Forms of anti-racist activism: from social movements to the everyday
Theorizing contemporary racisms – Feminist, Critical Race Theory, Postcolonial and Neo-Marxist perspectives are particularly welcomed.
The legacy of anti-Irish racism in Scotland
Scots, the Empire and the externalisation of racism
Different attitudes to immigration in Scotland and England

The Far Right
The changing class basis of far right party membership
Distinguishing the ‘non-fascist’ far-right from fascism
Tensions between neoliberalism and far-right policy (the Tea Party, UKIP, etc.)
The far-right and the different phases of capitalist development
Working class electoral support for far-right parties
Campaigning against the far-right
Scottish Loyalism and far-right politics in Scotland
Why is the far-right weaker in Scotland than England?

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