

# So far so good?\*

## about identity politics and racialism in France

Anonymous

*“10 years ago, in the same kind of meeting as today, if you’d said « white »<sup>1</sup>, people would have broken the furniture. Today, thanks to the Indigenous of the Republic, thanks to Houria<sup>2</sup> one can say « the whites ».” – Eric Hazan<sup>3</sup>*

Unfortunately we are still unable to prove wrong what Eric Hazan has said above. He is the publisher, classified as extreme left, of the latest explicitly anti-semitic pamphlet by Houria Bouteldja *Whites, Jews and us*, whose enormously repulsive character has not caused as many reactions as it would deserve. The categories and vocabulary of the ideology of racialisation, which for some time has been taken up in political organizations and milieus that range from the extreme left to the libertarians, are now becoming the norm and are establishing their hegemony. This vocabulary is being imposed insidiously, without being either discussed or argued. Moreover, many people are unable to politically support these untenable positions, except through affirming tautological assertions and false evidence. A semantic shift is already, for the most part, being operated : the terms "race", "white", "non-white", "racialized", "racialization", "decolonial" have overnight become analytical categories considered relevant, necessary, and are even promoted as tools with a perspective for emancipation, whereas we see this as a catastrophic failure.

We live in an epoch of generalized crisis conducive to confusion, which thrives in counter-revolutionary currents, currents which are threatening or even murderous like the red-fascists, such as racist shopkeepers like [Alain] Soral and Dieudonné [M’bala M’bala] or variants of political Islam. So some find nothing better to do than to resurrect race theory by rehabilitating cultural,

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<sup>1</sup> In France, up until a few years ago, any discourse containing the word "race" or any assumption about people based on the color of their skin would have been deemed as racist, extreme right politics. A certain part of the extreme left has embraced all the concepts related to "race", originating from American Universities. Organised non-mixed „racial“ groups are now a common thing. (Tn.)

<sup>2</sup> Houria Bouteldja is the leader of the PIR (Indigenous of the Republic Party) who is constantly in the media and the writer of the anti-semitic pamphlet *Whites, Jews and us*. She declares herself against mixed marriages and against "state philo-semitism", a supposedly republican state ideology dominated by or pushed for by Jews. (Tn.)

<sup>3</sup> Eric Hazan is a famous French editor who advocates alliances with the police during social struggles. Close to the "Invisible Committee", he is now a fierce defender of "racialisation" and of Houria Bouteldja whose book *Whites, Jews and us* he edited. (Tn.)

social and religious attributes in line with the ethno-differentialism of the Nouvelle Droite<sup>4</sup>. The turnaround has gone to the point that the mere questioning of the ideology of racialisation has become impossible, both in public meetings and on the websites of activist circles, who operate a real censorship in these places. All this thrives and takes hold particularly by using the blackmail of guilt through which the proponents of this ideology manipulate the situation. Ironically, today, to refuse the terms of "Race" or "Islamophobia"<sup>5</sup> gets you exposed to the infamous accusation of racism, aimed at stifling any possibility of debate, of critique or of refusal. Some anarchists manage to outlaw the slogan "neither God nor master" under the pretext of "Islamophobia" and some Marxists believe that to be antiracist it is vital to add "race" to class. In fact the term "race", which was until recently the preserve of the far right, finds itself today added to all sauces. Promoting identities and cultural or religious communitarianism have never had any other function than the maintenance of social peace.

The task of a break around these issues must be clarified and worked at thoughtfully. There's good reason to believe that, in the current situation, racialisation ideology can only lead to the war of all against all. This political offensive is fraught with consequences for everybody, and from a revolutionary point of view it's a point of rupture. Where will we be if, after a bit of time, it should prove victorious? Sooner or later we will have to choose sides and the sooner the better.

*Summer 2016,*

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*We call for this text to be circulated as widely as necessary, and it can be used to stimulate discussion, debate and confrontation.*

\* P.S.

\* Reference to the quote in the movie *La Haine* (1995) : *"Heard about the guy who fell off a skyscraper? On his way down past each floor, he kept saying to reassure himself: "So far so good.." "So far so good..." How you fall doesn't matter. It's how you land!"*. (Tn.)

\* Footnotes

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<sup>4</sup> The "New Right" is a school of thought following Alain de Benoist and the GRECE (Research and Study Group on European Civilization). Nouvelle Droite arguments can be found in the rhetoric of many major radical right and far-right parties in Europe such as the National Front in France, the Freedom Party in Austria and Vlaams Belang in Flanders (Belgium). (Tn.)

<sup>5</sup> A term that was recently exhumed by religious leaders to defend their religion, with the trick of being able to assimilate any critics of islam as a religion to racism. Affirming atheism is presumed to be a racist threat to people who are defined as Muslim, people who are of many colours and types. This term is now proliferating amongst a certain part of the extreme left, even marxists or anarchists. (Tn.)

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