

*Researching class  
and diversity in  
multicultural  
neighbourhoods*

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Territory, Diversity,  
Conviviality | Zaragoza |  
October 2018



*Photo: Simon Rowe, Cacao,  
for Intersecting Diversities*

# Aim of paper

**To sketch out seven key methodological dangers in researching territory, diversity and conviviality in urban space.**

1. Groupism. // 2. Prioritising ethno-cultural difference. // 3. Neighbourhoodism. // 4. Focus on attitudinal instead of praxis. // 5. Ignoring private, commercial and state spaces. // 6. Neglecting role of state in shaping diversity. // 7. Neglecting inequality in understanding diversity

Paper based mainly on three research projects:

- a. *Concordia Discors*** (Pastore et al)
- b. *Intersecting Diversities*** (Berg et al)
- c. *Away from the noise: Jewish-Muslim interactions & narratives in E1/Barbès***  
(Gidley and Everett)

# **THE THREE RESEARCH PROJECTS**

## a. *Concordia Discors*

*Understanding Conflict and Integration Outcomes of Inter-Group Relations and Integration Policies in selected Neighbourhoods of Five European Cities*

Research partners: TARKI,  
Budapest (Hungary);  
COMPAS, Oxford (UK); EFMS,  
Bamberg (Germany); **FIERI**,  
Turin (Italy); Autonomous  
University, Barcelona (Spain)

Associate partner: European  
Policy Centre (EPC)



*Supported by the European Fund for the Integration of Third Country Nationals*



# Concordia Discors neighbourhoods

## **Barcelona, ES:**

- Poble Sec
- Sagrada Familia

## **Budapest, HU:**

- Józsefváros
- Kőbánya

## **London, UK:**

- Bermondsey
- Camberwell

## **Nurnberg, DE:**

- Gostenhof
- Langwasser
- Werderau

## **Torino, IT:**

- Barriera Di Milano
- San Paulo



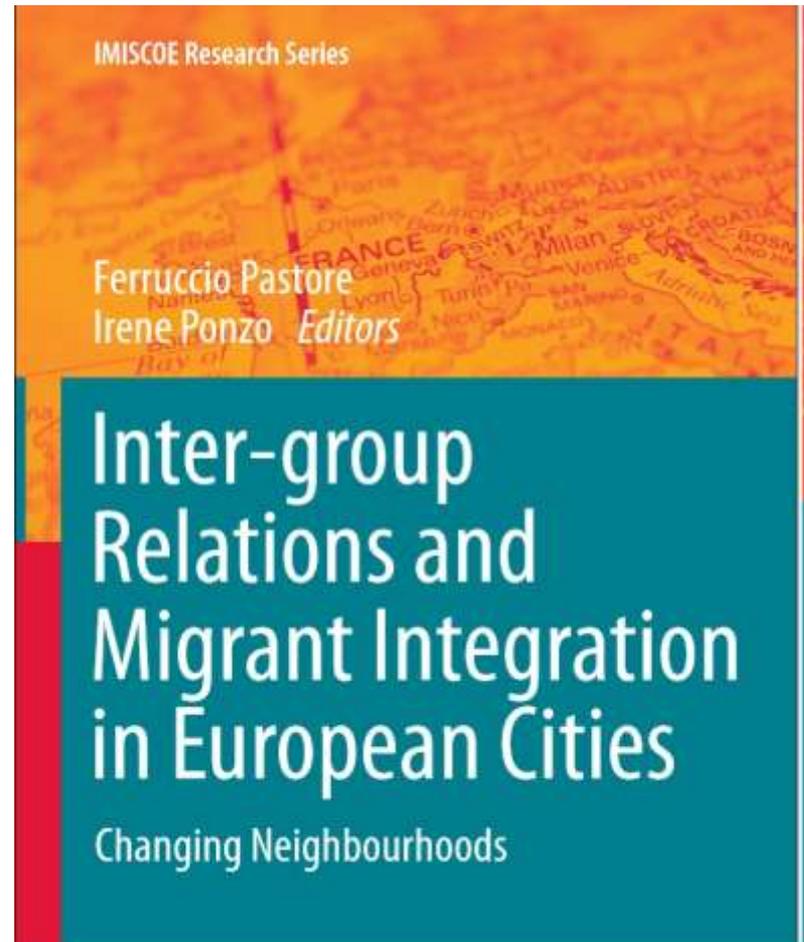
# The Concordia Discors book – published in IMISCOE Research Series by Springer

Ferruccio Pastore and  
Irene Ponzio, eds, 2016

***Inter-group Relations and  
Migrant Integration in  
European Cities:  
Changing  
Neighbourhoods***

[http://www.springer.com/  
gp/book/9783319230955](http://www.springer.com/gp/book/9783319230955)

Open access online



## ***b. Intersecting Diversities***

Team: Mette Louise Berg,  
Ben Gidley, Caroline  
Oliver, Rachel Humphris.  
Ana Krausova, Hiranthi  
Jayaweera, Ana Krausova,  
Simon Rowe

in Elephant & Castle,  
South London

Focus on welfare domains:  
maternity, schooling,  
housing, elder care



*Photo: Elephant & castle,  
Simon Rowe, Cacao,  
for Intersecting Diversities*

# Intersecting Diversities

Forthcoming article in *Ethnic and Racial Studies*: “Welfare micropublics and inequality: urban super-diversity in a time of austerity” Mette Louise Berg, Ben Gidley, and Anna Krausova



*Photo: Elephant & castle,  
Simon Rowe, Cacao,  
for Intersecting Diversities*

## ***c. Away from the noise:***

Jewish-Muslim interactions & narratives in E1/Barbès

Ben Gidley and Sami  
Everett

In Brick Lane/E1, London  
and Barbès/La Goutte  
d'Or, Paris

Forthcoming article in  
*Francosphères* December  
issue: **“Getting away from  
the noise: Jewish-Muslim  
interactions & narratives  
in E1/Barbès”**



*Photo: Barbès, Paris  
Sami Everett*

**SEVEN METHODOLOGICAL DANGERS IN  
RESEARCHING URBAN DIVERSITY (AND  
TENTATIVE SUGGESTIONS OF  
ALTERNATIVE APPROACHES...)**

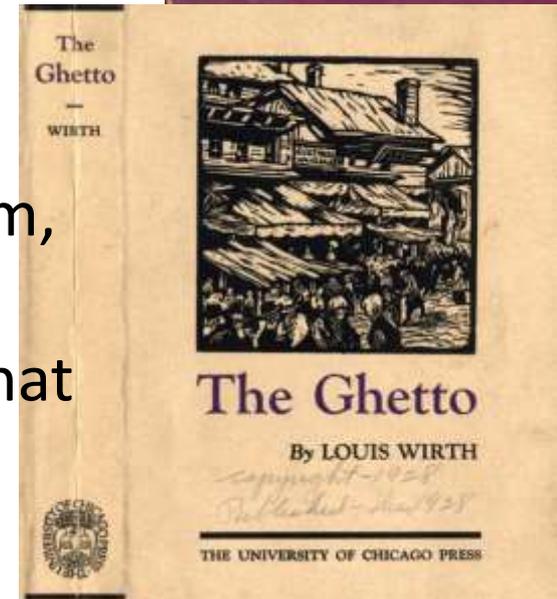
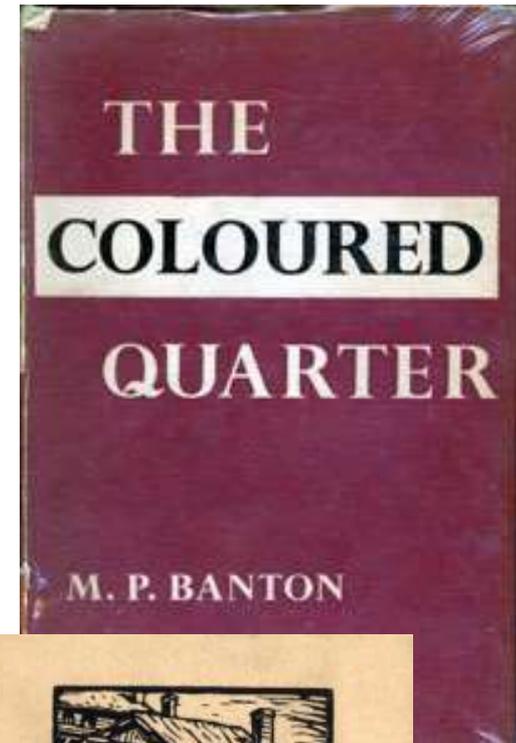
# 1. The problem of methodological groupism

## *El problema de la grupismo metodológico*

Long tradition of researching ethno-cultural “communities” in the city (the Bangladeshi community in East London, the Latin American community in Barcelona,... etc)

→ *Reificando grupos etnicos*

Danger of **reifying groups**, freezing them, obscuring what they have in common with (members of) other groups and what divides them internally



# The problem of methodological groupism

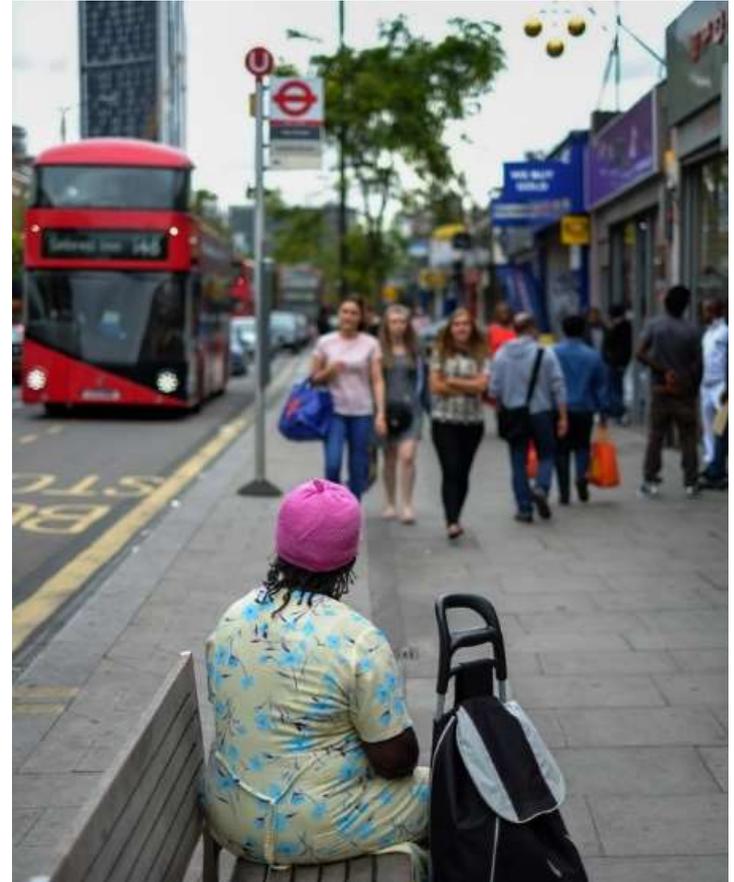
- **methodological groupism** (Brubaker 2002)
  - In all social contexts various parties have an interest in the relevance, salience and power of group categories. “By *invoking* groups, they seek to *evoke* them, summon them, call them into being” (Brubaker, 2002, 166).
- **methodological ethnicism** (King 2001)

Brubaker, Rogers. 2002. “Ethnicity without groups”. *Archives of European Sociology*, 34 (2): 163-189

King, Jeremy. 2001. "The Nationalization of East Central Europe: Ethnicism, Ethnicity, and Beyond."

# The problem of methodological groupism

- **Invisible** and **dispersed** groups
- Ethnography understands how differences become social significant **contingently**, at specific moments (cf *Who Are the Lue?* Moerman 1965)



*Photo: Elephant & Castle, London  
Simon Rowe, Cacao,  
for Intersecting Diversities*

# An alternative approach?

→ Space rather than  
group as unit of  
analysis

*El espacio, más que la  
etnicidad, como unidad de  
análisis*



*Photo: Elephant & Castle, London  
Simon Rowe, Cacao,  
for Intersecting Diversities*

## 2. Prioritising ethno-cultural difference

*El supuesto a priori de que la diferencia que marca la diferencia es étnica.*

- A priori assumption that the difference that makes a difference is ethnic
- Reduction of “diversity” to ethno-cultural diversity (and of “super-diversity” to “more” ethno-cultural diversity)



*Photo: Barriera de Milano, Torino  
Pietro Cingolani, FIERI, for Concordia Discors*

# Class

- Newer socio-economic lines of cleavage as new spatial injustices emerge
  - e.g. gentrification (e.g. Bermondsey), changing housing tenure (e.g. Werderau) – often these cleavages not ethnically marked
- Range of “other others”
  - Gentrifiers and new homeowners – but also tourists (Sagrada Familia), leisure/nightlife visitors (Poble Sec)



*Photo: Bermondsey., South London  
Ben Gidley, for Concordia Discors*

# An alternative approach?

→ Intersectional  
approach

→ Recognising the  
contingency of which  
difference makes a  
difference, and when

# The turn to neighbourhoods

The diversity turn (Berg and Sigona):

- Superdiversity (Vertovec)
- Common-place diversity (Wessendorf)
- Conviviality (Gilroy, Vertovec, Nowicka, Wise)

BUT...

# 3. Methodological neighbourhoodism

“Methodological neighbourhoodism”  
(Berg and Gidley, forthcoming)



*Photo: Simon Rowe, Cacao, for Intersecting Diversities*

# Reifying places:

- iconic sites: proper nouns as synecdoches for problematisations...

*Google images hits for “Molenbeek”*



...or for hopeful projections of conviviality

*Hackney as iconic site of “superdiversity”*  
[http://photogallery-mm.g.de/?page\\_id=1654](http://photogallery-mm.g.de/?page_id=1654)

## Fieldwork photo galleries

Max Planck Institute for the Study of Religious and Ethnic Diversity

HOME

by a

Susanne WESSENDORF

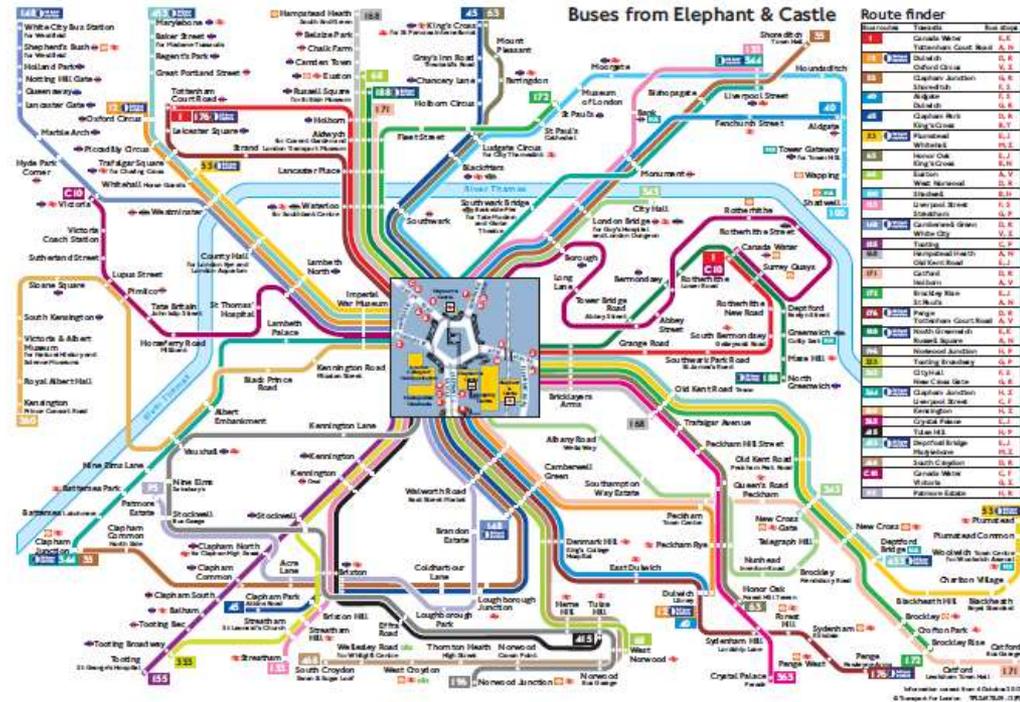
Living together, dwelling apart. Social relations in super-diverse London



# An alternative approach?

→ Ethnographies of non-places?

(Suzi Hall on a street, Rhys-Taylor on markets, Wise on workplaces, Neal on schools, Berg et al on Elephant)

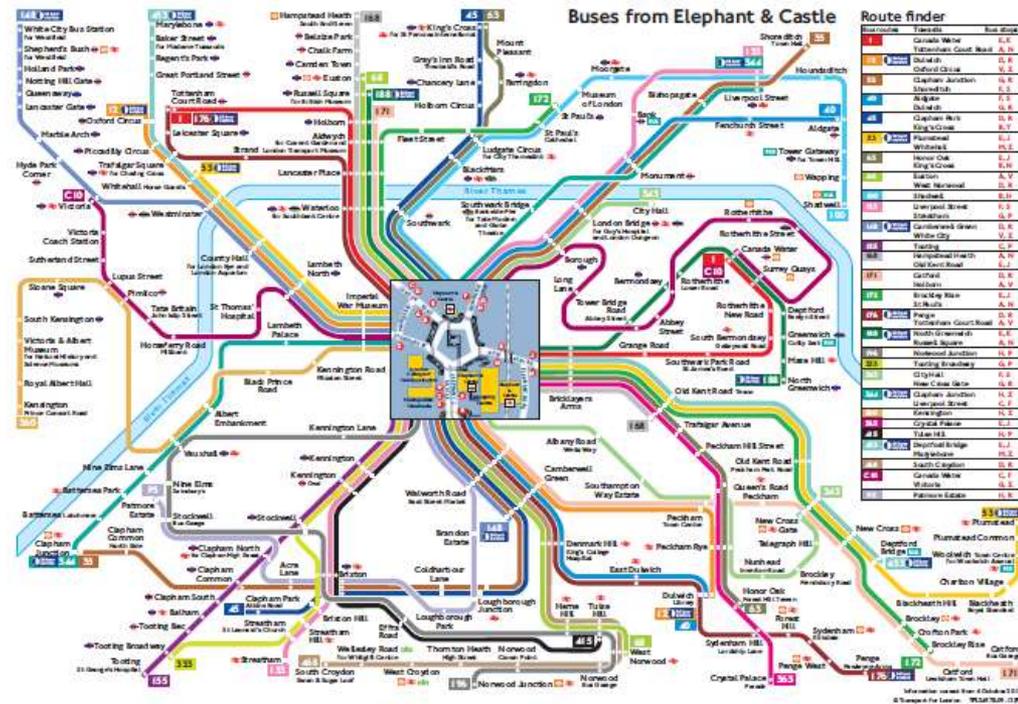


*Bus map of Elephant & Castle, – see Berg, Gidley, Krausova, forthcoming*

# An alternative approach?

→ Space as socially constructed: neighbourhood ≠ a container for the social

→ Extending the field – following cases beyond the field



Bus map of Elephant & Castle, – see Berg, Gidley, Krausova, forthcoming



## → Attending to multiple scales

- Patterning diversity – micro-local or nano scales (*micro-publics* – see Back, Amin)
- Space and time
- The trans-local



*Photo: Elephant & Castle  
Ben Gidley*

## → Attending to multiple scales

- Patterning diversity – micro-local or nano scales
- **Space and time** (the quotidian rhythms of use of space)
- The trans-local



*Photo: Elephant & Castle  
Ben Gidley*

## → Attending to multiple scales

- Patterning diversity – micro-local or nano scales
- Space and time
- **The trans-local** (the multiple elsewheres tangibly present here)



*Photo: Elephant & Castle  
Ben Gidley*

## 4. Focus on attitudes instead of practices: Saying versus doing

*Actitudes o prácticas, decir o hacer.*

A fourth methodological problem is when conviviality is indexed by how residents respond to interview- or survey-based research, rather than (also) observing how people interact in real time.

Sometimes attitudes, or representations, do not coincide with interactions. For example...

# Saying versus doing: *Concordia Discors*

	REPRESENTATIONS		
RELATIONS	Positive	Indifference	Negative
Cooperation	Different ethnic groups in public libraries in Bermondsey and Camberwell (UK)	Chinese families and old Hungarian nannies in Taraliget residential park in Kőbánya (HU)	Chinese traders and Roma employees in Four Tigers Market in Józsefváros (HU)
Lack of contacts	Elderly people, teenagers and mothers with children in SPA garden in San Paolo (ITA)	Pakistani and natives in Poble Sec (SPA)	Affluent middle class residents in re-developed docklands and working class residents on council estates, north Bermondsey (UK).
Conflict/ Competition	Arabs and Hungarian shopkeepers in Józsefváros (HU)	Tourists and residents in Sagrada Familia (SPA)	New Turkish residents and old German and Turkish residents in MAN's housing stock in Werderau (GE)

# Saying versus doing: *Concordia Discors*

**Positive representations  
combined with negative  
interactions**

– e.g. “Arabs” and Hungarian shopkeepers in **Népszínház Street, Józsefváros**, describe each other in terms of mutual respect while practising intense and harmful forms of competition

– see *Boglárka Szalai and Krisztina La-Torre in Pastore and Ponzio 2016*



Photo:  
<http://24.hu/belfold/2016/07/06/egy-gazdag-utca-budapesten-ami-mindig-a-szegenyeke-volt/>

# Saying versus doing: *Concordia Discors*

**Positive representations  
combined with no interactions**

– e.g. middle class whites and  
minority residents in  
**Camberwell**, former love  
diversity but don't practise it  
outside purchasing "ethnic"  
food

– see *Jenson and Gidley in  
Pastore and Ponzio 2016*



*Photo: Camberwell, London  
Ole Jenson for Concordia Discors*

# Saying versus doing: *Concordia Discors*

**Negative representations  
combined with positive  
interactions**

- e.g. (1) **Chinese traders and Roma employees in Four Tigers Market in Józsefváros** –  
mundane forms of trust and reciprocity, a “market-language”  
lingua franca, etc
- *see Boglárka Szalai and Krisztina La-Torre in Pastore and Ponzo 2016*



*Photo: Józsefváros, Budapest  
Endre Sik, Tarki, for Concordia Discors*

# Saying versus doing: *Concordia Discors*

**Negative representations  
combined with positive  
interactions**

– e.g. (2) **white natives and  
minorities in Bermondsey,  
London** – xenophobic language  
combined with intense trust  
relations

– *see Jenson and Gidley in  
Pastore and Ponzio 2016*



*Photo: Ben Gidley*

# Saying versus doing: *Beyond the Noise*

**Negative representations  
combined with positive  
interactions**

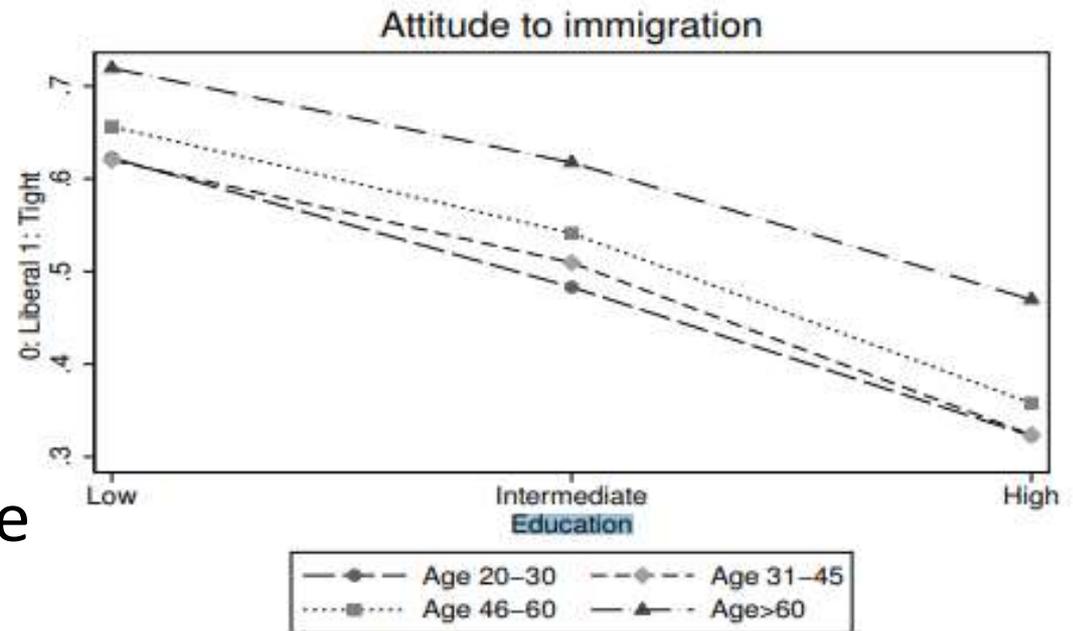
– e.g. (3) **Jewish/Muslim  
commercial interactions in  
garment and food industries  
in Barbès and London E1** –  
trustful relations combined  
with stereotyping and  
racialised representations  
– *see Everett and Gidley in  
December issue of  
Francosphères*



*Photo: Barbès, Paris  
Sami Everett*

# Class and the norm against prejudice

- The **norm against prejudice** (US research: Mendelberg; Plant and Devine; Blinder. European research: Ivarsflaten, Blinder and Ford)
- Higher educated people learn not to speak in prejudiced ways



Source: European Social Survey, 2003

# An alternative approach?

- Attending to the banal, **unremarkable** things, the unspoken
  - e.g. gestural communication, semiotic overload, discretionary practices of street level bureaucrats, or residents' choreography of difference in space



*Photo: Elephant & Castle,  
Simon Rowe, Cacao,  
for Intersecting Diversities*

# 5. Ignoring private, commercial and state spaces

*Ignorando espacios privados, comerciales y estatales.*

- Wealth of diversity research on public and parochial spaces, e.g. markets, parks, shopping centres
- Relative lack of diversity research focused on homes, businesses, welfare institutions



*Photo: Elephant & Castle,  
Simon Rowe, Cacao,  
for Intersecting Diversities*

# An alternative approach?

→ “**Micropublics**” – term coined by Les Back, popularised by Ash Amin

“**Welfare micropublics**”  
(Berg and Gidley, forthcoming)



*Photo: Elephant & Castle,  
Caroline Oliver,  
for Intersecting Diversities*

# 6. Neglecting role of the state in shaping diversity

*Desatención del papel del Estado en la configuración de la diversidad.*

- The *national* state (e.g. immigration policies – **civic stratification**)
- The *local* state (the role of **street level bureaucrats** and **welfare micropublics**)
- Examples from Elephant and Castle (maternity, education and youth, housing...)

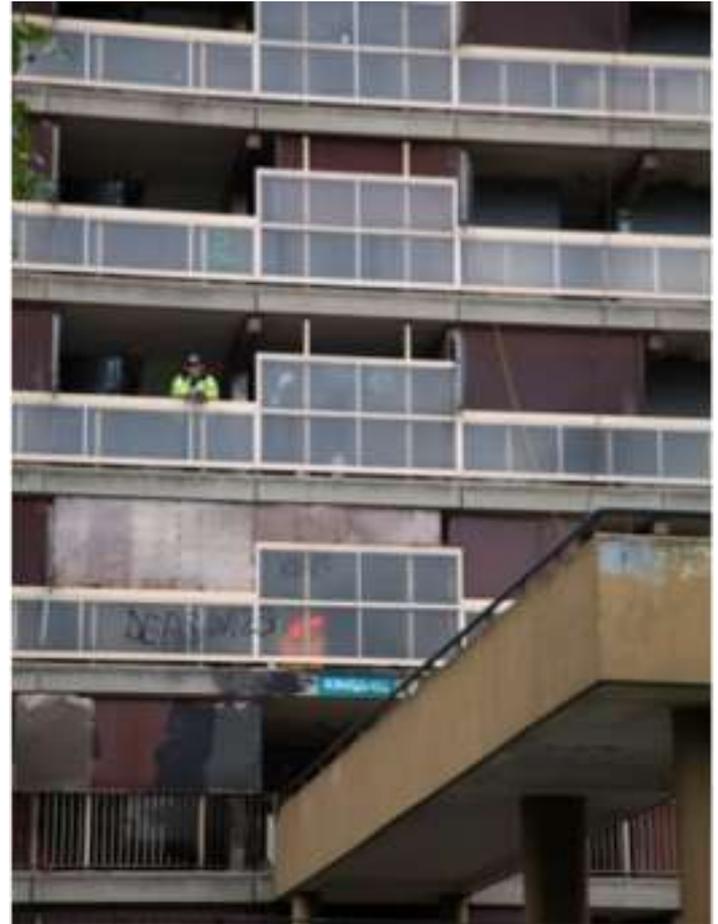


*Photo: Elephant & Castle, Simon Rowe, Cacao, for Intersecting Diversities*

# 7. Neglecting inequality in understanding diversity

*Desatención de la desigualdad en la comprensión de la diversidad*

- Class exclusions (including those driven by gentrification) are (at least) as significant as ethno-cultural cleavages.
- Unequal access to social rights structures the experience of micro-publics



*Photo: Elephant & Castle,  
Simon Rowe, Cacao,  
for Intersecting Diversities*

**Muchas gracias!**

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