

From a Tolerant Nation? To an Anti-Racist Nation?

The politics of race equality in Wales

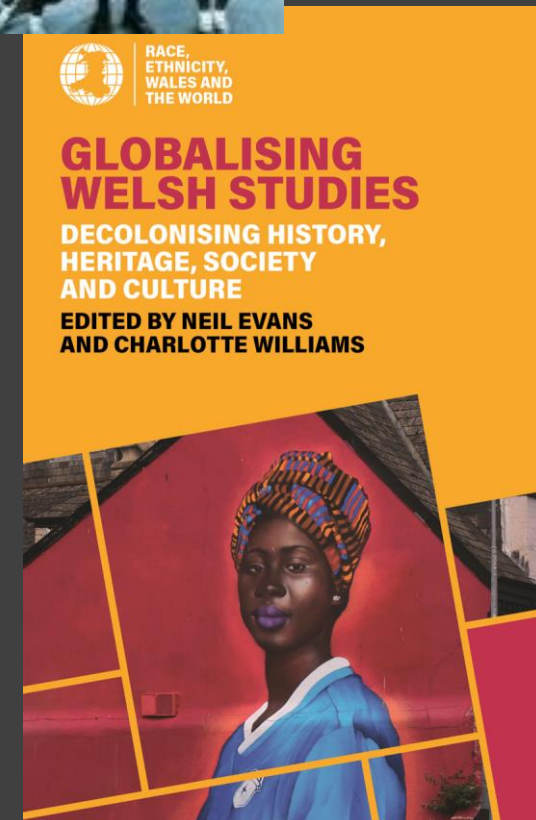
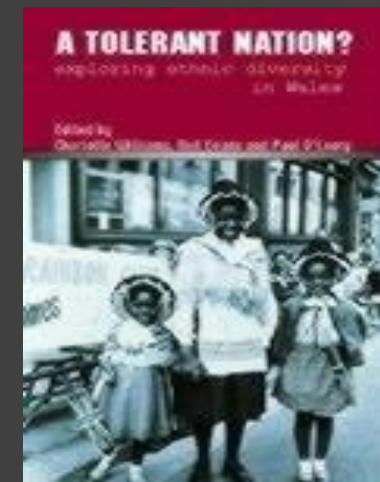
Professor Charlotte Williams OBE FLSW

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The Welsh Political Archive Lecture 2024



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'No complacency here' says Prifweinig



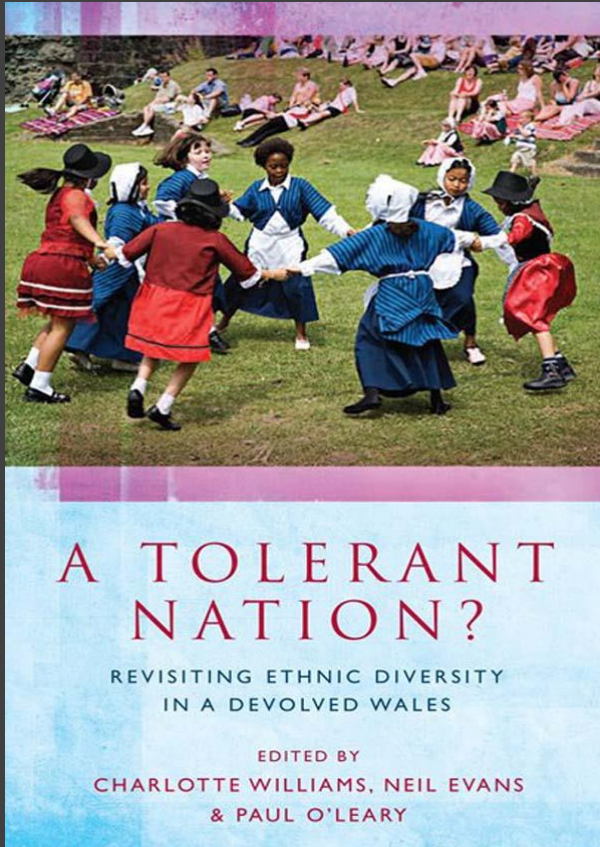
'cracks in our foundation laid bare,
weakened by a decade of division
and decline, infected by a spiral of populism'
Sir Keir Starmer 27.08.24

"Wales as the UK's wokish nation" Daily
Telegraph 17.03.23

A Welsh way?

- **‘Distinctiveness’ “Clear Red water” first phase devolution**
- **‘Decoherence’ - driven by 2010 Equalities legislation**
- **‘Decolonising’ Black Lives Matter, 2022 post-Floyd revisionism**

A Tolerant Nation?



“Modern confident Wales, for so long insular in its history and keen to forge a progressive future for itself either within or without the United Kingdom, has not often been keen to meet this imperial past’s steely gaze. It sits uncomfortably with the rhetoric of grievance, of loss, of oppression which the modern Welsh, in varying degrees of seriousness, tend to characterise their relationship with England”

Rhys Owens *A Deliberately Forgotten History?*
Chapter One, Globalising Welsh Studies

Distinctiveness

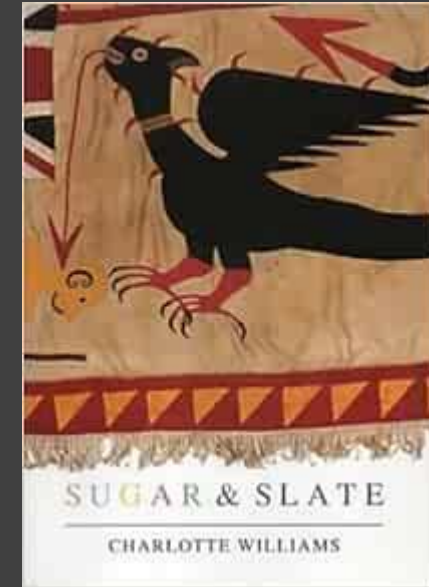
'Clear Red water'

- constitutional departure – “An Absolute Duty”
- ‘mainstreaming’
- participatory democracy
- governance not government becomes an enduring model for change
- role of populace – to participate- representation foregrounded

“from laissez faire to nationally responsible politics of race”

Distinctiveness?

“characterized by elite burnout, consultation overload, lack of capacity in terms of skills, expertise, resources and a responsive rather than proactive mode and widespread and declared inability to shift agendas” CW (2006)



Yet a process of rescaling citizenship had begun..... Themes of identity, belonging and heritage gain recognition.

Decoherence

new era Equalities legislation

- acknowledges complexity of status....superdiversity
- new articulations of rights and recognition – equalities aligned
- seeks to define a technical (bureaucratic) apparatus for change
- cohesion as a key concern
- role of populace ...neo assimilationism.. British values restated
- neo-liberal moderisation

Decolonising

Black Lives Matter, 2022 post-Floyd revisionism

- Brexit /Covid conjuncture, institutional racism named ..
- decolonising approach, interrogative, reparative justice. .. “decolonial reflexivity”
- moral/ethical positioning
- co-production – focus on process
- role of community to shape, lead, advise, co-leadership of monitoring implementation of ARWAP

“the Welsh way” Towards ‘a more egalitarian Wales’

From a tolerant nation to an anti-racist nation, from patronage to pluralism, from the margins
....political opportunity structure

‘Whatever happens in the future, this plan has helped to shine a light on the important role of race and racialisation in influencing societal outcomes and has opened much needed debates which have been avoided for many years’ Emmanuel Ogbonna (2024) ***An anti-racist plan for Wales: Prospects and limits Chapter 12***

‘Rising to the radical agenda set out by the Welsh government will mean, not reducing the change effort to a technical activity but promoting narratives rooted in that idea of *Welsh ways of life* – its histories, narratives that make connections, develop symmetry, and seek out the potential of collective action and that look to past shared mobilisations and old solidarities’ Charlotte Williams 2024

Placing Wales in the world locates the nation within its broader, global interconnections. This remarkable volume draws attention to the place of Wales within the overseas colonial project and examines the legacies of those colonial connections back home. Addressing issues of labour migration, devolution, race equality, the challenges of heritage work, as well as the ongoing processes of social and cultural change this UNWP Series opener will ground scholarly work on Wales in the context of its diverse histories and histories of diversity.'

Professor Gurminder K. Bhambra, University of Sussex

This important new book asks searching questions about the relationship between a small non-state people and the amplex in which they live and to which they contribute. That relationship is examined in the light of attempts to decolonise our understanding of both past and present, and to develop fresh approaches to social, cultural and political life. The chapters shed new light on historical encounters between Wales and the wider world, and illuminate the complexities of how race affects present-day heritage and culture and the power dynamics of racial positioning.'

Paul O'Leary, Emeritus Professor of Welsh History, Aberystwyth University

'Setting out the global context of Welsh studies is an essential and important precursor to understanding Wales's journey to become an inclusive and antiracist nation. This volume broadens the horizons of Welsh Studies by linking local histories with transnational dynamics, and by reshaping our perceptions of Wales through the lenses of race, nationality and ethnicity. This is an excellent introduction to the redefining of Welsh identity exploring its diverse and multicultural heritage, amplifying the narrative about the concept of belonging.'

Professor Uzo Iwobi CBE, Chief Executive Race Council Cymru

Interest in race/ethnicity research in Wales has grown apace in the last decade, opening up wider debates about the nature, focus and content of what collectively is called Welsh Studies. Across a range of disciplines, we are witnessing not only a 'global turn' placing Wales more substantively within a plethora of global interconnections, but also a 'decolonial turn' that involves the questioning of disciplinary traditions and knowledge production, and highlighting the colonial legacy that shapes academic pursuits. This volume explores the development of Welsh Studies through the lens of race/ethnicity, with contributors presenting case analyses adopting new perspectives, theoretical routes and methodological innovations, illustrating aspects of the decolonising of knowledge production.

Neil Evans is Honorary Research Fellow at Bangor University, Fellow of the Royal Historical Society, and a Vice-President of *Llafur: The Welsh People's History Society*. **Charlotte Williams** OBE, FLSW, is Professor Emerita in the School of History, Law and Social Science at Bangor University.

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UNIVERSITY OF WALES PRESS



GLOBALISING WELSH STUDIES

EDITED BY NEIL EVANS AND CHARLOTTE WILLIAMS



RACE,
ETHNICITY,
WALES AND
THE WORLD

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DECOLONISING HISTORY, HERITAGE, SOCIETY AND CULTURE

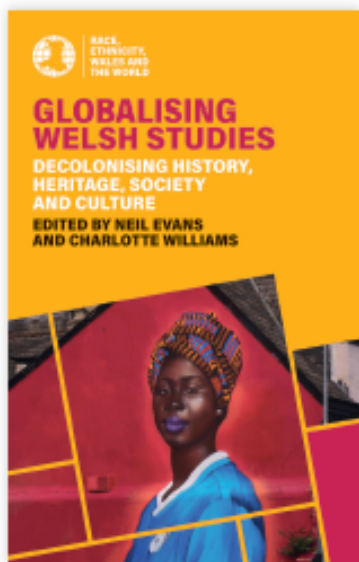
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CYHOEDDI CYMRU A'R BYD ER 1922
PUBLISHING WALES AND THE WORLD SINCE 1922



November 2024 • 216x138mm • 336pp
PB ISBN: 9781837721863 £24.99
Available in e
Series: Race, Ethnicity, Wales
and the World
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