

The Politics of (Anti-)Racism

Academic Research and Policy Discourse in Europe

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Abstract: This essay reflects on the relationship between power and knowledge within the current politics of integration and mainstream ›minorities and immigration research‹ in Europe. Drawing on recent research on (anti-)racism and public policies in different European contexts, we unravel the current discourse on »evidence-based policy-making« and the role of the social sciences in providing knowledge aimed at »better informed« policy decisions. With a specific focus on the Portuguese context, our analysis questions the assumptions behind the political and academic rhetoric of ›integration‹ and ›interculturality‹, its policy solutions and their consequences for the continuing institutionalisation of racism through a regime of denial. The essay argues that what it is at stake is not merely a fight over knowledge/evidence, but rather a struggle to break the consensus on the perceived role of knowledge in the ›regulation‹ of non-Europeanness.

This essay focuses on the relationship between social sciences research and policy interventions within the dominant framework of ›integration‹ in contemporary European politics. It is based on research within a collaborative project on (anti-)racism and public policies in different European contexts (2010-2013).¹ More specifically, we reflect on the ways in which our research approached discourse on ›evidence-based policy-making‹ and the role of the social sciences in providing knowledge aimed at ›better-informed‹ policy decisions.

Focussing on the politics of integration in the Portuguese context since 2000, the essay examines how dominant political and academic approaches are (re-)producing a certain construction of ›immigration‹ and ›ethnic minority‹ *issues* that prevents anti-racism from becoming

¹ The semantics of tolerance and (anti-)racism in Europe. Public bodies and civil society in comparative perspective – TOLERACE, funded by the EU 7th Framework Programme. The research leading to our results has received funding from the European Union's Seventh Framework Programme (FP7/2007-2013) under grant agreement n°244633.

an actual policy concern and political debate. We argue that since the 1960s integration discourse – as a discourse of power – has been the product of the institutionalisation of racism in European democracies.

This institutionalisation has operated hand in hand with a Eurocentric understanding of racism that sees it as a (rather exceptional) result of ignorance, irrational prejudice and excessive ›race-thinking‹,² and the production of ›immigration‹ and ›ethnic minorities‹ as key issues for policy *intervention*. Within this broader context, our research project aimed to disrupt the consensus on the self-evident idea that producing ›credible‹ knowledge on the ›true reality‹ of immigration will counter the otherwise ›natural‹ prejudices of the ethnically unmarked majority.

The essay is divided into four sections: first, we outline some key aspects in the relationship between hegemonic Euro-American sociological thinking and research on race and policy interventions, pointing out the emergence of dominant understandings of racism and anti-racism as illustrated by Gunnar Myrdal's work, *An American Dilemma*.

Secondly, we address the assumptions behind the ideas of ›evidence-based policy‹ and ›problem-oriented research‹, which are predominant in European Union (EU) policy discourse on the role of the social sciences. The analysis will examine the predominant views on knowledge production, scientific evidence and policy-making, and their repercussions on research into racism.

Thirdly, we focus on the Portuguese context and examine the interrelations between academic and policy narratives on racism that have consolidated a ›deficit model‹³ that produces ethnically marked minorities as both ›vulnerable‹ and ›problematic‹. This approach legitimises the *need for intervention* based on the reified ›characteristics‹ of ethnic minorities rather than on the socio-economic structures and institutional life.

Finally, we conclude with some reflections on how the agenda for integration evades the debate on institutionalised racism and explore the three main discursive devices that sustain a systematic denial of racism in the Portuguese context.

² Cf. Julian Henriques: *Social Psychology*; David T. Goldberg: *Racism and rationality*; Barnor Hesse: *Im/plausible deniability*.

³ Cf. Philomena Essed, Kwame Nimako: *Designs and (Co)Incidents*.

Sociology, Race and Policy Designs

The contested nature of the relationship between sociological research and policy-making is an old issue within mainstream Euro-American academia. During the discipline's institutionalisation, in the period between 1890 and 1940 – in close association with other fields such as history, political economy, demography and anthropology – race and racial issues were central to sociological thinking and its relationship to political commentary. Since the 1950s, after World War II and the UNESCO initiatives to scientifically discredit race and implement a plan of ›moral education‹ against the ›evil‹ of racism, race has almost vanished as a *valid* category for sociological thinking. More importantly, the prejudice paradigm⁴ and immigration/minorities studies began to dominate the discipline, giving rise to depoliticised understandings of racism.

How has sociological thinking intervened in the management of racial anxieties and fears,⁵ conveying the need for knowledge about the demographics and moral status of ethnically marked populations in order to regulate ›the problem‹ of their ›presence‹ in ›growing numbers‹? In doing so, the sociological gaze compared situations in the metropolitan and colonial territories and European thinkers looked to the so-called ›Negro problem‹ in the post-abolition/post-bellum United States as a laboratory for answering racial/moral questions in modern capitalist societies. One relevant, well-known case is the relationship between German and American sociological thinking in the 1920s and the impact of Gunnar Myrdal's *An American Dilemma* (1947) in establishing the dominant views on racism and policy reform, and on the future allocation of resources for the race relations research agenda in the United States.

In this respect, Andrew Zimmerman has shown how German sociology ›emerged from real colonial engagements that were repressed, but not deactivated, after World War I‹. He cites the role that the ›Negro question‹ played in German sociology's discussions of race *determinism* and the biological/cultural divide, the link between race and class, and the role of policy intervention. In particular, the influential work of Max Weber fuelled anti-Polish policies while his cultural-ra-

⁴ Cf. Eduardo Bonilla-Silva: Racial Attitudes or Racial Ideology?

⁵ Cf. Frank Furedi: The Silent War.

cial economics became »a theory of culture, race and class that continues to this day to shape European and American social thought«. ⁶ Weber's sociological model – extirpated from his pan-Germanist, social Darwinist credentials – is now seen as a sociology of meaning that provides an understanding of the cultural and ethical dilemmas of modern rationality and world economic development.

Since the mainstreaming of Weber's works in the 1960s, it has been emphasized that he abandoned the racist and nationalist positions of his early writings in favour of a detached scientific inquiry that has helped to establish the »social constructivist« approach to race, based on the conclusion that »racial difference had no explanatory value«. ⁷ These views, however, require commentary. The relevance of inquiring into the relationship between sociological research, race, and policy-making does not lie in the final condemnation or absolution of the racism of social scientists but rather in elucidating their analytical approach to race within a specific political context. Weber's approach in »Economy and Society« is, in part, a rationalisation of race that considered it a »quality« of *difference* between human beings in terms of »inherited physical« traits – not exactly a social constructivist approach to race. Following this, the questions he posed related to the circumstances in which race – i.e. anthropological differences – would be the »source of (political) action«, the source of »racial antipathy« between ethnic groups, and the contexts in which race »creates a group«, to which his response was to attribute a major role to »differences due to socialization and upbringing«. Nevertheless, this conceptualisation needs to be analysed in relation to Weber's wider Eurocentric and supremacist socio-historical understanding of the emergence of *universal Western* rationality and civilisation. ⁸ His formulation of a general, universal theory of repulsion and attraction between groups – in the »belief that affinity or disaffinity exists between groups that attract or repel each other« – focuses not so much on the causes but on the effects of such behaviour for the formation of political communities. ⁹ Weber, like other thinkers in the interwar period, tended to bind the category of race to

⁶ Cf. Andrew Zimmerman: *German Sociology and Empire*, pp. 185 (»colonialism«), 173 (»theory«); see also id.: *Decolonizing Weber*.

⁷ Cf. Raymond Geuss, Quentin Skinner: *Introduction*, p. xi.; cf. John Rex: *Theory of race relations*, p. 120.

⁸ Cf. Manuela Boatacã: »From the Standpoint of Germanism«.

⁹ Cf. Max Weber: *Economy and Society*, pp. 386 ff.

inherited biological traits without a definite explanatory power, being political subordination legitimised on the grounds of cultural or civilisational development.¹⁰ This approach certainly did not challenge the presumed inferiority of non-White, non-European races. Additionally, ›racial prejudice‹ began to be associated with the poor, *ignorant* lower classes, in Weber's case the ›poor white trash‹ in the south of the United States.¹¹ They were seen, as was the case with ›sub-human‹, ›barbarian‹ or religious others such as the Polish workers or uneducated black plantation workers, as threats to the ›true‹ Western cultural character.¹²

W. E. Burghardt Du Bois »countered dominant models which suggested presumed biological differences between Black and Whites best explained racial disparities«¹³ in his sociological study, *The Philadelphia Negro*, published in 1899. Du Bois' research into the conditions of the Black populations living in one of the largest cities in America aimed to examine the »Negro problems« from a historical perspective. His analysis of empirical data on education, health, employment, crime and prison sentences, and on Black community organisations had related final policy recommendations. As Marcus Hunter has pointed out, the study not only offered a scientific scrutiny of the workings of historically deep-seated racial discrimination but also of the heterogeneous class structure of the Black population and Black agency: »the role of specific types of institutions, namely those that support the survival and success of marginalized groups«.

By the 1930s Du Bois had been involved in extensive research into race issues and Black culture. Among his major projects was the *En-*

¹⁰ A paradigmatic example of this view can be seen in Julian Huxley's work as an evolutionary biologist and first director of UNESCO; see Julian Huxley, Alfred Haddon: *We Europeans. A Survey of ›Racial‹ Problems*.

¹¹ »The ›poor white trash‹ were far more anti-Negro than the plantation owners, who were often imbued with patriarchal sentiments«; »The ›poor white trash‹ [...] were the actual bearers of racial antipathy, which was quite foreign to the planters« (Max Weber: *Economy and Society*, pp. 304, 391).

¹² Cf. Manuela Boatacã: ›From the Standpoint of Germanism‹. For a different analysis of Weber's racism cf. Wulf D. Hund's essay in this volume.

¹³ Cf. Marcus A. Hunter: *A Bridge over Troubled Urban Waters*, p. 16; for the following quote cf. *ibid.*, p. 15. In 1898 W. E. B. Du Bois: *The Study of the Negro Problems*, p. 20, had already published in the *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, where he stated that »[t]he attempt should be made to isolate and study the tangible phenomena of Negro prejudice in all possible cases; its effect on the Negro's physical development, on his mental acquisitiveness, on his moral and social condition, as manifested in economic life, in legal sanctions and in crime and lawlessness«. Some years later Du Bois: *The Souls of Black Folk*, p. 34, famously addressed the »problem of the colour line«.

cyclopaedia Africana which he had envisaged in 1909¹⁴ but for which he had failed to secure funding. In 1931, White philanthropist Anson Phelps Stokes launched the idea of publishing an *Encyclopaedia of the Negro* and, although initially excluded, Du Bois finally became ›Editor in Chief‹, a controversial decision amongst Black intellectuals, in particular Carter G. Woodson. However, in 1937, the Carnegie Corporation's promised funding was cancelled, as certain board members believed that Du Bois was »too ›radical‹ to serve as a model of disinterested scholarship«. ¹⁵ Interestingly, in 1935, Newton D. Baker – a former Secretary of War (1916-1921) and a member of the Carnegie Corporation Board of Trustees – had suggested research into the »Negro Problem«, due to the »extraordinary circumstances that led to our having so large a Negro population«. ¹⁶ In those years, population control policy »confirmed the ideological victory of the racism associated with eugenic ideas« epitomised in the American Birth Control League and its »Negro Project«. ¹⁷

Population issues had also been a major concern for the Swedish Social Democrat and economist Gunnar Myrdal and his wife, Alva Myrdal, who rejected and feared immigration as a solution to Sweden's declining population. ¹⁸ Gunnar Myrdal was chosen by the Carnegie Corporation to carry out the study on the »Negro Problem«, culminating in the well-known book *An American Dilemma*, published in 1944. Frederick Keppel, President of the Corporation, stated in the book's foreword that »since the emotional factor affects the Negroes no less than the whites« they had decided to search for a competent scholar in places such as Switzerland and the Scandinavian countries, »countries of high intellectual and scholarly standards but with no background or traditions of imperialism which might lessen the confidence of the Negroes in the United States as to the complete impartiality of the study and the validity of its findings«. ¹⁹

Three aspects of Myrdal's approach to the subject have had a major impact on shaping the dominant understandings of race relations,

¹⁴ The project was interrelated to the Pan-Africanist movement and included Pan-Africanist women on the editorial board, such as the Kansas educator Anna H. Jones.

¹⁵ Cf. Henry Louis Gates, Kwame A. Appiah: Introduction to the First Edition. *Africana*, n/p.

¹⁶ Cf. Frank Füredi: *The Silent War*, p. 76.

¹⁷ Cf. Angela Davis: *Women, Race & Class*, pp. 214 f.

¹⁸ Cf. Walter A. Jackson: *Gunnar Myrdal and America's Conscience*, pp. 76 ff.

¹⁹ Cf. Frederick Keppel: Foreword, p. vi.

racism and policy reform:²⁰ 1) the consolidation of the prejudice paradigm, i.e. the »beliefs« in the presumed inferiority of the Negroes, defined as »a need for defence on the part of the Americans against their own national Creed, against their own most cherished ideals«, »a psychological need«;²¹ 2) the overall emphasis on »integration« and »equal opportunities«; 3) the need for the moral reform of (*racist*) White Americans, which aimed to »correct false popular beliefs« and strengthen the »American Creed«, i.e. the *democratic values* of equality and liberty. This is a familiar picture that would be refashioned in contemporary European discourses.

Myrdal's book became a key work in many scholarly discussions and in liberal racial orthodoxy. Yet by the time of its publication, the Chicago School sociologist Donald Young – known for his work on American minorities – »circulated a memo to the foundations in which he argued against support for major new research on race relations« and »reported a lack of consensus on strategies for bringing racial practices into line with the American Creed«. The Carnegie Corporation did not fund any study in the field in the post-war era. Behind the scenes, Keppel remarked: »human nature is always discriminatory« and »you don't want, for instance, to have your chauffer to dine with you«.²²

Building an Anti-Racist Research Agenda

The politics of research funding and policy advice on race-related issues have reflected wider power relations in society. In other words, the workings of »institutional whiteness«²³ and racism have shaped problem-framing and findings in sociological research and their influence on scientific policy decisions. Despite the strong mutual influence between the political and academic/scientific spheres, contemporary EU discourse has emphasized the »two-communities« imaginary and

²⁰ Cf. Myrdal's influence can be seen in more contemporary analyses of public discourses on integration in Europe, such as Adrian Favell: *Philosophies of Integration*.

²¹ Cf. Gunnar Myrdal: *An American Dilemma*, pp. 89, 105; for the following quote see *ibid.* p. 110. Regarding this issue, Myrdal ascribed a key role to scientific findings in both the social sciences and biology (*ibid.*, p. 92). The moralistic tone of Myrdal's work was strongly criticised by Oliver C. Cox: *Caste, Class & Race*, p. 537.

²² Cf. Walter A. Jackson: *Gunnar Myrdal and America's Conscience*, p. 263.

²³ Sara Ahmed: *On Being Included*, pp. 33-43.

the need to improve communication channels. In Janez Potočnik's words²⁴ the need for »bridging the gap« between science and policy is not a technical issue. It is a political, economical, social, and cultural issue. It is about an encounter between politicians and scientists, often with the necessary help of citizens themselves«. ²⁵ The political and socio-economic issues at stake here concern the »efficiency« and »impact« of the EU research system – with the aim of creating »informed European citizens« and »evidence-based policy-making« – more than power relations.²⁶

Discourse on »evidence-based policy-making« had become central to the New Labour strategy of »modernisation of government and the wider apparatus of the state« in the United Kingdom by the end of the 1990s.²⁷ In 2001 the »Evidence Network« was founded as part of an initiative funded by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC).²⁸ Philip Davies, a former Deputy Director of the Government Social Research Unit, defined evidence-based policy »as an approach that helps people make well informed decisions about policies, programmes and projects by putting the best available evidence from research at the heart of policy development and implementation. [...] in contrast to opinion-based policy, which relies heavily on either the selective use of evidence (e.g. on single studies irrespective of quality) or on the untested views of individuals or groups, often inspired by ideological standpoints, prejudices, or speculative conjecture«. ²⁹ Davies does not regard the issue of power relations and values as necessarily shaping policy-framing and scientific inquiry but rather »as factors which are competing with evidence and with trying to get people to think in a more evidence-based way«. ³⁰ Regarding policy scientists, the concern is with the »narrow instrumentalism« that may rule the »research-action relationship«. ³¹ In the Weberian spirit, critical views consider that

²⁴ Senior researcher in economics, former Slovenian Minister for European Affairs and European Commissioner for Science and Research (2004-2009).

²⁵ Cf. Janez Potočnik: Foreword, p. 3.

²⁶ Cf. EC: Green Paper, p. 17; see also: EC: Communicating research, p. 3. This approach is in tune with the Lisbon Strategy (2000) which aimed to make the EU »the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world« by 2010. See Lisbon European Council: Presidency Conclusions.

²⁷ Cf. Peter Wells: New Labour and evidence-based policy-making, p. 23.

²⁸ Cf. <http://www.esrc.ac.uk/research/research-methods/uk-cebp.aspx> (11.2.2014).

²⁹ Cf. Philip Davies: Is Evidence-Based Government Possible?, p. 3.

³⁰ Cf. Philip Davies: Evidence-based policy at the Cabinet Office, p. 2.

³¹ Cf. Ken Young et al.: Social Science, p. 218; there, p. 223, also the following quote.

the social scientist's role should not therefore be seen as one that solves problems but rather as one that »clarifies« and »informs«, with the aim of generating a »broader evidence-informed society«.

Considering the set of ideas described above, what kind of evidence is a European project focusing on the study of racism expected to provide? What kind of questions is it supposed to address? The TOLERACE project responded to the following call for funding: »The aim is to study European societies in a context of increasingly diverse cultural backgrounds. In particular, an assessment of multiculturalism, cultural interactions and their relationship to integration, social cohesion in urban spaces, tolerance as well as intolerance, racism and xenophobia should be addressed in order to provide recommendations for future European Union policies«. ³² Undoubtedly, there are different ways of responding to this. One crucial difference in the TOLERACE approach was that, whilst the EU call proposed »integration« as a desirable feature of European societies (and more specifically of urban spaces), we considered it a hegemonic policy discourse that needed to be critically discussed. Therefore, the question guiding our research was not related so much to the extent to which »integration« has been challenged or enhanced by multiculturalism and cultural interactions, and the role of racism and xenophobia in this process. Instead we questioned the assumptions behind the political rhetoric of »integration«, its policy solutions and their consequences for the institutionalisation of racism.

The TOLERACE project thus worked on the assumption that the persistence of racism and racial discrimination across Europe needs to be seen as closely related to the inadequacy of existing interpretations of racism and anti-racism, and the resulting policy frameworks. Rather than an »assessment of cultural interactions«, we focused on the meanings of racism and anti-racism in different European contexts, ³³ exploring how they are being shaped through the mediation of civil society organisations, public bodies and policies at European, national, regional and local level.

In recent decades, the prevailing research »evidence« has been based on *statistical and empirical methodologies* aimed at describing race relations (in contemporary European contexts and in the former colonies), the majorities' attitudes towards minorities/immigrants, or

³² Cf. EC: FP7 Cooperation Work Programme, p. 14.

³³ Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, Portugal, Spain and the United Kingdom.

the latter's experiences of racism and racial discrimination. This kind of evidence – while it may reveal relevant issues regarding prejudice and national imaginaries – too often conflates certain phenomena (demographic diversity – i.e. the so-called *presence* of ›others‹) with the sociological problem (the current configurations of racism). TOLERACE therefore aimed to »replace the problematics of empirical testing of racial attitudes and aptitudes with analyses of the body of discourse concerning race and racism«. ³⁴ Accordingly, we proposed that the quality of evidence on racism and anti-racist policies does not depend on a positivist confidence in figures (e.g. the statistical significance of the weight of groups ›exposed‹ to racial/ethnic discrimination), or on a supposedly objective, clear-cut differentiation between the *kinds* of racism affecting different types of populations – e.g. cultural racism affecting Muslims, ethnic discrimination affecting the Roma, biological/colour-based racism affecting Black populations or ›Sub-Saharan Africans‹. The quality of evidence on current configurations of racism lies first and foremost in a sound understanding of its historical and political foundations and the ways in which racism, as a system of representation and as a discourse, organizes policy decisions in contemporary democracies.

Accordingly, the research combined both a historical approach to understanding racism and its relevance to the formation of European nation states (i.e. the legacies of colonialism; national imaginaries on race and nation formation; migration and population movements) and a contextually-informed study of current policy developments and interventions by mediation agents in two key sectors – employment and education (i.e. local case studies focusing on how specific policy initiatives are conceived, institutionalised and regulated). After one and a half years of empirical research, the evidence obtained called for the need to critically address the ways in which the deep-seated understanding of racism as a ›deviation‹ in the otherwise progressive history of achievements of European democracies is shaping existing regimes of denial of racism. Our attempts at pursuing an anti-racist research agenda made explicit the historical continuities in the blurred relations between dominant scholarship and policy designs, ³⁵ as pointed out in the previous section.

³⁴ Cf. David T. Goldberg, Introduction, p. xiii.

³⁵ Cf. Philomena Essed, Kwame Nimako: Designs and (Co)Incidents.

Policies should not be seen as »discrete decisions« but as »a system of knowledge and beliefs – ideas about the causes of social problems, assumptions about how a society works and notions about appropriate solutions«. ³⁶ The European-wide policy discourse on integration is revealing of how the ›old‹ anxieties and fears about the demographics and moral status of non-European populations – registered within a racist grammar – have been reformulated and re-inscribed in an »immigrant imaginary«. ³⁷ In other words, integration policies provide a discourse on the ontology of post-colonial European societies that reinvents the myth of the presumed original homogeneity of national societies ³⁸ through the narrative of ›post-War immigration flows‹ (e.g. France, Germany, the United Kingdom) or ›new immigration countries‹ (e.g. Spain, Portugal, Denmark, Italy). The management of diversity is thus a discourse on the need to ›regulate‹ the ›impact‹ of ethnically marked populations on the unmarked (white) national society. This can be seen in key documents such as the »Handbook on Integration«, written on behalf of the European Commission: »Integration policies aim to bring about, over time, a convergence of societal outcomes for all. This requires the active involvement of all citizens and residents; those with and without an immigrant background. They can contribute to the social, economic, cultural and civic life of society by using their skills and competencies«. ³⁹

TOLERACE's endeavour was therefore not so much a struggle to produce evidence about the persistence of racism that is ›intelligible‹ to policy-makers, but rather to break the cycle of consensus on narratives about post-colonial politics, immigration and racism. It was also about breaking the consensus on the perceived role of knowledge – in terms of precisely what requires scientific validation – in the ›regulation‹ of non-Europeanness. In the following section we analyse the production of this consensus in the Portuguese context and the ways in which a reformulated Myrdalian programme of demystification becomes one of the key roles reserved for scientific knowledge: »›myth-busting‹ initiatives« that »improve public opinion by providing a true-to-life picture of immigration based on facts and personal accounts«.

³⁶ Cf. David K. Cohen, Michael S. Garet: *Reforming Educational Policy*, p. 21.

³⁷ S. Sayyid: *Slippery People*.

³⁸ Cf. David T. Goldberg: *The Racial State*.

³⁹ Jan Niessen, Thomas Huddleston: *Handbook on Integration*, p. 8; for the following quote see *ibid.*, p. 59.

Immigrant Integration, Racism and Knowledge in Portugal

In this section, we focus on key initiatives by the High Commission for Immigration and Intercultural Dialogue (ACIDI),⁴⁰ the institution which coordinates most integration and anti-discrimination policies and programmes in Portugal. The ACIDI was created in 2007, replacing the former High Commission for Immigration and Ethnic Minorities (ACIME).⁴¹ It marked the culmination of a series of institutional initiatives by the Portuguese state regarding the ›management of diversity‹ and the fight against racism and xenophobia since the 1990s, establishing immigration as a central issue in the political agenda in this field. The ACIDI has »a responsibility to assist in designing, implementing and evaluating transversal and sectoral public policies relevant to the integration of immigrants and ethnic minorities, as well as to foster dialogue between different cultures, ethnicities and religions«.⁴²

In particular, we analyse key publications and initiatives to explore the perceived role of knowledge in promoting ›immigrant integration‹ and in combating racism and xenophobia: a) the 2005 booklet ›Immigration – the Myths and the Facts‹ produced by the ACIME; b) the publications, in 2004 and in 2007, resulting from two major events: the First Congress of ›Immigration in Portugal: Diversity, Citizenship, Integration‹, organised by the ACIME, and the Gulbenkian Forum ›Immigration: Opportunity or Threat?‹, organised with the support of the ACIME. We consider it crucial to critically analyze the discourse of symbolic elites in politics, policy-making and academia in order to understand how certain dominant narratives on racism are formulated and consensualised.⁴³

Knowing and sharing the facts, appeasing with the ›truth‹

The booklet ›Immigration – the Myths and the Facts‹ was produced as part of a campaign aimed at challenging common stereotypes about immigration widely disseminated in Portugal. The booklet is divided into eight sections, headed by key common-sense questions: »Are we being invaded by immigrants? Are immigrants coming to steal our

⁴⁰ Alto Comissariado para Imigração e Diálogo Intercultural

⁴¹ Alto Comissariado para Imigração e Minorias Étnicas.

⁴² Decree-Law No. 167/2007, 3 May.

⁴³ Cf. Teun van Dijk: *Elite Discourse*.

jobs and lower wages? Do immigrants drain our social welfare system and are they parasites living off subsidies? Are immigrants associated with crime? Do immigrants bring diseases? Are »illegal« immigrants dangerous? Do immigrants reject Portugal? Are immigrants a threat to our culture and traditions?»⁴⁴ Throughout the booklet ACIME presents »facts« from scientific research that challenge these widespread »myths«.

Both the nature of the questions asked and the way in which they are addressed are problematic. Overall, the document fails to consider how such »myths« have historically emerged and been politically sustained, while implicitly naturalising racism as a matter of uninformed views on immigrant »others« and ignorance of their »positive« contributions to national society (for instance, accepting jobs nationals do not want, helping to increasing state revenue, and showing a desire to integrate into the Portuguese nation). Accordingly, the presentation of »facts« (particularly statistical data) is seen as capable of counteracting the ideologies that lead to a »biased« understanding of reality and the »wrong« interpretation of immigration produced by the »national«/»autochthonous« population. Data is thus used in a positivist way, while the broader political legitimacy that sustains it remains unquestioned. For example, the supposed perception that there may be too many immigrants in Portuguese society is considered »understandable«. The data used to counter this assertion shows that »Portugal is far from being one of the European countries with the largest percentage of immigrants« and that those who are in the country are needed for economic growth. Whilst providing data to disprove this »myth«, two underlying assumptions are never questioned: firstly, the presupposition of a primordial (ethnic) national homogeneity which sustains the idea that immigration is somehow recent and the assurance that »we« – non-marked Whites – are »still« a large majority;⁴⁵ secondly, the notion of racism as resulting from encounters between mutually unknown, *different* populations. In addition to eschewing power in the understanding of racism, this assumption also contradicts the often of-

⁴⁴ ACIME: *Imigração: os mitos e os factos*, p. 3; concerning the following quotes see *ibid.*, pp. 2, 4.

⁴⁵ Cf. Marta Araújo: *Challenging Narratives on Diversity and Immigration*. For instance, at the beginning of the 16th century the Black (mostly enslaved) population in Lisbon was estimated at about 10 per cent and this was not constructed as a political problem.

ficially cited history of (colonial) ›cultural contact‹ to attest to a natural disposition towards national tolerance and interculturality.

In the document, scientific knowledge is considered to provide ›factual‹, ›objective‹ and ›rigorous‹ accounts which can demystify racism. Moreover, the aim of revealing of such ›truths‹ is not only to counteract misinformation that could lead to ›prejudice‹ (i.e. ›defensive and fearful views‹),⁴⁶ but also to appease public opinion, assuring ›nationals‹ that the state is in control of the situation – as long as the immigrant population is not too large, does not complain about being over-qualified for jobs or insists on not assimilating/integrating.

Although the logic throughout the publication is to contrast common-sense ideas with research and statistical data, it also introduces one important element on the basis of weak evidence – that Portuguese society has proved to be an example of ›tolerance‹ in the European context: ›As the European Commissioner Gil-Robles underlined in his 2003 report on Portugal: ›(...) the increase in the number of foreigners in Portugal, whether from Eastern Europe or the Portuguese-speaking countries, was absorbed without any noticeable rise in social or racial tensions. This is certainly a testimony to the general openness and tolerance of Portuguese society, and an example to other countries across Europe‹‹. Underlying this is the widely diffused idea of Portugal as a tolerant and intercultural nation – linked to a defence of the specific nature of Portuguese colonialism and its lower tolerance towards racial and ethnic discrimination – which has served as a rhetorical device since the early 1990s, whilst rendering racism invisible.

From a critical analytical perspective, it is crucial to note that the very formulation of these ›myths‹ is permeated by, and grounded in, racist ideas and policies and discriminatory practices that consider immigrants to be ›others‹ who must prove their contribution to national society in order to integrate within the limits of tolerance set by the host society. In the booklet, evidence of the tolerant national character is also implicit in the idea of a nation *desired* by immigrants: ›The

⁴⁶ ACIME: Imigração: os mitos e os factos, p. 21; for the following quotes see *ibid.*, p. 5. In the same paragraph from the abovementioned report – and unquoted in the booklet – it is also stated: ›This tolerance will, however, be tested by the increased numbers. In the relation to the issues raised above, therefore, it is perhaps worth recalling that the best possible promoter of good relations between indigenous and immigrant communities is the effective integration of the latter. The effective integration of immigrants is, moreover, best achieved by effective respect for their fundamental rights‹ (Alvaro Gil-Robles: Report on his visit to Portugal, pp. 11 f.).

overwhelming majority of immigrants want to become part of Portuguese society«. ⁴⁷ Thus, mainly in the section dedicated to countering the idea that immigrants »reject Portugal«, the idea that immigrants show a willingness to be »part of Portuguese society« is central, emphasising that many »aspire to Portuguese nationality for themselves and especially for their children«. This aspect is highlighted in several of the photographs of non-white people that illustrate the booklet: a man reading a book entitled ›Portugal and the Sea‹ on the topic of so-called Portuguese »Discoveries«, or a picture of the athlete Francis Obikwelu, a Nigerian naturalised Portuguese, holding the Portuguese flag in the stadium during the 2004 Olympic Games in Athens, together with the quote: »I want to do everything for Portugal, I wish to be remembered in the country as someone who helped to project it. I was spectacularly welcomed, I am cherished and I would very much like to bring joy to the Portuguese people«.

The only time racism (i.e. »discrimination« and »racist acts«) is mentioned in the document is in the sections on criminality and disease. In the former case, trajectories marked by discrimination and disadvantage are seen as explaining the so-called second generation's involvement in crime. ⁴⁸ In the latter, with regard to mental health, it states that immigrants could »feel discriminated against or [be] victims of racist acts«, which could accentuate depressive states and mental suffering. ⁴⁹ While racism or racial discrimination are seen as associated with exclusion and marginalisation, they are not perceived as crucial aspects that should be prioritised in »awareness« measures for »national society« or the presentation of evidence. Without a policy in place to systematically collect and publish data on ethno-racial equality – in key spheres such as employment, health, housing and education (including higher education) – as well as lacking independent structures and

⁴⁷ Here and hereafter ACIME: *Imigração: os mitos e os factos*, pp. 19 f., 10.

⁴⁸ Cf. *ibid.*, p. 13. It is relevant that a substantial effort towards the so-called integration of the descendants of immigrants has taken place within an initiative that had at its origins the association of this population with crime. The Choices Programme (›Programa Escolhas‹) was initially aimed at the »prevention of crime and the integration of young people in the most vulnerable neighbourhoods in the districts of Lisbon, Porto and Setúbal« (cf. Resolution of the Council of Ministers No. 4/2001, p. 1). Since 2004 the initiative has become a nationwide programme with a broader focus on »the promotion of social inclusion for children and young people from vulnerable socio-economic contexts«, targeting the children of immigrants and ethnic minorities (cf. Normative Dispatch n.º 27/2009).

⁴⁹ Cf. ACIME: *Imigração: os mitos e os factos*, p. 15.

transparent mechanisms to deal with complaints and denunciations,⁵⁰ the Portuguese state has actually shown very little evidence of the effectiveness of its integration policies vis-à-vis ethno-racial equality.

Knowing the ›other‹ for better integration policies

We now focus on two major political-academic events that took place in Lisbon in the 2000s. The First Congress on »Immigration in Portugal: Diversity, Citizenship, Integration« was organised by the ACIME in December 2003. The second, the Gulbenkian Forum »Immigration: Opportunity or threat?« in March 2006, was supported by the ACIME. These two events are particularly interesting in terms of creating a dialogue between academia and politics (institutional and party politics).⁵¹

These publications are marked by the idea of the need to reach a consensus based on a positive view of immigration due to the »demographic dilemma«,⁵² i.e. the demographic and economic vulnerability of an aging European population, the crisis affecting social protection systems and the simultaneous increase in immigration.⁵³ This approach – recurring in the discourses of politicians and policymakers – calls for the need to generalize the so-called »positive« discourse in schools, neighbourhoods and amongst immigrant associations.⁵⁴ Considering certain complex political phenomena from their positive and negative consequences, the focus is on selecting the contributions immigrants make to national society – those that can ›appease‹ the public – thereby naturalising and trivialising the so-called »negative effects« (e.g. historically produced social exclusion, segregation and racism). In so

⁵⁰ Cf. ECRI: Third Report on Portugal, p. 14; FRA: Annual Report, p. 23.

⁵¹ The key areas addressed by the publications are, in the 2004 publication: »Immigration policies«; »Diversity management«; »Immigration and development«; »The dynamics of integration: strategies and key actors«; »The legal framework for immigration«; »The reality of immigration in Portugal: a social, demographic and geographic analysis«. In the 2007 publication they are: »Migration flows: dynamics and management modes«; »Welcoming newcomers«; »Territorial integration – urbanism, regional development and local pull-factor policies«; »Political and civic participation – citizenship and civics«; »Young like the Others? Integration processes and scenarios for the children of African immigrants in Portugal«; »Employment and social protection – opportunities in the Portuguese labour market, competition and complementarity, recognition of qualifications and skills; entrepreneurship«; »Remittances and development; circular migration, support for the internationalisation of business«.

⁵² Isabel Mota: Apresentação, p. 7.

⁵³ Cf. Nuno Sarmento: Intervenção durante a sessão de abertura, pp. 16, 20.

⁵⁴ Cf. Feliciano Duarte: Intervenção, p. 104. For the following, see *ibid.*, p. 104.

doing, the fact that this approach is constructed from a certain (usually institutional) point of view is obscured, whilst the political objections of those who reject it (seeing the politicisation of the agenda of immigrants' associations as biased and a form of victimisation) are viewed as problematic.

In Portugal, the defence of a positive view of immigration not only translates an economicist view but also draws on humanist principles to legitimize it, i.e. »immigration ›managed‹ and based on human values«. ⁵⁵ As noted in the previous section, these discourses are anchored in the idea of a historical »matrix of tolerance« ⁵⁶ that Portugal has constructed. ⁵⁷ Thus they deploy notions such as the Portuguese »Pilgrimage« ⁵⁸ to refer to colonial expansion, the Portuguese as »historically settlers«, ⁵⁹ a people with a »humanist vocation« that »never feared« to relate to other people around the world. ⁶⁰

This is a narrative that is only challenged in the 2004 publication by the academic Jorge Vala: »[...] according to the ESS [European Social Survey], about 70% of Europeans and a similar percentage of Portuguese people consider that immigrants contribute towards increasing criminality and insecurity. Contrary to the dominant discourse which represents Portugal as a tolerant, open country with mainly anti-discriminatory attitudes, other data from this same study shows that our country is equally infused with prejudiced beliefs and attitudes which legitimise the discriminatory behaviour that occurs in everyday life or in institutional contexts. [...] Discriminatory behaviour is more difficult to identify and tackle in Portugal the more widespread the idea becomes that this behaviour and the attitudes that sustain it are not found here [...] due to the ideological veil of Luso-tropicalism that covers us all [...]« ⁶¹

With the exception of Vala's contribution – which focuses more specifically on identity processes – and some of the comments on his intervention, the debate on racism is evaded in both publications. Although it is not totally erased from the political and academic ac-

⁵⁵ Ibid., pp.103, 105.

⁵⁶ Nuno Teixeira: Comentário à intervenção de António Vitorino, pp. 44 f.

⁵⁷ Specially in ACIME: I Congresso: Imigração I Congresso: Imigração em Portugal.

⁵⁸ Manuel Cruz: Intervenção durante a sessão de abertura, p. 12.

⁵⁹ Nuno Sarmento: Intervenção durante a sessão de abertura, p. 17.

⁶⁰ Feliciano Duarte: Intervenção, pp. 103, 105.

⁶¹ Jorge Vala: Processos identitários e gestão da diversidade, pp. 48 f.

counts, racism is seen to be inevitably associated with the figure of the (undesirable) immigrant, a naturalised reaction to *difference* which constitutes the downside of integration – it being understood that this should not be prioritised for fear of increasing latent social problems. Thus, racism is mainly approached from a set of euphemisms, such as trafficking, exploitation, negative media representations; conflict and xenophobia; social marginalisation, discrimination based on cultural difference; negative feelings; the social exclusion of ethnically marked populations; misunderstanding of immigrants on the part of Portuguese citizens; and negative stigmas.⁶² This use of euphemisms is accompanied by the trivialisation and naturalisation of racism: »The ethnically marked immigrant groups will always be confronted with discriminatory attitudes arising from such identification«. ⁶³ By not *naming* racism,⁶⁴ such accounts fail to activate a symbolic universe that requires another type of policy approach, involving transformations at the level of the deepest foundations of the state. Instead, a concept of racism as symbolizing a »weak sense of belonging to the national community«⁶⁵ places the figure of the immigrant under suspicion by questioning his/her commitment to Portuguese society (since they are always seen as two separate entities) and absolves the state of the need to act on its own structures and propose unambiguous measures against institutional racism.⁶⁶

Underlying these two major academic and political events there is also the conception of knowledge about the ›other‹ as crucial to combating racism – i.e. exclusion and marginalisation. In this dominant approach, »to know, study and share, think about and understand the reality of immigrants« plays a leading role in »acting better«:⁶⁷ »Only

⁶² Cf. P. António Vaz Pinto: Intervenção na Sessão de Abertura, p. 9. (›media‹); Nuno Sarmento: Intervenção durante a sessão de abertura, p. 19 (›xenophobia‹); António Vitorino: Uma política comum de imigração, p. 33 (›cultural difference‹); Leonor Beleza: Comentário a intervenção de António Vitorino, p. 39 (›feelings‹); David Justino: Integração política e cívica: cidadania e civismo, p. 154 (›exclusion‹); Jorge Sampaio: Intervenção durante a sessão de encerramento e síntese final, p. 207 (›misunderstanding‹); Maria Lucinda Fonseca: Inserção territorial, p. 257 (›stigmas‹).

⁶³ David Justino: Integração política e cívica: Cidadania e civismo, p. 165; see also António Vitorino: Imigração: oportunidade ou ameaça?, p. 36.

⁶⁴ Cf. David T. Goldberg: The Threat of Race.

⁶⁵ António Vitorino: Imigração: oportunidade ou ameaça?, p. 33.

⁶⁶ Cf. Stokely Carmichael, Charles V. Hamilton: Black Power; see also Chris Mul-lard: Racism, ethnicism, and etharey or not?

⁶⁷ Nuno Sarmento, Intervenção durante a sessão de abertura, p. 18 (›reality‹); Manuel Cruz: Intervenção durante a sessão de abertura, p. 13 (›acting‹).

by deepening our knowledge both of the existing conditions of immigrant life and the representations that they and national citizens are constructing about the Different Other will we be able to come up with effective measures to combat marginalisation of the social group in question«. ⁶⁸ The idea that more information and evidence is needed to appease public opinion is also highlighted: »informed and engaged public opinion (...) the touchstone for ensuring the cohesion of society«. ⁶⁹ The consolidation of this consensus has been reflected in the significant increase in academic literature on immigration, minorities and integration – and the concomitant stagnation of academic and political interest in racism. Significantly, it has also helped blur the boundaries between political intervention(s) and scholarship, ⁷⁰ particularly evident in joint initiatives involving certain sectors of academia and the centre of the political spectrum (namely Socialist and Social Democrat party members). In spite of this, in the discourses analysed the relationship between academic knowledge and political and policy intervention is not questioned: it is as if knowledge is to be left to academic experts – who are asked to produce more studies – and politics to politicians – who are expected to become better informed in order to pass fairer political measures.

Associated with this is the implicit absolution of mainstream politics as free from (extreme) bias and the frequently asserted belief that common-sense public opinion is where prejudices lie: ⁷¹ »[...] it should be noted that the debate on these processes [of social integration] is not exempt from value judgements guided by common sense and the prevailing prejudices and representations concerning the integration of immigrants. Underlying the debate on the integration of immigrants is the belief that this process is good for both parties, i.e. that greater justice in access to, and distribution of, resources, greater participation and a less restricted citizenship are additional assets, and that greater social integration is beneficial in terms of the desired social cohesion. However, whereas political and academic discourse tends towards this conviction, it is not always reflected in the observable practices of agents«. ⁷² With racism being attributed to the biased beliefs and erro-

⁶⁸ Jorge Sampaio: Intervenção durante a sessão de encerramento e síntese final, p. 207.

⁶⁹ Isabel Mota: Apresentação, p. 7.

⁷⁰ Cf. Philomena Essed, Kwame Nimako: Designs and (Co)Incidents.

⁷¹ Cf. Teun van Dijk: Elite Discourse and Racism.

⁷² David Justino, Integração política e cívica: cidadania e civismo, p. 158.

neous practices of ordinary people, the role of the state, political party structures and academia in the reproduction of (institutional) racism is obscured. In this approach, the dissemination of contrary (unbiased) evidence to counter what is being circulated – mainly in the media – is seen as the solution.

Policy Discourse and the Systematic Denial of Racism

In the last two decades there has been an increasing call for »evidence-based policy« which has helped naturalise the relationship between scholarship, politics and policy-making. It has also promoted the emergence and establishment of think tanks and pressure groups for immigration and integration issues, pushing for specific political concerns, approaches and methodologies (e.g. the Migration Policy Group and its Migrant Integration Policy Index - MIPEX). Whilst knowledge is never produced in isolation by academics,⁷³ institutionally sponsored research agendas on »immigrant integration« across Europe are particularly illustrative of the unacknowledged match-making between dominant ideologies, frameworks and interests,⁷⁴ with consequences for the building of an anti-racist academic agenda.⁷⁵ In this context, the relationship between knowledge, power and rationality is revealed: »power does not limit itself to defining a specific kind of knowledge, conception, or discourse of reality. Rather, power defines physical, economic, ecological, and social reality itself. Power is more concerned with defining a specific reality than with understanding what reality is. Thus, power seeks change, not knowledge. And power may very well see knowledge as an obstacle to the change power wants. [...] Power, quite simply, produces that knowledge and that rationality which is conducive to the reality it wants. Conversely, power suppresses that knowledge and rationality for which it has no use.«⁷⁶ We therefore need to continue examining the ways in which the integration agenda within evidence-based policy-making has been evading the debate on institutionalised racism, not only in Portugal but also in a number of European contexts. In Britain, for example, Stephen Small and John Solomos

⁷³ Cf. Kwame Nimako: *About Them, But Without Them*, p. 45.

⁷⁴ Cf. Philomena Essed, Kwame Nimako: *Designs and (Co)Incidents*, p. 281.

⁷⁵ For the main areas of scholarship within British »race relations industry« cf. Stephen Small, John Solomos: *Race, Immigration and Politics in Britain*, pp. 250-254.

⁷⁶ Bent Flyvbjerg: *Rationality & Power*, p. 36.

have written about the emergence of a »race relations industry« which has framed politics, policy formulation and implementation: »Academic writing about immigration and race relations since the 1950s has been dominated, first, by anthropologists, sociologists and historians, and subsequently (since the 1970s) by a wider range of disciplines including geography, politics and a range of inter-disciplinary writings, such as in cultural studies. An important facet of research in this field is that, in practice, researchers have been pulled in a variety of directions, by both political and academic pressures. Given the politicised nature of this field this is not surprising, but the consequences for research and scholarship have been negative.«⁷⁷ In the Netherlands, what Philomena Essed and Kwame Nimako have called a »minority research industry« is also noted as inscribing the denial of racism within the production of knowledge. This has been achieved by naturalising hostility and exceptionalism, resistance to the term racism, the defence of presumed national values, and self-victimisation.⁷⁸

In our own analysis of the official discourses of political and academic elites in Portugal, as well as in the interviews and participatory workshops held with policy and decision-makers,⁷⁹ we identified three main discursive devices that sustain a systematic denial of racism:

a) ›The principle of universality in law and policies‹: the Portuguese state has invested in enacting the *unity* and *homogeneity* of the Portuguese *nation* as a historical characteristic, whilst defending its commitment to the *civic* principles of universal equal treatment. This discursive re-enactment of a kind of *primordial* (ethnic) homogeneity – strengthened by the centuries-old rhetoric of stable frontiers – portrays Portugal as an example of the longstanding unity between state and nation. Alongside this image of nationhood, the Portuguese authorities emphatically deny the endorsement of ›ethnic/particularistic‹ arguments and perspectives in politics/policies. Instead, official arguments stress that state and nation have been one for centuries and that *universal* citizenship is the *civic* solution for the non-ethnic Portuguese. Legalism is thus seen as the key to regulating racism, as suggested by a well-known figure in the field: »Then there is a whole body of legislation, a superstructure as it was called in other times, prepared to com-

⁷⁷ Stephen Small, John Solomos: *Race, Immigration and Politics in Britain*, p. 250.

⁷⁸ Cf. Philomena Essed, Kwame Nimako: *Designs and (Co)Incidents*, pp. 297-304.

⁷⁹ Most of the fieldwork within the TOLERACE project was carried out between December 2010 and May 2012.

bat racism and extended to discrimination. It extends from the Catholic ideology, [it is] reflected in the Constitution and in all laws, including the Labour Code. The Labour Code prohibits all forms of discrimination etc., including discrimination based on nationality, which protects immigrants«. ⁸⁰ This assertion of universality and legalism, i.e. rule by civic principles, is implicitly opposed to the idea of ethnic/racial principles: the law is *blind*, and integration policies are deemed universal rather than specific to any such group. Making it clear that no particular privileges are granted to immigrants and ethnically marked populations (thus appeasing the ›majority‹) is a frequently deployed political strategy. The booklet ›Immigration – The Myths and the Facts‹, for instance, clearly states that: »*immigrants do not benefit from any subsidy or specific social support destined exclusively for them*«. ⁸¹ This idea is also common in research published by the Immigration Observatory (within the ACIDI). ⁸² In their recommendations for policy-making, for instance, the authors of a study on racism and discourse propose: »Given the dual hostility detected towards immigrants, based on perceptions of relative deprivation, and towards political elites, seen as relinquishing control of [migratory] inflows, it would also be pertinent for the State to become proactive in highlighting the universal nature of social support, particularly amongst the lower sections of society«. ⁸³

b) ›Racism within the prejudice paradigm‹: interrelated to the previous discursive device is the concept of racism within the paradigm of prejudice studies. ⁸⁴ Racism is understood as an individual attitude towards *difference*, implicitly seen as resulting from the ›poor integration‹ of immigrants and ethnically marked populations, or as an extreme ideology enacted by the remaining members of the extreme right-wing. This is based on the assumption that its most explicit and violent forms have been already eradicated. This latter notion was clearly expressed by a decision-maker in one of the workshops: »[Racism] is a topic which we feel is re-emerging with the crisis and the

⁸⁰ Jurist and human rights activist. Participatory workshop. Lisbon: May 2012.

⁸¹ ACIME: Imigração - Os Mitos e os Factos, p.11 (original emphasis).

⁸² A body that »seeks to deepen knowledge of the reality of immigration in Portugal, in order to be able to define, implement and evaluate effective policies for the integration of immigrants«. Cf. The Immigration Observatory: Who we are.

⁸³ Edite Rosário, Tiago Santos, Silvia Lima: Discursos do Racismo em Portugal, p. 206.

⁸⁴ Julian Henriques: Social Psychology and the Politics of Racism; see also Eduardo Bonilla-Silva: Racial Attitudes or Racial Ideology?

harshening of the crisis. And for us it is not only that racism is being, in certain contexts, used as the scapegoat for the country's situation. We have witnessed, with great concern, the growth of the extreme right, although not so much in Portugal. As someone once said it represents little more than 0.3 % of the vote, which I think should leave us relatively reassured, although it is not something we should ignore. But in Europe, the far right is forging ahead, and I see this in France, I see it in Austria – where they already have MPs from the extreme right. Italy has just removed the banning of hate speech from the Constitution; this is very serious! Right now there might be groups of skinheads – there's no other word for them – outside school gates in Italy handing out leaflets full of race hate against immigration and Gypsies. And this growth of the extreme right has left us extremely worried and very alert«. ⁸⁵

The notion of racism and racial discrimination as due to the persistence of *prejudice* and *stereotypes* as well as the cultural ›deficiencies‹ of the ethnically marked populations and their ›unwillingness‹ to integrate – rather than fuelled by public policies or the ideological structures which sustain them – has been particularly prominent in official political discourse.

This can be illustrated by the words of two of the High Commissioners responsible for immigration, ethnic minorities and intercultural dialogue. The first case concerns the reaction to the ECRI's third report on Portugal (2007) which cited the exclusion of Roma communities and criticised the lack of success of public policies in this area. Interviewed for a national broadsheet newspaper, »The High-Commissioner, Rui Marques, whilst admitting that the ACIME ›can and should do more‹, considered the criticism ›excessive‹, since it did not take into account ›the willingness to integrate‹ on the part of the community«. The ECRI French representative, Marc Leyenberger, retorted: »We cannot be satisfied with an ›it is them who do not want it‹ answer«. ⁸⁶ Although not totally evading the institutional structures that produce racism, institutional approaches favour marginalising anti-racism in public policies, proposing instead that ›prejudice‹ will be eliminated by positive means, i.e. by the ›active integration‹ of immigrants and minorities.

⁸⁵ Decision-maker in the field of integration and interculturality: Participatory workshop. Lisbon: May 2012.

⁸⁶ Sofia Branco: Relatório da Comissão Europeia contra o Racismo e a Intolerância.

In the second example, the current High Commissioner Rosário Farmhouse ratifies the idea that the problem of racism is one of prejudices and stereotypes, »imprinted in our minds«, thus determining the appropriate political solution: »Discrimination and racism are serious human rights violations and one of the great vices of our time, and immigrant and Roma communities are the preferred targets. In fact, no country can declare itself free of racism, and Portugal is no exception. The main source of discrimination is looking at others and not seeing people with inalienable human dignity, but instead seeing images and stereotypes imprinted in our minds, the result of accumulated prejudice due to years of ignorance. The road we build towards education for intercultural dialogue is a road towards action against racial discrimination. Knowledge is therefore essential, because Portuguese social cohesion depends on awareness of the value of interculturality as a factor in cultural and social enrichment. Awareness-raising campaigns carried out by the ACIDI's Group of Instructors (*Bolsa de Formadores*) have played a vital role in this sense«. ⁸⁷ This psychologising of racism – already present in Myrdal's work – forecloses the questioning of its reproduction in the »benevolent« routine functioning of institutions and public bodies. ⁸⁸

c) »The institutional fight against racism as moral education«: a third device sustaining the regime of denial of racism relates to the »civilizing principle« underlying the idea of the moral education of majorities. The central role attributed to »awareness« and »evidence« in combating racism and xenophobia is characteristic of an approach to racism within the prejudice paradigm that draws on an assumption of the irrationality of racism. ⁸⁹ Viewing prejudice as originating in ignorance and biased cognition, rather than in unequal access to resources, ⁹⁰ it implies that education and scientific knowledge can effectively eradicate racism ⁹¹ – an approach that has become consensual since the 1950s UNESCO interventions on race. ⁹² Within this approach, liberal political initia-

⁸⁷ Rosário Farmhouse: Editorial.

⁸⁸ Cf. Barnor Hesse: Discourse on Institutional Racism; see also Sara Ahmed: On Being Included, pp. 44, 163.

⁸⁹ Cf. David T. Goldberg: Racism and Rationality.

⁹⁰ Cf. Philomena Essed: Understanding Everyday Racism.

⁹¹ Cf. Julian Henriques: Social Psychology and the Politics of Racism.

⁹² Cf. Frank Furedi: The Silent War; Alana Lentin: Racial States, Anti-Racist Responses; Brattain: Race, Racism, and Antiracism.

tives – such as awareness activities or multi/intercultural education⁹³ – are proposed, evading the dynamics of race/power. They stress instead the need to know the ›other‹ – i.e. ›we‹ need to learn about and accept other cultures. The problem of racism becomes the problem of immigrant populations, fuelling the perceived need for ever more information about immigrants and minorities themselves⁹⁴ – and sanctioned by academia for possessing a certain ›scientific rigor‹. This evidence is to be transmitted to the majority society so that they can understand the ›other‹ and become aware of their own prejudices.

Awareness-based solutions and the ideologies that sustain them are precluding the construction of racism and anti-racist struggles as political issues. Accordingly, criticism from outside the convergent academic and political agenda – which tends to focus on difficulties in policy implementation rather than policy problem-framing – is questioned and challenged. For example, in September 2012 the Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent Mission to Portugal from the United Nations Human Rights Council made public its report, stressing that »the official policy for the inclusion of people of African descent into Portuguese society is one more approximating assimilation than multiculturalism«. ⁹⁵ In response to this report, High Commissioner Farmhouse declared: »This statement is untrue. [...] All policies developed by the Portuguese state [...] clearly prove otherwise. Portugal is internationally recognised – including by the UN – for its integration policies [i.e. MIPEX]. The model for the management of cultural diversity defended by the Portuguese state is that of interculturality, through the promotion of intercultural dialogue, and there is nothing in the UN's report that factually proves otherwise; it is a conclusion without any evidence«. ⁹⁶

This is not, however, a matter pertaining merely to the dispute over evidence: i.e. evidence produced by officially-sanctioned bodies and academics versus evidence collected by political activists and grassroots movements. Rather, it is an active resistance to the construction

⁹³ Cf. Madan Sarup: *Education and the Ideologies of Racism*; David Gillborn: *Racism and Antiracism in Real Schools*.

⁹⁴ Cf. Kwame Nimako: *About Them, But Without Them*.

⁹⁵ UN Human Rights Council: *Report of the Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent – Mission to Portugal*, p. 14.

⁹⁶ Joana Henriques: *ONU traça retrato de discriminação e ›racismo subtil‹ em Portugal*.

of (anti)racism as a ›political field‹.⁹⁷ As a key activist in this area suggested: »[In Portugal] the official narrative demonises anti-racism. We often hear the High Commission [for Immigration and Intercultural Dialogue] saying that it is us, the anti-racist movements, that invent the problems. In Portugal I think all this has to do with the amusing idea that we have a different model from the French and English. That is, several times I have heard people with some political responsibility for this speak of a kind of Third Way in Portugal, if you can call it that. Which I think is atrocious cynicism, from a political point of view. I mean, it shows something of how there has been a resistance – even within the so-called progressive sectors – to confronting the issue of racism as it really is«. ⁹⁸ Power thus seeks its balance by resisting any understanding of racism that questions mainstream problem-framing and therefore challenges the institutionalised narratives on national politics.

The issue at stake is the politicisation of (anti-)racism which, in terms of research and knowledge production, still needs to unsettle the following issues: – the assumption of national homogeneity as a violent process of heterogeneity in denial, which requires a discussion of the constitutive relationship between management in the metropolis and in the colonial territories; – the dominant, Eurocentric notion of racism that conceives of it as a result of ignorance, (nationalistic) excess and related prejudices; – the moralisation of the fight against discrimination: contact theory, interculturality as a good, humanistic practice, and the education/moral reform of individuals; – the non-disclosure of data collected by the state in various spheres that could help the struggle against ethnic and racial inequality; – the systematic denial of the political existence of the ethnically marked ›other‹ (i.e. the discourse of the ›good‹ and ›bad‹ immigrant), which is produced as a ›problem‹ for policy-makers and academics; an ›object‹ of toleration.

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⁹⁷ Cf. Sadri Khiari: *La contre-révolution coloniale*.

⁹⁸ Anti-racist activist: Participatory Workshop. Lisbon: May 2012.

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