The elective affinities between racism and immigrant integration. A dialogue between two research studies carried out in the European Union and Spain.

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Abstract

In this paper, we problematise the relationship between racism and immigrant integration policies. First, we approach racism from its institutional, governmental and trans-scalar functioning logic. Then, drawing on the fieldwork materials of our respective investigations

(carried out at the EU level and in Spain), we argue the existence of an 'elective affinity' between racism and integration, despite the apparently inclusive and proactive rethoric entailed by integration policies. With this aim, we focus on three specific issues: (1) the construction of the migrants (and the racialised Others) as an object of intervention/knowledge, (2) the downplaying of racism, reduced to an individual pathology which is considered to be incompatible with Western democracy and free market, (3) the reproduction of epistemic racism through the discourse on European (and national) values. By discussing the power/knowledge relations fostered by the hegemonic problematisation of integration, we propose to approach it as a 'suspicious category'.

Keywords

Immigrant integration, racism, racialisation, European Union, Spain, Andalusia.

Questioning an unsuspected field

In this article, we will delve into the relationship between immigrant integration policies and the (re)production of racism[1]. The reason behind this choice is that the rhetoric of integration is characterised by operational concepts generally opposed to the 'intolerant' imaginary triggered by the notion of racism. The keywords that such policies disseminate - 'participation', 'diversity', 'best practices'- do not appear to leave any space for racism, and are frequently appropriated by actors committed to migrants' rights. Moreover, the use of an 'uncomfortable' and 'suspect' term such as racism, seems to enclose an unacceptable moral accusation (Maeso and Cavia 2014, 152). Hence our decision to problematise certain commonly accepted assumptions, both at an academic and social level. In particular, we will

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1   Although racism does not only affect migrant populations nor it is limited to integration policies, we will
     approach it from this perspective according to our specific research experience.

argue the existence of a connection between integration and racism for, at least, three reasons: (1) because the hegemonic problematisation of integration draws its attention towards the supposed characteristics of migrants, concealing how policies subdue such populations to hierarchical classification processes; (2) because this paradigm contributes to a limited and psychologistic understanding of racism, understood as an individual pathology rooted in prejudices, stereotypes or extremist ideologies, and generally rectifiable through a better knowledge of the Other; (3) because integration policies contribute themselves to the epistemic inferioritisation of migrant populations. For this purpose, we will put into dialogue our research materials respectively focused on the European Union (EU) 'soft' integration policies and on the political apparatuses through which integration is constructed at a local level, in the Autonomous Community of Andalusia (Spain). By addressing different scales of multilevel governance, we also intend to emphasise the *trans-scalar* logic through which the meanings of policies are produced (García, Álvarez, and Rubio 2011), not 'in' but 'through' places (Shore and Wright 1997), articulating diverse spaces (physical or virtual) through shared problematisations and specific power/knowledge relations. Following this approach, we chose to focus on how hegemonic discourses are transmitted, (re)produced or modified when they move from one scale to another.

Problematising racism and integration

Racialisation vs cultural racism

> Racism is a global hierarchy of superiority and inferiority along the line of the human (Grosfoguel 2016, 10).

> I understand racism as diverse practices of discrimination and exclusion based on ideas of inherent 'racial' superiority that normalize control, domination and exclusion of one

group over others, while legitimating privilege and oppression (Moreno Figueroa 2010,

389).

Racism is a domination system with deep historical roots. It structures multiple areas of social life and affects the way in which other axes of oppression are experimented (such as class, gender, sexual orientation, age, religion/spirituality, disability). Drawing on the non-existence of 'race' as a biological/genetic fact, recent studies have emphasised the transformation of racist logics, discussing 'new racism' (Baker 1981), 'differential racism' (Taguieff 1987), 'racism without race' (Balibar 1991) or 'cultural fundamentalism' (Stolcke 1995). According to these approaches, contemporary racism is not based on biology but operates by naturalising 'culture', 'ethnicity' or 'religion' from an essentialist perspective. The explicit superiority/inferiority hierarchy between races is replaced by the respectability attributed to any cultural identity, as long as the presence of immigrant populations or people from 'different cultures' is maintained under certain 'thresholds of tolerance' (Stolcke 1995). Although these researches capture some undeniable tendencies, it is true that the 'legitimising meta-narratives' of racism have been continuously changing throughout history (Manrique 2014, 64). Therefore, the relevance of cultural markers is not a new fact[2]. The reason why it is problematic to differentiate the genealogy of racism between a 'scientific' and a 'cultural' phase is that this approach, taking as the historical point of reference biological racism, ends up invisibilising the historical continuities with periods previous to the 19th century. In particular, this paradigm invisibilises the racial classification of non-European populations initiated by colonial empires (Quijano 2000, 534) and, therefore, makes it more difficult to grasp its underlying *transnational* and *geopolitical* logics (Sayyid 2017)[3]. On the other hand,

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2   For example, studies conducted in Latin America point to the emergence of a 'culturalist definition of race' in the 18th century already (Manrique 2014, 75), or during the construction of independent states (De La Cadena 2001, 7). In the European context, religious identity was the main marker for the inferioritisation of the Irish during British colonialism (Grosfoguel 2016).

3   According to Sayyid (2017), racism as a politics -in the Schmittian sense- emerged during the modern age, aimed to manage the antagonism between 'Europeanness' and 'Non-Europeanness'. Hence, although

the physical-corporal-biological referent has not disappeared completely: an example of this are the 'animalistic' representations still attributed to Afro-descendant black people by some politicians or media (Italy racism raw 2013). Instead, the 'physical' and 'cultural' indicators (along with others) are interwoven and difficult to separate. This clearly emerges from the discussion on Islamophobia -also called 'anti-Muslim racism' (Fekete 2004; Mijares and Ramírez 2008)-, since it includes both cultural elements, religious aspects and physical markers -bodies and phenotypic traits that remit to a certain idea of 'Arabness' or 'Muslimness'- (Sibai 2016). Besides, the discussion on Islamophobia emphasises another dimension of racism: the epistemic one, which considers as 'irrational', 'underdeveloped' or 'not valid' any way of knowing (doing, feeling, living, believing) other than the canons of modern Eurocentric thinking (Grosfoguel 2011). Although racism always has an epistemological dimension, the Islamophobic discourses that constantly problematise Muslims as a threat to democracy and the 'Western' way of living make this aspect clear (Grosfoguel 2011).

In conclusion, although race is a social construction, it still generates material effects. Therefore, we assume this category from a constructivist perspective as a 'floating signifier' (Hall 1997): by abandoning any attempt to define a foundational racial marker, we emphasise its political nature instead. Various assemblages of discourses and markers can be used in different historical moments, but this has more to do with the existing 'opportunity structure' - the available meta-narratives and the accepted truth regimes- than with any other substantial reason. Hence the analytical usefulness of the *racialisation* concept (Grosfoguel 2004), which attends to the socio-political construction of race from its various dimensions, without defining a preferential marker. As Grosfoguel (2016, 10) puts it: 'Depending on the different colonial histories in diverse regions of the world, the hierarchy of superiority/inferiority along

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national contexts affect the specific processes of racist classification, racism in itself exceeds the Nation-State.

the lines of the human can be constructed through diverse racial markers. Racism can be marked by colour, ethnicity, language, culture and/or religion'.

Integration between academia and policy

The word 'integration' conveys an idea of society as an organic whole. It transmits the urgency of maintaining such homogeneity, avoiding flaws or disruptions. From classical sociology, authors like Durkheim, Parsons, Myrdal or the Chicago School paid attention to shared values, cohesion and social interaction, focusing on issues such as migrant incorporation, assimilation, race relations, etc. In each national context, the concept is also influenced by the respective colonial histories, which generated narratives and specific classification systems of the colonised populations, giving rise to different paradigms of 'diversity management' (Gil 2010b). Hence its close relation with the 'State Thought' (Sayad 2004): ultimately, integration narratives provide main information on how a given society thinks of itself, what are its 'national construction' processes (Gil 2010a). During the age of the Welfare State, the integration policies implemented in European countries had been mainly addressed to 'vulnerable' groups (Wieviorka 2014) and designed from a social-labour perspective (Gil 2010a). However, in the second half of the 1970s -facing the emergence of post-Fordism, the crisis of 1973 and the economic recession-, the Northwestern countries that had previously hired 'guest workers' (*Gastarbeiter*) to raise their national economies, adopted restrictive migration policies and encouraged their return to the home countries. It was only in this moment that the latter, previously conceived as temporary workers, started to be problematised as an 'immigrant' presence. Hence, a set of interventions in various sectors were adopted so that they would become an 'accepted part of society' (Penninx and Martiniello 2004, 141).

In the last decades, this notion has been increasingly used by governments of different political ideologies, to the extent that both 'assimilationist' and 'multiculturalist' positions were subsumed under the idea of integration (Favell 2001). Moreover, since the Tampere European Council[4], this policy field gradually became part of the EU multilevel governance, ending up in the establishment of a 'European Integration Framework' based on the exchange of information and best practices[5] among different actors -EU, national and regional representatives, non-governmental organisations, think tanks, foundations, etc.-. In the Spanish context, the first measure in the area of immigration management was the Organic Law[6] 7/1985, regarding the 'Rights and Liberties of foreigners in Spain'. Although there was no numerically consistent migrant presence at that time, the approval of the law was directly linked to the imminent entrance of Spain into the EU. Therefore, it was about transmitting an image of a 'modern' and 'developed' country, now becoming part of the EU Southern border. The first integration measures were carried out during the 1990s, mostly in the area of social policies (Agrela 2008, 4), culminating into the Organic Law 4/2000 of 11 January on the rights, liberties and social integration of foreigners in Spain and its successive reforms[7].The influence of the European guidelines is remarkable throughout the composition of the different integration programmes, subsequently developed both at the national level[8] and in the comprehensive plans of the regional communities[9].

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4   Its conclusions advocated the 'fair treatment of third-country nationals' and 'a more vigorous integration policy' (European Council 1999, n.p.).
5   According to the Lisbon Treaty (article 79.4), the EU can only implement measures in support of national policies, excluding their harmonisation. The national primacy in this area emphasises the current relevance of the State Thought.
6   In the Spanish political system, an Organic law *(Ley Orgánica)* must be approved by an absolute majority of the Congress of Deputies.
7   Such as the Organic Laws 8/2000, 11/2003, 14/2003, 2/2009, 10/2011 and the Royal Decrees 2393/2004, 557/2011, 16/2012, 844/2013.
8   For example, the first (2007-2010) and the second (2011-2014) Strategic Plan for Citizenship and Integration (PECI).
9   Such as the first (2001-2004), the second (2005-2009) and the third (2014-2016) Comprehensive Plan for Immigration in Andalusia.

It is for all the above reasons that, without any prejudice to the theoretical debates on the opportunity of the term 'integration' and its adjustment to a variety of different situations (Koopmans and Statham 2000; Favell 2001; Zapata-Barrero 2004; Penninx and Martiniello 2004; Cachón 2008; Wieviorka 2014), the idea of 'immigrant integration' *in itself* conveys a specific problematisation of Otherness: one that is based on a common narrative and legitimises specific expert knowledge, instruments, and forms of intervention. In this regard, it is necessary to point out that, in the institutional EU-argot, the notion of immigrant indicates non-EU 'third-country nationals', since the nationals of the member states are considered as 'EU citizens'. However, in social uses not all third-country nationals are called migrants, nor are all EU citizens considered as 'European': for example, it is highly likely that a French national defined on the basis of some phenotypic marker as 'Arab' is automatically problematised as an immigrant, but this is not the case for an Anglo-Saxon white American. Ultimately, the immigrant characterisation is attributed according to the alleged 'non-European' (and by extension: 'non-Western') origin of the person (Fassin 2001). This is particularly the case for *second-* or *third-generation* migrants, people with a migrant background who never emigrated from the country they were born in (in some instances they also have its nationality) but are problematised as 'migrants'. Not by chance many discourses on integration are directed to them, for whom 'the process of immigration has no end' (Sayyid 2004: 151) and the 'immigration crime' seems to become a 'genetic culpability' (Sayad 2004, 383), showing that 'the status emigrant/immigrant is not only a juridical category but also (and overall) a social and racial category' (Gil 2010a, 190).

Methodological notes

There is a predominant tendency to consider racism through the actions of openly racist individuals or groups; that is, focusing on acts organised around aberrant and hostile beliefs (Hesse 2004, 133-136) -Delgado (2006) has called it *reductio ad hitlerum* of racism-. In a 'softer' version, racism is understood from a psychologistic-cognitivist perspective based on representations, prejudices and stereotypes possessed by the individual -being 'discrimination' the practical consequence of such beliefs-. This approach has paved the way to a proliferation of quantitative studies -statistical analyses, surveys, opinion polls- aimed to 'measure' racism.

Instead, we prefer to address racism from its *institutional* dimension (Ture and Hamilton 1992)[10] and its *governmental* logic (Foucault 1991)[11]. We assume that racism is reproduced through 'the social routinization and institutionalization of regulatory, administrative power (e.g., laws, rules, policies, discipline, precepts)' (Hesse 2007, 656) and through a 'system of practices' (both discursive and non-discursive) that, regardless of their conscious or non-conscious nature, 'is consistent in its impact or strategic effect' (Hesse 2004, 143-144). That is why we prefer to investigate practices that contribute to the reproduction of racism as a power relation rather than focusing on 'racist people' (Van Dijk 1993, 51). Following Olmos (2015) and Olmos and Martín (2018), we point out the utility of combining ethnographic strategies with critical discourse analysis, to which we add 'anthropology of policy' (Shore and Wright 1997). This approach enables a more profound analysis of racist logics, drawing attention to the interaction between specific political/institutional/social/historical contexts, expressly racist acts, and the more ordinary experiences of 'everyday racism' (Essed 1991; Kilomba 2010; Sian 2017).

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10 According to Ture and Hamilton, institutional or *covert* racism is 'less identifiable in terms of specific individuals committing the acts', since it 'originates in the operation of established and respected forces in the society' (1992, 3-4). But it is covert racism that most profoundly contributes to the social, economic, and cultural subordination of racialised populations.

11 Foucault does not define 'government' in terms of 'imposing law on men, but of disposing things: that is to say, of employing tactics rather than laws, and even of using laws themselves as tactics -to arrange things in such a way that, through a certain number of means, such and such ends may be achieved' (1991, 95). He calls 'governmentality' to the concrete ways of exercising government, 'the ensemble formed by the institutions, procedures, analyses and reflections, the calculations and tactics that allow the exercise of this very specific albeit complex form of power' (102).

As for the methodological details: the first fieldwork has been carried out mainly in Brussels between 2011 and 2012 and has consisted of 37 interviews conducted with relevant actors of the European Integration Framework[12], observations of different meetings, platforms and institutions, and the analysis of written material -brochures, institutional documents, books, scientific articles, blogs and websites-. The fieldwork of the second study -still in progress- has been carried out in Granada (Andalusia) between 2016 and 2017 and through virtual media between 2016 and 2018, consisting of 12 interviews[13], various participant observations within a social intervention project and the analysis of a variety of written and 'virtual' documents -integration programmes, social networks and virtual press-[14].

The paradigm of integration and the 'domestication' of racism

In this section we will present our research materials, delving into the relationship between racism and integration already outlined in the introduction. The differentiation between three types of connections only has explanatory purposes, being each one overlapped with others in the dynamics of social action and emerging transversally from the policy instruments analysed.

Displacing the gaze: migrant populations as an object of intervention

In 2004, the Justice and Home Affairs Council adopted eleven 'Common Basic Principles for Immigrant Integration Policy in the EU' (CBPs)[15], consisting of recommendations for the implementation of national and local policies. The CBPs will be disaggregated through more detailed recommendations in the European Commission communication 'A Common Agenda

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12 The interviewees have been representatives of the EU or national and regional institutions (14 interviews), think tanks (4), non-governmental organisations at a European (17) and national level (2).

13 Civil servants (2 interviews), social workers associated with non-governmental organisations (6) and people involved in the implementation of the intervention project (4).

14 Following the temporary delimitations of our field research, we have not considered the modifications for the European context after 2013, whereas for the Spanish and Andalusian context we have focused on the regulations developed until 2017.

15 However, the European Integration Framework is only addressed to 'legally residing third-country nationals': no integration measures are planned for those who find themselves in an irregular condition.

for Integration' (COM [2005] 389 final) and confirmed again by the 'European Agenda for the Integration of Third-Country Nationals' (COM [2011] 455 final). CBP n.1 defines integration as 'a dynamic, two-way process of mutual accommodation by all immigrants and residents of Member States' (JHA Council 2004, n.p.). Even by assuming the dualism of this formulation -which encourages a dichotomous definition of the parties involved: 'residents' vs 'immigrants' (Martiniello 2007; Carrera and Faure Atger 2011)-, the claimed bidirectionality is contradicted by successive provisions, such as CBP n.2 -'integration implies respect for the basic values of the European Union' (JHA Council 2004, n.p.)- and n.4 -'basic knowledge of the host society's language, history, and institutions is indispensable to integration; enabling immigrants to acquire this basic knowledge is essential to successful integration' (JHA Council 2004, n.p.)-. Two 2003 directives on 'right to family reunification' (Council Directive 2003/86/EC) and 'concerning the status of third-country nationals who are long-term residents' (Council Directive 2003/109/EC) had already allowed the requirement of integration measures previous to the concession of the legal status. Thus, CBP n. 2 and n. 4 not only legitimised these controversial measures a posteriori but also provided member states a pretext for their subsequent implementation. Hence the increasing realisation of 'civic tests', 'courses', or integration 'agreements' oriented to examine the knowledge of the language and the 'values' of the receiving country -in some cases mandatory and binding- (Pascouau 2014). In this way integration, far from being a 'process' (CBP n.1), becomes a goal to be achieved, shown and exhibited. In an analogous sense, the first edition of the 'Handbook on Integration for policy-makers and practitioners' (2004)[16] opens with an entire chapter dedicated to introductory 'orientation' courses for newly arrived immigrants -claiming that 'they give immigrants a start enabling them to acquire vital skills to become self-sufficient' (Niessen and

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16 It is a volume published by the European Commission together with the think tank 'Migration Policy Group' (MPG), developed in several technical seminars between experts, national administrators and NGOs, which contains guidelines for the implementation of the CBPs and examples of best practices. It will be followed by a second (2007) and a third (2010) edition.

Schibel 2004, 14)-, including sections on 'language training' and 'civic content of introduction courses' (15). Also, 'best practices' implemented by countries such as Denmark, Germany, United Kingdom, France or the Netherlands -some of them very active in the 'unidirectional' resignification of integration- are mentioned. Although it provides some exceptions and nuances, on the whole, the Handbook never questions the underlying logic of these measures, that is, their problematisation of non-EU migrants as a problematic subject, lacking the socio-cultural skills essential to getting on in the European context (Gil 2010a). What is more: in its first pages, it even theorises integration as 'a process lasting several years, in many cases beyond naturalisation or into the second and third generations' (Niessen and Schibel 2004, 14), making evident the underlying racialisation processes in the allegedly aseptic notion of 'immigrant'. In this regard, it turns to be illustrative the words by which a 'second generation' woman (by her definition), member of an NGO, describes her participation experience in various meetings along with institutional actors[17]:

> I feel very often aggressed, there is a lack of diversity, you have a kind of full group of white people talking about integration [...]. I had a meeting with regional institutions in charge of integration, and I was really shocked! I was really, really, really shocked! Because they had an assimilationist discourse actually, but they were totally in the paradox because they couldn't say directly: 'Well, we are assimilationists, so we think that the evolution of the process of integration is: you disappear as a migrant' [...]. So they had that discourse, but they were using it in an interculturalist fashion, and so they were trapped, but actually, they had no thought of otherness (interview with NGO representative 11/3/2001).

The reduction of the 'two-way' process to a 'one-way' one traverses the elaboration of policy documents at local level. For example, in the town of El Ejido (Andalusia) -the fieldwork

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17 To ensure anonymity, we have randomly altered some of the interview dates, the gender and references to specific places and organisations.

location of a previous project in which one of us participated-, one of the programmes intended for the 'integration support and diversity management' can be found on the website of the local government in the 'Social Services and Women' section, located under the label 'immigrant people', which is itself mentioned between the 'prevention of drug addiction' and 'Roma community' sections (https://serviciossociales.elejido.es/). The project's target group were third-country nationals in a regularised situation and town residents, where the 90% of the participants were women, and the 93.4% of the latter were nationals of Morocco. The different activities that were carried out were focused on four blocks of tasks: (1) To have a general knowledge of Spanish educational system for mothers and fathers; (2) Spanish Courses; (3) Courses on 'women and interculturality' and (4) Coexistence with Neighbours. The very configuration of the programmes illustrates how integration becomes the ultimate responsibility of migrants (especially migrant women).

In short, we observe that the idea of 'mutual accommodation' between 'receiving society' and 'immigrants', formulated by CBP n.1, is questioned in practice. The hegemonic paradigm, far from problematising the host society or the white elites of policy-makers, is only addressed to non-EU migrants -some categories of migrants more than others- and constructs them as dangerous populations, 'external elements' to the host society (Wieviorka 2014, 639) in need of biopolitical intervention. Its underlying rationalities conduct the gaze (and the suspicion) towards the ethnically and racially marked Other, generating a 'pathologisation of minorities' (Maeso 2015, 66) and 'shift[ing] responsibility for societal success onto its outsiders' (Lentin 2011, 14-15). So, the intended bidirectionality turns itself into 'an imaginary that is about the Other, but remains grounded in Western supremacist discourse' (Sayyid 2004, 152).

Awareness-raising against discrimination

It has been observed that, when dealing with racism, integration rhetoric tends to prioritize less 'uncomfortable' expressions, such as 'discrimination', 'prejudice', 'intolerance' or 'exclusion', reserving the word 'racism' only for the most 'extreme' cases (Maeso 2015, 63-64). In a similar way, our fieldwork materials point to the emergence of a tendentiously homogeneous language through different levels of policies that, despite some nuances, is characterized by the preponderance of 'technical' terms related to specific policy instruments ('citizenship', 'participation', 'diversity', 'indicators', 'education', 'training'). In the majority of the cases, these expressions denote a positive charge, aiming to encourage 'best practices' rather than to question 'worst practices' -notwithstanding, continuous references to 'women' or 'second generations' reveal the problematic nature attributed to these specific conditions-. Besides, minimal references are done to 'racism' and its derivative terms (always beneath 'discrimination') [table 1 near here].

How to fight, therefore, 'discrimination'? Awareness-raising, education and the questioning of stereotypes through 'a better knowledge of the others' culture' (Maeso 2015, 63) play a central role. At EU level, the third Handbook states that the media should develop intercultural competencies and generate non-sensational representations of immigrant populations (Niessen and Huddleston 2010, 34). It also states:

> Public misunderstandings on migrants' attitudes, characteristics and their presence in the country of residence (migration flow, number of migrant workers in the labour market, etc.) create conditions that encourage ethnocentrism and discrimination among the population, segregation and marginalisation among immigrants, and inaction or backtracking in policy [...] If combating misunderstanding is the goal of awareness actions, then these misunderstandings must be identified, measured, and analysed through a variety of information-gathering tools. Those designing public opinion polls cannot be afraid to ask a survey question for fear of the answer. Surveys can later be used to

confront real fears, misunderstandings, and prejudices in public opinion (Niessen and

Huddleston 2010, 51).

Similarly, the Spanish Government's Integration Plan suggests the 'support for actions aimed

at promoting mutual understanding and eliminating stereotypes that provoke discriminatory

attitudes' (Ministerio de Trabajo e Inmigración 2011, 59). The Andalusian Plan contemplates

as a good practice the campaign 'For diversity. Against discrimination', launched by the

European Commission in 2003 to 'inform citizens about their rights and to create a state of

opinion against discrimination' (Consejería de Justicia e Interior 2014, 131). In this approach,

it would seem that lack of knowledge is the main factor of structural discrimination: we would

like to problematise this statement, observing that 'the racist complex inextricably combines a

crucial function of misrecognition [...] and a "will to know"' (Balibar 1991, 19), and 'within

racism the aim is not to understand, but to possess and control' (Kilomba 2010, 140)[18].

Another critical issue is the reduction of the anti-discrimination struggle within an

economicist and (neo)liberal problematisation. In this regard, CBP n. 6 states that 'access for

immigrants to institutions, as well as to public and private goods and services, on a basis

equal to national citizens and in a non-discriminatory way is a critical foundation for better

integration' (Council of the European Union 2004, n.p.). Also, the only section of the EU

Handbooks specifically dedicated to 'anti-discrimination and diversity' is included in a

chapter within the second edition, called 'Economic integration'. This subsumption of anti-

discrimination within an economic concern is not new: in effect, the approval of two

directives on 'Racial Equality' (2000/43/EC) and 'Employment Equality' (2000/78/EC) some

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18   Similarly, a research carried out in Graz (Austria) has shown that the provision of information about the
     'characteristics' of newly settled Roma populations, given by the media, far from dismantling the existing
     stereotypes, it contributed to the generation of new and more 'sophisticated' ones (Benedik 2011, 74). A
     similar dynamic occurred in the Andalusian city of Granada, during the public break of the fast (*iftar*) of
     2017. Although the event was supposed to be a meeting of coexistence, cultural exchange and knowledge
     about the Muslim world, numerous digital media interpreted it as a threat to 'national' culture and values.
     So, the public discourse ended up encouraging the stereotypes that were intended to be overthrown (*The
     local.es*, June 13, 2017).

years before, had been justified by the need to remove obstacles to the full realization of a European labour market (Geddes 2000; Guiraudon 2003). From this perspective, free market would ultimately be incompatible with the existence of discrimination: the intention here is to make some adjustments so that the market works efficaciously while invisibilising the imbrications between racism, capitalism and liberal democracy. A final question to emphasise is the irrelevance granted by the documents to the institutional dimension of racism. Let us take a look at the only excerpt of the Handbooks that alludes to something similar:

> The first step here is to stimulate applications from immigrants. Some employers attract few immigrant applicants because they are perceived as 'unapproachable' or even institutionally racist. Outreach activities can be successful in changing such perceptions over time. In several Member States, the police, firefighting departments and other public sector employers engage in outreach towards immigrants and ethnic minorities (Niessen and Schibel 2007, 60).

Here, the potential forcefulness of the initial denunciation is blurred by everything that comes after: effectively, the fact that some entrepreneurs could be considered as 'even institutionally racist' seems to be due to wrong perceptions. It is true that, in other parts of the Handbooks, the existence of discriminatory practices at work is recognized, although the question is resolved by declaring that they are legally prohibited and advocating for greater legal protection through the dissemination of 'good information' and better support to migrant's complaints (Niessen and Schibel 2007, 62).

The contents of the interviews are similar to those analysed in the documents. For example, a member of a European NGO has explained racism in the following way:

> In my personal opinion, it's due to ignorance, it's a lack of knowledge, it's a lack of good education... It's when people are too close into their own little world, then fears come up too fast and based on that fear you want to close yourself even more into your own safe

space, and everyone who is different is wrong (interview with NGO representative
28/2/2011).

An interesting exception comes from the discourse of a social worker from Andalusia, whose
recognition of institutional racism is combined with its reduction to 'a series of clichés' from
practitioners:

> Racism is something that is very deeply anchored [...]. When you think about it, racism is
> one of the fundamental problems that exist, and institutional racism is too brutal. You talk
> to most of the practitioners and ask them for... I don't know, what about the Roma?, and
> you will get a series of clichés, right? What about the Senegalese?, and you will get a
> series of clichés, without taking into account the diversity within each group, they are all
> clichés, so when people go there, they are received with these clichés (interview with
> project director 7/2/2017).

In short, the few 'apparent concessions' (Van Dijk 1993) to the concern of institutional
racism, far from addressing the broader conditions that underpin it, generally conceptualise it
as an 'exception' to be suppressed by restoring the rule of law (Maeso 2018). Eventually, they
understand racism as a set of practices perpetrated by *individuals within institutions*, but not
as a governmental logic that traverses and structures the functioning of institutions
themselves.

Epistemic racism and discourse on values

An example of how integration policies not only downplay but (re)produce racism, is given
by the discourse on European and national values emerging from numerous documents -
starting with the CBPs n. 2 and 4-. It is true that there is a 'struggle for the meaning' about the
interpretation of these values, between those who prioritize 'essentialist'/'culturalist' contents
-emphasizing 'habits' and 'traditions'- and others that refer to a more 'civic'/'political'

concept of integration -shifting attention to issues such as 'democracy' and 'human rights'- (Arribas et al. 2014). For example, not all EU actors indicate the knowledge of 'language' and 'culture' as necessary prerequisites:

> I do not think that integration laws should be used to reduce fundamental rights. Another issue is that the authorities and civil society should promote among all residents the values of open and egalitarian democratic societies [...]. From my point of view, integration has a stronger association with equal treatment, non-discrimination, equality of rights, equality of obligations, sense of belonging, which is a more social than a legal concept (interview with employees' organisation representative 3/3/2011).

The first edition of the Manual interprets the content of these values in a more ambivalent way:

> Besides language, introduction courses also often stress the importance of 'social orientation' and of giving immigrant knowledge of the functioning and the values of society. Courses can convey the fundamental elements of the constitution, such as respect for human rights and democracy, and the functioning of the political system including opportunities for political and civil society participation. Orientation about gender equality and children's rights are important components of many programmes (Niessen and Schibel 2004, 17).

This excerpt is quite representative of the hegemonic discourse. In fact, although sometimes the EU guidelines refer to the fact that all residents should attend 'democratic' values, when it comes to their practical implementation it is primarily the migrants who must respect 'human rights', 'gender equality' or 'children's rights', as if by default they were devoid of their consciousness. It is precisely this second inflexion that is usually captured by the national integration devices: for example, article 2 of Spanish Organic Law 4/2000 declares:

[The Public Administrations] They will provide, through formative actions, the
knowledge and respect of the constitutional and statutory values of Spain, of the values of
the European Union, as well as of human rights, public freedoms, democracy, tolerance
and equality between women and men, and they will develop specific measures to favour
incorporation into the education system, guaranteeing in all cases the compulsory
schooling, learning the official languages, and the access to employment as essential
factors of integration (Ley Orgánica 4/2000, 7)[19].

The emphasis on some topics such as gender equality, children's education or human rights,
presented as values to be assumed by the migrants, illustrates how the apparent neutrality of
particular statements is based on the problematisation of some 'origins', 'religions' or
'cultures' more than others[20]. Therefore, although the discourse on values appears to be
structured by a confrontation between 'restrictive' vs 'progressive' approaches, it is internal to
a Eurocentric horizon. In this narrative, 'civic' and 'political' values are subsumed within a
culturalist pre-definition of 'Europe', intended as the appropriate -if not unique-
historical/cultural context for their emergence and realisation. Therefore, some nuances may
emphasise 'language' and 'culture' while others 'democracy' and 'human rights', but even the
last two, despite being presented as neutral and universal, are conceived as the product of a
specific historical experience. In short: a certain idea of Europeanness comes embedded in
them[21].

By disqualifying the knowledge(s)/doings/feelings/experiences of 'non-European'
subjects, integration policies contribute to the reproduction of the epistemic dimension of
racism, whose invisibility does not imply a diminished insidiousness by any means.

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19 With this aim, a 'Report on Integration Effort of the foreign person' can be voluntarily filled out by the
    candidates to demonstrate their consciousness of such values and facilitate the renewal of the residence
    permit.
20 An even clearer example is the Italian integration agreement, full of allusions to practices such as covering
    the face with a headscarf, polygamy or genital mutilation. It also compels migrants to assume a specific
    position on the 'Israel-Palestine' conflict (Sebastiani 2018).
21 On this issue, also see Dussel (2000) and Sayyid (2004).

Therefore, in this scenario, the current postcolonial migrant is still treated as the historical colonial subject, that is, under the conditions of a minor (Balibar 2004). He/she is submitted to a multitude of tests, contracts and integration agreements that have very little bidirectionality, never having their terms and contents defined by him/her -starting with the decision on which 'values' to be respected-. In this paradigm, it is exactly because the 'equation between the West and democracy is racially produced' (Maeso 2018, 8) that the 'non-European' Other is considered to be dangerous for democracy and needs to learn 'our' ways of doing things. Thanks to this representation of Europe and its civilising legacy, the current EU (and national) institutions can consider themselves as 'open' and 'tolerant', 'democratic' and respectful of 'human rights' -ultimately: not racist-. Therefore, racist epistemologies are themselves the ones that reproduce racism while, at the same time, they construct it as non-existent (Lentin 2011, 2).

Integration as a suspicious category

In this article, we have attempted to unravel integration policies by addressing their underlying problematisations. We have brought together the EU 'soft policy' framework along with the Spanish and the Andalusian policies, observing common problematisations despite the different scales. What then is the nexus between racism and integration? According to Maeso and Araújo (2014, 208), 'since the 1960s integration discourse -as a discourse of power- has been the product of the institutionalisation of racism in European democracies'. To test this statement, we have delved into this 'elective affinity' -generally insufficiently explored by the scientific literature- from three inter-related aspects: (1) The problematisation of migrant populations (and racialised subjects) as an object of knowledge/intervention; (2) The downplaying of racism, its reduction to 'discrimination' deriving from individual 'prejudices', 'stereotypes' or 'lack of knowledge', as well as a narrative which presents it as something incompatible with 'Western democracy' and free market economy; (3) The

reproduction of racism through the inferioritisation of the knowledge(s), doings and feelings of the 'non-European' Others, whose values are not considered as worthy as 'our' values. In this context, integration is configured as 'a promise which does not correspond to the experience of whole segments of the population' (Wieviorka 2014, 638), characterized by 'a national script that is known by the insiders and only knowable by those outside (or those who are trying to enter) under precise, often shifting, conditions' and constituting 'an ultimately impossible goal' (Lentin 2011, 110-111). That is why, as a result of this exploration, maybe we should change our starting point by considering integration, and not racism, as a suspicious category. To put it into other words: it may be more useful to address integration drawing on the assumption of an institutionally and structurally racist society, rather than to approach racism as a pathology which is incompatible with or even opposed to integration.

In short, this reflection invites us to question not only the 'proactive' assumptions associated with the idea of integration, but also those criticisms that only point to the opposition between 'intentions' and 'actions', 'discourses' and 'practices', or policy statements and their material implementation. We rather believe that the governmental practices that construct, (re)produce and give meaning to the category of integration are closely associated to a broader context that structures and aligns them within specific patterns of agency, thus conditioning the horizon of the thinkable and the feasible. While it is true that any struggle for the meaning is open to unpredictable results, both the power/knowledge relations hegemonic in this field and the historical genealogy that led to its constitution push us, ultimately, to deny that integration is a category 'beyond suspicion'.

Declaration of interest statement

We do not report any potential conflict of interest.

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Table 1. Most frequent integration 'keywords'

TABLE 1	UE Handbooks	Spanish Plan	Andalusia Plan	Total
Citizenship	158	432	44	634
Indicator(s)	198	49	313	560
Education	240	182	96	518
Services	158	170	185	513
Participation	189	200	112	501
Diversity	186	173	140	499
Training	197	130	156	483
Women	58	175	244	477
Employment	120	153	189	462
Equality	47	262	149	458
Origin	54	298	97	449
Development	109	213	117	439
Rights	111	203	112	426
Information	198	77	112	387
Second generation(s)	191	164	15	370
Discrimination	100	224	34	358
Media	313	18	11	342
Health	63	100	124	287
Housing	155	37	86	278
Language	220	8	30	258
Intercultural	135	81	31	247
Knowledge	106	48	76	230
Dialogue	178	22	11	211
Violence	10	67	95	172
Security	29	44	83	156
Racism	22	77	5	104
Racist	10	3	2	15

Caption table 1

The most frequent 'keywords' in the EU Handbooks on Integration, the Strategic Plan for Citizenship and Integration in Spain (2011-2014) and the III Integral Plan for Immigration in Andalusia (2014-2016). The recount has been made with NVivo 11 software. In grey colour, the ten most-mentioned keywords in each document.