

Introduction

Research overview and main findings

Katy Sian, Salman Sayyid, Ian Law

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How do we represent people and places which are so significantly different from us? Why is difference so compelling a theme, so contested an area of representation? What is the secret fascination of 'otherness', and why is popular representation so frequently drawn to it? What are the most common forms of representation used to construct difference, and where did these stereotypes come from? (Hall 1997: 225)

The reports in this compilation bring together the results of the fourth phase of the TOLERACE project: 'Framing racism and intolerance: public issues and denunciations'. The purpose of this stage of the project was to examine the role of the Media in framing and constructing issues concerning ethnically marked populations. The reports analyse specific case studies in their national/regional context and present a detailed critique of the role of the Media to understand how it can be seen to contribute to the shaping of the semantics of (anti)racism and tolerance. In particular the reports take into consideration the three following objectives:

1. The various definitions of racism and (in-)tolerance used by institutions and policy-makers in making certain issues of discrimination and exclusion visible;
2. The role of the Media in the framing of public issues and the (in)visibilisation of racism;
3. The issue-framing effects on the institutions and civil society organisations' agenda-setting.

There are nine reports that describe and analyze the role of the Media in constructing and framing key issues in relation to ethnically marked communities. The cases dealt with by the teams that form part of the TOLERACE project include, Portugal, Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, the United Kingdom and two teams from Spain in the regions of the Basque Country, and Andalusia. Each of the cases is focused on hegemonic

issues emerging in the Media surrounding the particular ethnically marked population(s) examined. The data informing the analysis of this collection of reports is generated from an extensive database of Media coverage. Each country compiled a separate database in the first wave of this workpackage in which the Media was closely monitored from October 2011-December 2011. During the monitoring period Media material in the form of newspapers (both print and online) was logged onto the database and the items archived were those related to each of the country's chosen case study. Each of the databases thus provide the most representative mass Media coverage of the case studies selected and examines the construction of the historicity of each "public issue". When analysing the various Media items to ensure consistency across all the countries the following information was logged:

- Type of item: news/ editorial/ comment
- General overview of the story,
- The level of minority bias: extent to which the item shaped hostility or inclusion,
- Minority news actors voice: Strong/Weak/Medium/Nil
- Key words and phrases
- Pictorial representation.

All databases will be made available online on the TOLERACE webpage.

The reports to follow each provide an in depth examination of the various case studies and the role of the Media in constructing/framing both the subject and the story taking into account the following aspects including: how the issue was framed; the key lexical semantics used to report the issue; how the language shaped the construction of the subject/population, the ideological/political orientation of the Media examined; how racism was used or conceptualised by the Media; the extent of 'othering', racialisation and ethnic marking; the effects of pictorial representations; the extent to which the reporting was negative/positive; the extent to which the Media was bias; the extent to which minority voices were in/excluded; and the importance the specific issues were given. Each of the country's case studies are listed below:

Table. 1 Case studies on the role of the Media

Key cases	Role of the Media	Semantics
Portugal: Segregation of the Roma/Gypsy population and issues surrounding racism	How the Media constructs and frames the Roma and Gypsy community, and the extent to which the Media (in)visibilises racism	Integration, (self)exclusion, the politics of identity, ghettoisation, cultural difference, racism, segregation, marginalisation
Denmark: Danish Media and the framing of Muslims, Islam and Racism	How the Media constructs and frames Muslims, Islam and Racism, and the extent to which the Media (in)visibilises racism	Muslims, Islam, racism, discrimination, Islamophobia, violence, terrorism, fundamentalism, backwardness, honour killings, oppression of women, and forced marriages.
France: The case of “quotas of discrimination” in French football	How the Media constructs and frames ethnically marked communities, and the extent to which the Media (in)visibilises racism	Race, racism, colonialism, immigration, ‘otherness’
Germany: The Media and Muslims in Germany	How the Media constructs and frames Muslims, and the extent to which the Media (in)visibilises racism	Racism, violence, terrorism, fundamentalism, backwardness, honour killings, oppression of women, and forced marriages, racism, Islamophobia
Italy: Chasing the Gypsy, immolating the Gypsy, securing the city	How the Media constructs and frames the Gypsy community, and the extent to which the Media (in)visibilises racism	Integration, (self)exclusion, the politics of identity, ghettoisation, cultural difference, racism, segregation, marginalisation
Spain (Basque Country): The ‘other’ in Education: Media Representations of Foreign Immigrants and Gypsies in Basque Schools	How the Media constructs and frames Gypsies and Immigrants, and the extent to which the Media (in)visibilises racism	(Self)Exclusion/integration, Inter/intra-ethnic relations, (in)visibility of the racial, segregation, marginalisation, ghettoisation, cultural difference, immigration, racism
Spain (Andalusia): Representations on Immigration, Islam and Immigrant Students in Andalusia	How the Media constructs and frames Islam and immigrants, and the extent to which the Media (in)visibilises racism	Integration, (self)exclusion, Islamophobia, racism, immigration
UK: The Media and Muslims in the UK	How the Media constructs and frames Muslims, and the extent to which the Media (in)visibilises racism	Racism, violence, terrorism, fundamentalism, backwardness, honour killings, oppression of women, and forced marriages, racism, Islamophobia, crime, immigration

The reports engage with a discourse analysis approach, thus the critiques presented in this collection are primarily concerned with examining the hegemony of the various issues in the Media and the particular ways in which they have been constructed as a means to understand how such framing can be seen to reflect the wider debates surrounding racism and tolerance across Europe. That is discourse analysis allows us to move, “beyond a superficial content analysis of isolated words” (Van Dijk in Cottle 2000: 41), towards an, “insight into the underlying mechanisms of how discourse embodies ethnic stereotypes and attitudes, and at the same time, how the minds of recipients are ‘managed’ by such discourse structures” (Van Dijk in Cottle 2000: 41).

Discourse analysis therefore enabled us to examine the ways in which the Media shapes particular meanings and the hegemonic forms of representation deployed to both frame and construct particular ethnically marked populations.

The findings of the reports are largely interconnected and overlap on a number of occasions, as such the **key arguments** can be summed up in the following points:

- The reports from **Portugal, Italy and Spain (the Basque country)**, found in relation to Media constructs of the **Roma/Gypsy population** that the overall representations were negative. In the Portuguese context the Roma/Gypsy community were framed as voiceless *victims* with very little agency. As such they were largely represented as belonging both “outside” Europe and “outside” history. Additionally they were constructed as socially unfit as well as being overrepresented in criminal cases and debates on segregation and ghettoisation. In the case of Italy exploring Nomad camps, findings illustrated in a similar vein that constructs such as precarious living conditions, unstable or non-existent work opportunities, failure to attend school, criminality, and “illegal” housing were the recurrent themes featuring in all the newspapers examined. Spain (the Basque country) also revealed similar accounts in their examination of the Roma/Gypsy community in the context of education. Here the main problem articulated in the Media with respect to the Gypsy population came in the form of ghettoisation narratives where they were framed as being self-segregating and accused of concentrating in the same schools.
- In examinations of **Muslims**, the research teams from **Germany, Denmark, Spain (Andalusia region) and the UK** saw hegemonic Media constructs of the figure of the Muslim as a ‘problem.’ In the German context the coverage surrounding Muslims was mainly sensationalist, stereotypical, and hostile. Islam was largely confined to conflict-ridden issues, including violence, terrorism, fundamentalism, backwardness, honour killings, oppression of women, and forced marriages. On the basis of a dichotomous binary worldview, Muslims were constructed as a homogenous entity, thus portrayed as the ‘other’ and a ‘threat’ to the West. Similarly in the Danish context over half of the news stories dealing with Muslims and Islam were negatively framed and restricted to certain kinds of topics such as extremism, terror, Sharia law, freedom of speech and women’s rights. Both Muslims and Islam were constructed as a threat to democracy, Christianity, freedom of speech

and/or Danish values, contributing to a perception of an antagonistic and hierarchical relation between 'Danes' and Muslims', where Muslims and Islam are associated with oppression, religious fanaticism, anti-secularism and terrorism.

- The Spanish context (Andalusia region) saw the same pattern emerge whereby a clear relationship between Islam, sexist violence, and the fanaticism of 'jihadist' groups was prominent. In the UK the results indicated that 70 percent of all the news items gathered were hostile in constructs of Muslims. Similar themes of the threat of terrorism, extremism, sexual crime, and Muslims as representing a danger to the national majority community (and the west) were dominant. The majority of the Media coverage surrounding the framing of Muslims thus saw Islamophobia as central in contributing to the establishment of the Muslim 'other' or more specifically the Muslim 'enemy'.
- **In France and Spain, both the Andalusia region and the Basque country, immigrants were framed as illegal, criminalised, defective and 'flooding' the nations, in other words, the 'outsiders'.** All the country reports thus found in respect to the ethnically marked populations examined debates around racism were marginal, in other words the denunciations of the Roma, Gypsies, immigrants and Muslims found to dominate the Media coverage failed on the whole to take into account explanations of structural racism. Rather than challenge racism, the ethnically marked communities were framed as the 'problems' thus they were held accountable for their own situation of marginalisation and subordination. In addition to this, racism was largely presented as sporadic and coincidental or described as 'prejudice', inequality' or 'lacking equality'. The Media's denial or subtlety surrounding racism demonstrates clearly that post-racial logics are at play whereby racism is unproblematically constructed as either trivialised, 'reversed' dismissed or exceptionalised.

To sum up, this volume of reports demonstrates how the Media can be seen as an institution that reflects Europe's increasing difficulties in dealing with the challenge of racism as manifested in debates surrounding citizenship, interculturality, multiculturalism and nation, as well as debates around the implementation of just social provisions and policies for ethnic minorities. The ethnically marked populations examined in the reports clearly illustrate operations of the semantics of racism and tolerance as inflected in the Europeaneseque immigrant imaginary (Sayyid 2012). The

hegemony of the immigrant imaginary (Sayyid and Hesse 2006; Sayyid 2004) its flexibility and its range, is demonstrated by the way in which a series of over-lapping tropes circulate in European Media outlets, despite the differences in the local circumstances, national policies and ethnic populations. The reports to follow can thus be seen to echo similar sentiments to that of Stuart Hall:

You won't expect 'correct' answers to my questions, for there are none. They are a matter of interpretation and judgement. I pose them to drive home the point about the complexity and ambivalences of representation as a practice, and to suggest how and why attempting to dismantle or subvert a racialized regime of representation is an extremely difficult exercise, about which – like so much else in representation – there can be no absolute guarantees... (Hall 1997: 276)

References

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