

RACISM AND THE PRESS IN SPAIN

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1. INTRODUCTION

THE international conflict caused by the anti-Muslim cartoons of the Prophet Mohammed in the Danish newspaper *Jyllands Posten* has been widely covered in the world's press, also in Spain. Much of this coverage was framed in terms of the alleged clash of civilizations, between the West and the Muslim World, and more specifically as a struggle between 'our' freedom of the press, on the one hand, and their' fanatic religious intolerance, on the other hand. A few months earlier, the press covered the election of president Evo Morales as president of Bolivia, often in terms that showed little respect for this 'indio'. Also in 2005, the Spanish press dramatically portrayed the 'assault' of African migrants on the North African Spanish city of Melilla.

These three events will be examined in more detail in this paper in order to illustrate the way the Spanish quality press, and in particular *El País*, covers 'ethnic events' in general, and immigration in particular. I shall do so against the broader background of earlier work on European elite racism and the role of the press in the reproduction of ethnic inequality in society.

2. ELITE RACISM AND ITS DENIAL

If there is one social phenomenon that is often referred to, and even more often denied, but without much knowledge about what exactly it is, it is racism. If acknowledged at all, racism is typically attributed to others, to other countries, to other ('lower') classes, or considered to be a thing of the past. Against the daily experiences of its victims, European racism against non-Western immigrants and ethnic minorities is seldom recognized by the political, media and academic elites.'

1. Back & Solomos, 2000; Boxill, 2001; Bulmer & Solomon, 1999 *a*, 1999 *b*, 2004; Cashmore, 2003; Doane & Bonilla-Silva, 2003; Essed, 1991; Essed & Goldberg, 2002; Feagin, 2000; Feagin, Vera & Batur, 2001; García Martínez, 2004; Goldberg, 1997, 2002; Goldberg & Solomos, 2002; Lauren, 1998; Marable, 2002; Sears, Sidanius & Bobo, 2000; Solomos & Back, 1996; Solomos & Wrench, 1993; Wieviorka, 1994, 1998.

One of the reasons of this consistent and widespread negation is that racism is often associated with and limited to the Extreme Right, that is, with blatant prejudices and discrimination. The many more subtle, interpersonal as well as structural and institutional forms of everyday racism are usually ignored, and emphatically denied when they are attributed to the symbolic elites who control the access to public discourse.

Yet, if we assume that racism is not innate but learned, it must be learned during the social practices that have most impact on most people, that is, public discourse in general, and political and media discourse, in particular — as well as on the everyday conversations that in turn are derived from this public discourse. Indeed, in most Western European countries most white citizens do not have extensive personal and daily experiences with immigrants or ethnic minorities, and most information — as well as opinions — about them, hence, must be derived from the mass media, and learned from those who have access to the mass media.¹

This argument is based on an empirically well-tested theory that defines European racism as a *system of social power abuse*, of domination of non-European ethnic minority groups by an European ('white') ethnic majority (and in some countries, such as Guatemala, and the former Apartheid South-Africa).

This system of ethnic domination has two major dimensions, namely that of *social cognition* (prejudices, racist ideologies), on the one hand,² and of *social practices* (discrimination, exclusion, etc.), on the other hand.³ In order to be able to discriminate on ethnic grounds, one needs the relevant beliefs, categories, values and norms that define ethnic prejudices and ideologies. And in order to acquire such beliefs, one in turn needs to be exposed to racist discourses, which are themselves prominent social practices of the system of racist domination.

That is, racist practices, cognition and discourse are intimately related: we learn our prejudices largely through text and talk, first from our parents and friends, then from textbooks, television, and the newspaper, that is, from the symbolic elites: teachers, journalists, writers and politicians. The same is true, obviously, for our antiracist beliefs, ideologies and practices.

The question then is which of these discourses are dominant in society. Extensive international research of the last decade has unambiguously shown

2. For studies of racist discourse, see for detail, see Blommaert & Verschueren, 1998; Jager, 1992, 1998; Matouschek, Januschek & Wodak, 1995; Reisigl & Wodak, 2000, 2001; van Dijk, 1984, 1987 *a*, 1991, 1993, 2005; Wetherell & Potter, 1992; Wodak, 1996; Wodak & van Dijk, 2000).

3. Apostle, Giock, Piazza & Suelze, 1983; Dovidio & Gaertner, 1986; Hamilton, 1981; Pettigrew, 1982; Pickering, 2001; van Dijk, 1984, 1987 *a*, 1998).

4. Alvarez & Lutterman, 1979; Banton, 1994; Britton, 2000; Cohn, 2000; Dovidio & Gaertner, 1986; Essed, 1991; Flint, 2004).

that the white' press in general is part of the problem of racism, rather than part of its solution.⁵

Whether more blatantly on the Right and especially in popular tabloids, or more subtly on the Left, all empirical research shows, among many other things, that non-European immigrants and minorities are systematically portrayed as a problem, and attributed many negative characteristics, of which violence, crime or cultural (religious, linguistic, etc.) deviance have been the main ones.

Moreover, the research shows that this bias is also due to the systematic discrimination of minority journalists: despite the presence of qualified minority journalists, newsrooms anywhere in Europe are nearly exclusively 'white', so that there is also lacking interest, knowledge and expertise to report about the ethnic communities in the first place.

In other words, the mass media play a prominent role in the coverage of ethnic affairs, and they do so in a way that promotes ethnic prejudices and, indirectly, discriminatory social practices based on such negative beliefs about the Others.

The media, however, are not alone. Much of their new coverage is of politicians and political discourse, another 'elite' source of racism in society. Again, as is the case for the media, also the majority of the politicians are not blatantly racist, and indeed some are antiracist. However, as suggested above, much of their 'modem' racism is rather indirect, disguised and mitigated. Their discourse might be focusing on the 'problems' (rather than the challenges and possibilities) of the multicultural society, and is often limited to arguments that oppose further immigration —often in name of the 'people'.

3. RACISM AND THE PRESS

Let us examine some of the properties of the racism in the press, and then proceed to a more detailed account of the three events widely covered in the Spanish press: the 'assault' on Melilla, the election of Evo Morales and the affair of the Danish cartoons.

As suggested above, one of the conditioning elements of the prevailing racism of the European press is inherent bias in the processes of production. Newsgathering routines favor discourses of elite sources, and because the elite sources are predominantly white, the dominant discourse that is used as news, opinion and perspective defines a bias that is stacked against a definition of

5. Chávez, 2001; Cottle, 2000; Hartmann & Husband, 1974; Jáger & Link, 1993; Ruhrmann, 1995; Smitherman-Donaldson & van Dijk, 1987; Ter Wal, 2002; van Dijk, 1991, 1995).

events from the perspective of minority groups and their members. Minority sources, if consulted at all, are found less credible. Despite prevailing prejudices and ignorance, white journalists often think that white sources know more and are more 'objective' about ethnic groups and ethnic affairs than minority groups and their leaders and experts themselves. And because of widespread discrimination against minority journalists, alternative and expert views of ethnic minority communities and perspectives is scarce and often non-existent, even in the newsrooms of Europe's elite quality newspapers. Unlike US newspapers, European newspapers do not have equal opportunity policies to hire minority journalists.

It is not surprising that in such a production context, news and opinion about non-western immigrants, refugees, and minorities —and in general on ethnic affairs— is hardly unbiased. As is the case for all outgroups, the overall discursive strategy is to emphasize Our good things and Their bad things, and to de-emphasize (deny, ignore, mitigate) Our bad things and Their good things. Such polarization, expressing and reproducing underlying racist prejudices and ideologies, is implemented at all levels of media discourse.

In the press, for instance, this means that negative stories about *Them* are more frequent, bigger, more often on the front page, with bigger headlines, and so on. Besides such presentational and visual bias, we also find syntactic bias through the use of active sentences to emphasize Their negative actions and responsibilities, but passive sentences or nominalization (like discrimination) with hidden agents when *We* are responsible for negative actions against them (discrimination, racism, violence, etc.).

Most conspicuous is the biased selection of overall topics (semantic macrostructures). Analyses of many thousands of news and opinion articles in many research projects in many countries have consistently shown that —unlike our own group— immigrants or minorities tend to be exclusively associated with negative topics and problems: immigration as invasion, abuse of identity papers, mafias, unemployment, violence, crime, drugs, illegality, cultural deviance, fanaticism, religious intolerance, backwardness, and so on.

At the same time, their obvious positive characteristics are systematically denied, ignored or underplayed: such as the immigrants' contributions to the economy (crucial in construction, agriculture, hotels, restaurants and domestic service), ethnic diversity and the arts, much needed correction of a very low autochthonous birthrate, and so on. Thus, whereas emphasis on problems is routine and daily, one seldom finds emphasis on the fact that Western Europe would economically collapse without the contributions of immigrants and minorities.

Besides the racist biases in the definition of main topics, also expressed in the headlines, we find a host of more local properties of news and opinion articles that implement this ideological polarization in discourse. Thus, the problems and threats of immigration are rhetorically enhanced by standard metaphors such as 'Naves', and by the consistent number game of keeping count of how many thousands are arriving. That such numbers are not merely the expression of the usual rhetoric of exactness in the news may be concluded from the fact that these numbers are *never* given for all those who are *leaving* the country — as was the case for the millions of Spanish and Italian *Gastarbeiter* in the 1950s and 1960s in Northern Europe, or the political refugees from Latin America in the 1960 and 1970s.

The local discourse semantics of racist discourse is exhibited in the news, the editorials and the other opinion articles by more or less subtle meanings, such as negative descriptions of the Others, vague expressions for Our negative properties, and of course the usual play of negative presuppositions and other implications that indirectly state what hardly can be asserted explicitly about *Them*.

Consistent with the exclusion of minority journalists in the newsroom and the lacking access of other than white elite sources in the production process, is the biased pattern of citations in the news. Ethnic events are nearly exclusively defined by Our elites, and when those of the Others are incidentally given the floor, it is either because *They* are hardly representative (such as extremists) or because they happen to agree with *Us*. In any case, the Others are seldom speaking alone, and if they do have a different view on ethnic affairs than We do, their opinions are generally 'balanced' by one of Us. Of course Their accusations of racism tend not to be taken seriously, and hence are typically censored or played down — and always cited with conspicuous quotation marks, that is, not as a description of the facts, or as items of common knowledge, but as a controversial opinion.

In sum, both in the strategies of news production as well as in their discursive consequences in the news or the opinion articles themselves, we find a consistent pattern of racist bias, exclusion, and the overall polarization between Our good things and Their bad things. Whereas the prominent topics and headlines defining ethnic events and ethnic Others as a problem or as a threat are most conspicuous, more sophisticated discourse analysis has shown that such negativization extends to the subtle play of pronouns, demonstratives, active-passive syntax, implied meanings and the usual rhetorical means of emphasizing and de-emphasizing meaning.

Of course, the press is not homogeneous, and we may find differences between conservative, populist tabloids, on the one hand, or more liberal quality newspapers on the other hand. But the differences are more a question

of style than of content. The quality press no less features news on problems and threats of immigration, illegality, crime and violence, and especially also alleged cultural threats. Most obvious, for instance, is that both on the Right as well as on the Left, and both in the tabloids as well as in the quality press, the denial of racism is standard. In fact, sometimes the denials on the Left are more vehement, because an accusation⁶ of racism (and of sexism) is felt to be inconsistent with a progressive self-image. The same is true for the discrimination of minority journalists and minority sources in the production of news.

Also, the press is of course not alone in this discursive construction and reproduction of racism, and much of its discourses are rather closely imported from similar text and talk in politics, the bureaucracy, scholarship and other domains of symbolic power in society. Indeed, journalists not seldom blame others, such as politicians or the public at large, for their topics, style and other aspect of reporting—as if they were passive chroniclers of the discourses of the other power elites, or even of that of public sphere in general.

4. THE SPANISH PRESS

Unfortunately, most of the generalizations formulated above for the European press also apply to Spain and the Spanish press. It would be strange if this would not be the case.⁶

Yet, on the other hand, the Spanish press also has some particular properties that sets it apart from the rest of Europe.

First of all, there is not, properly speaking, a right-wing, popular tabloid press, as we know it from the US, Germany, Denmark and other countries. On the contrary, most newspapers are definitely within the range of what usually would be called the quality press.

Secondly, the history of the Spanish press should also be seen against the light of the struggle against Franco's dictatorship, which promoted a strong democratic tradition since the early 1970s. This means that fascism, and more

6. For studies on immigration, racism and anti-semitism in Spain, see, e.g., the following books: Álvarez Chillida (2002); Aramburu Otazo, (2002); Bañón Hernández (1996, 2002); Barbadillo Griñan (1997); Calvo Buezas (1989, 1990 a, 1990 b, 1993, 1995, 1997, 2000, 2001, 2003); Castiello (2002); Checa (2001); Colectivo 10E, (2001); Criado(2001); García Martínez (2004); García Martínez & Sáez Carreras (1998); Gimeno Giménez (2001); Izquierdo (1996); Manzanos Bilbao (1999); Martín Rojo, Gómez Esteban, Arranz & Gabilondo (1994); Martínez Vega (1997); Nash & Marre (2001); Pajares (1998); Ruiz Olabúenaga, Ruiz Vieitez & Vicente Torrado (1999); S.O.S. Racismo (2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004); Solé (1995, 1996); van Dijk (2003).

generally right-wing extremism, is outside of the consensus in Spain, especially under the symbolic elites. Unlike elsewhere in Europe there are no overtly racist parties, nor racist party publications. Various forms of radical conservatism survive in the Popular Party, in the hierarchy of the Catholic Church as well as in the Opus Dei movement, but so far this movement has not been associated with explicit racism.

Thirdly, Spain has a recent history of labor emigration, not only to the USA but also to Northern Europe, and the collective memory of these experiences, also among the symbolic elites, may have served as an antidote against blatant xenophobia against contemporary immigrant workers. This is more an explanatory hypothesis than an established fact, however, although it would be hard to prove such an assumption.

And finally, the debate in politics, education, the press and language in Spain is also strongly influenced by State and regional nationalisms. Conservative forces among these nationalist movements also have expressed themselves against immigration, e.g., for fear of losing linguistic and cultural identity, for instance in Catalonia.

These and other factors set the Spanish press apart from much of the press in Europe. However, as suggested, Spain has for decades been a member of the European Union, and its economic success has contributed to its rapid integration in the rest of Europe. The same causes have spawned unprecedented immigration, especially from Africa and Latin America — after earlier (largely pensioners') immigration from Northern Europe. This led to a strong increase of the immigrant population, from an insignificant percentage in the 1990s to close to 10% in large parts of the country in 2006. Compared with other EU countries, Spain now has by far the largest annual increase of immigrants.

As may be expected and predicted, fast non-European immigration has had its consequences also on the ethnic attitudes of large parts of the immigrant population. Although, again, not as strong as elsewhere in the EU, xenophobic and racist feelings have become widespread, and enacted in many forms of everyday discrimination and racist talk. As suggested, the Popular Party, led by former Prime Minister, José María Aznar, following the lead of the success of anti-immigrant politics on the Right in France, formulated and implemented anti-immigration policies. As elsewhere in the EU, these policies were accompanied by increasingly racist discourse associating immigration and immigrants with problems, illegality, crime, violence and cultural or religious threats.

Such political developments cannot be sustained without reproduction and help from the mass media. This means that national papers close to the Popular Party, such as *ABC* and *La Razón*, often feature the same kind of topics

formulating anti-immigration opinions. Regional newspapers, especially in the South, where African (including especially also Moroccan) workers are most conspicuous in intensive agriculture, might in this case be even more blatantly racist, typically so in more detailed coverage of 'foreign' crime, or their defense of xenophobic local politicians, for instance in the *Voz de Almería*.

The national prestige press, such as *El País* and *El Mundo*, as well as the regional quality press, such as *La Vanguardia* in Catalonia, comparable to the quality press elsewhere in the EU, are much less openly xenophobic.

Especially *El País*, backing the current socialist government of Luís Rodríguez Zapatero, has a rich tradition of high quality and progressive journalism that is largely inconsistent with explicit racism. Its strong opposition against the Popular Party and its earlier leader and Prime Minister Aznar also implied opposition against the latter's anti-immigration rhetoric.

As elsewhere in Europe for the center and center-left quality press, this does not mean that the coverage of immigration and minorities in *El País* is beyond critical analysis. As we shall see in more detail below, explicitly antiracist opinion articles may sit side by side with sensational coverage of the 'assault' of would-be African immigrants on the North-African Spanish cities of Ceuta and Melilla in 2005.

Similarly, during the cartoon affair in early 2006, *El País*, just like other EU newspapers, emphasized the freedom of the press and hence legitimized anti-Muslim discourse, while again dramatically enhancing radical and violent Muslim protest around the world. Such biased reporting perhaps more clearly shows in what is *not* reported. Thus, although the occasion would have demanded it as context information, it did not publish background articles on racism in the EU press, nor detailed reports about racism and the situation of immigrants in Denmark —information that was relegated to that of a few letters to the editor and opinion articles of academic outsiders.

5. RACISM AND THE SPANISH PRESS

From the summary of some general properties of the Spanish press and its coverage of immigration, minorities and ethnic issues, we may expect few explicitly racist articles, but a clear European (Spanish, 'white') perspective on events. The few studies on racism in the Spanish press confirm this prediction.⁷ It is rare to find the explicit xenophobic sensationalism we may find in the British tabloid *The Sun*, or German *Bild*.

7. See, e.g. Bafión Hernández (1996, 2002); E1-Madkouri Maataoui (2005); Prieto Ramos (2004); van Dijk (2003).

Before we examine this general impression in more detail, let us summarize some earlier data. Unfortunately, the excellent press data of the Observatorio Permanente de la Inmigración (arIE) only go as far as 2000, and since immigration has doubled since then, and many more topics have become relevant we have no current general statistics of the press coverage. For the third trimester of 2000, the frequency data for a few newspaper are as follows, in Table 1:

TABLE 1. *Frequencies of articles on immigration in four national and regional newspapers*

368 *El País*
273 *La Verdad* (Murcia)
256 *La Vanguardia* (Barcelona)
238 *Abc*
237 *El Mundo*

This means that after a steady increase of the coverage in the 1990s, the national and local newspapers in 2000 published on average about three articles per day on issues related to immigration, with *El País* at the top with 4 articles per day. The topics during these days may be summarized in Table 2:

TABLE 2. *Topics in the 2000 Spanish newspaper coverage of immigration*

15% Legislation, the Immigration Law, etc.
23% Border Control
5% Daily life (work, housing, education)
16% Crime, violence
16% Solidarity, antiracism
7% Europa

This simple frequency list shows that at least in 2000—as was the case from the start—immigration coverage in Spain focuses first of all on the arrival of new immigrants (typically framed as illegal crossings from Africa in 'pateras'), on the one hand, and the question of papers and regularization on the other hand. Most likely a similar distribution is true today and for 2005, when the new regularization law of the new socialist government permitted millions of immigrants to legalize their situation—a topic prominently covered in the press, especially by pro-socialist newspaper *El País*. Note that the 'control de las fronteras' topics not only account for the harrowing experiences of the immigrants at sea, but also for the actions of the police. As is the case anywhere else, also in Spain there is scarce coverage of

the everyday lives, the work and activities of minorities. On the other hand, less than elsewhere in Europe, and less than in the right-wing tabloids, is the limited (though not insignificant) coverage of 'ethnic' delinquency and violence. Part of the prominent topic of positive self-presentation is the collection of articles on solidarity with the immigrants.

El País in 2005

To get an impression of the coverage 5 years later, we did a search of the data base of *El País*, the paper that consistently publishes most on immigration topics. In 2005 *El País* published 5,791 articles featuring the words *immigrante*, *immigration* or the plural *foreigners* (we did not include the ambiguous singular Spanish expression 'extranjero', because this may also refer to 'abroad'; obviously, the plural may also refer to foreigners from Europe —whereas *immigrant* in general only refers to non-European immigrants). This includes all articles on other topics in which these words are mentioned only in passing, but it confirms the general tendency observed in 2000 of some 4 articles per day, and in 2005 probably much more (some 15 articles per day at least mention these words). As suggested, these numbers include many articles in which immigrants are only briefly mentioned, but on the other hand do not include the articles that refer to immigrants only by their country of origin, such as Moroccans (mentioned in 1,481 articles, which of course includes reference to Moroccans in Morocco), Ecuadorians (mentioned in 327 articles). If we count all references to immigrants, foreigners, Africans, Moroccans, Ecuadorians, 'sin papeles', etc. *El País* may come close to 9,000 articles in 2005.⁸ In 2005 there are 701 articles in *El País* in which the notion of *racism* (or *racist*) appears, although many of these articles are about Europe or the rest of the world. In 228 articles *racism* is associated with *immigration* and in 346 articles with Spain —large part of which (97 articles) are about a racist incident in a football match and its consequences.

Headlines. In order to have an idea how many articles are actually largely on immigrants in *El País*, we examined the frequency of the words mentioned above in the headlines, which suggest that *immigrants* are a topic of the articles. The large amount of many thousands is now reduced to 983 for 2005, which means about 3 articles per day in all sections (also international or sports), and in all regional supplements together (viz., Catalonia, Madrid, Andalusia, Valencia, and Basque Country). Limiting this to national news only there remain 275 articles, less than

8. The search engine of *El País* does not allow to search more than a limited number of key words at the same time, so there is no way we can know the exact number, whereas accumulated separate searches are impossible because of much overlap: articles that use different words to refer to immigrants of various backgrounds.

one article per day, whereas Catalonia, for instance, adds 95 articles to this, summing to 360 articles per year for the reader: one article per day. Obviously, there are articles on immigrants or immigration that do not mention this notion in the headline, so it is plausible that this number is higher. That many of the articles on immigration focus on illegal entry is obvious from the 92 articles that have 'patera' [the small boats used to cross the Straits of Gibraltar] in their headline—and 35 articles combine immigrants in the headline with the police.

A more detailed study of the headlines in the Catalan edition of January-February 2006 confirms these general tendencies: of 369 headlines, 85 are about any form of illegal entry, pateras, etc.; 38 about political reactions about irregular immigration; 10 about false papers; but also 19 articles about discrimination of immigrants. As is the case for the national coverage, and different from other countries, is the scant coverage, in *El País*, of crimes committed by immigrants. These topics rather tend to be covered by the conservative local press, such as the *Voz de Almería*, etc.

We specifically focused on the 70 articles in *El País* that had the word *racism* or *racist* in the headline, so as to see how the newspaper deals with racism as a main topic. First we see that many (20) articles on racism appear in the regional supplements, especially in Valencia, Andalusia, Madrid and Barcelona. Secondly, during 2005 it is especially the topic of racism in football that is covered—but nearly only in the sports section of the newspaper (in 22 of 70 articles). Only a few articles appear in the (national) sections on Society or Spain (e.g., protests against a racist disk jockey), and the same is true for international news. *Actually, during the whole of 2005 there is not a single general news or opinion article in the national edition about racism in Spain.* This confirms results of other studies as well as our own previous studies, namely that one of the topics that is most relevant for immigrants and minorities itself, but that is about Our bad things (in our own country, etc.), is typically excluded or backgrounded. If it occurs it is about racism in the past, in other countries, at the extreme right, or in other social classes (typically the 'uneducated' popular classes), or it is dealt with in euphemistic terms, such as 'prejudice' or even 'popular discontent'. The interest in the topic of racism in football confirms that it is rather something for 'another' section of the newspaper and for another kind of readers and citizens. We have not found any reportages or background articles on elite racism, e.g., in government, the media, education, research, the police, business, and so on.

In other words, in Spain in 2005 the topic of racism is not found newsworthy or relevant for the readers, and hence probably not very prominent in the minds or worries of the (invariably white) Spanish journalists, reporters or editors. We see what the consequences are on the coverage of ethnic affairs of the homogeneously 'white' composition of the newsroom.

El Mundo

The other major national newspaper *El Mundo* published 1,129 articles in 2005 with the notions of 'immigrant' or 'immigration', that is, still about 3 articles per day on average —following its own statistics. Only 219 articles actually deal with the topic as such (if we set the 95% relevance criterion of the newspaper). However, a search for *extranjeros* produce a frequency of 3,294 articles, so that we may assume that this is a term more used by *El Mundo* than the expression *inmigrantes* (this large number of articles on foreigners is reduced to 264 if we set the relevance criteria to 95%. In other words, there are many articles that merely mention foreigners in passing and not as a main topic. Obviously, the term *foreigners* may also refer to other foreigners than immigrants, and in a search there it is impossible to make the distinction. Yet, as also is the case in the media in Holland and Germany, *foreigners* (*buitenlanders*, *Ausländer*) has become virtually synonymous with (non-European) immigrants. So, even when sometimes *extranjeros* is used to refer to European immigrants or tourists, it is likely that more than 4,000 articles at least briefly mention immigrants —that is, more than 10 articles per day. Many of these articles are about illegal immigration: 2,236 articles in 2005 feature the word *patera*, 104 of which also mention *immigrants* or *immigration*. Of the 1,129 that mention *immigration*, 247 also mention *police*, and 275 also the notion of *illegality*. In 2005 many of the articles (211) mention the process of regularization of undocumented immigrants (*sin papeles* –without papers). On the other hand, only 15 articles combine immigration with racism (of the 302 articles that only mention racism, many of which deal with the incidents of racist events in football and other sports). It is impossible to find out how many of these articles are mainly on these topics because the search engine of *El Mundo* does not allow searches of the headlines.

Unfortunately, we have no data from conservative *Abc*, whose search engine does not seem to produce reliable frequencies (searches add up to the same frequency of 400 articles).⁹

9. More generally, it should be observed, for methodological reasons, that the search engines of the Spanish newspapers could be improved upon. First of all, they are all different, making access by readers and researchers more difficult. They often do not allow Boolean searches, or the use of abbreviations (like *inmigra*) to search for many forms of a word (*inmigrante*, *inmigrantes*, *inmigración*, etc.). Also, they are often very unreliable, producing the same frequencies when one adds a search term. It should therefore be recommended that all newspapers use a simple Google-like search input of Boolean expressions, and all types of contents to be searched —headlines, bodies, different sections, etc.— (as is the case for the best of the engines, that of *El País*). Lacking in all media is a possible search of *keywords*. Now, with only a word-based search, many articles are found that have nothing or little to do with what is being searched. So, *articles* should be stored, like scientific articles or books, with keywords or 'subject terms', for instance in an xml framework. Thus, in our case, all articles should have had a key word *immigration* or *minorities*, combined with some others, such as *work*, *housing*, etc.

From these approximate statistics, we may first conclude about a prominent part of the national press that the topic of immigration and immigrants remains very prominent in the Spanish press, with at least some three articles each day —and possibly much more in *El País*. Also, much of this coverage still is about illegal entry, 'pateras', the police and other negative or stereotypical topics. Specific for 2005 is the extensive coverage of the regularization of undocumented immigrants. On the other hand, 'racism' is a concept that may appear at least once a day in the press, but hardly ever as a main topic, let alone about racism in Spain —except when there is a special incident, such as racist slogans during a prominent football match in 2005.

La Vanguardia

Looking at the regional press, in 2005 the conservative Catalan newspaper *La Vanguardia* published 2,499 articles with the words *immigrant(s)* or *immigration*, of which 418 in the headlines, that is, as main topic. Of these articles, 358 also talk about the police, 152 about *illegals*, and 31 about delinquents. If we add the vague *termforeigners* then there are 3,823 articles in 2005. In the same year *La Vanguardia* published 385 articles with the word *racism* or *racists*, of which only 60 also mentioned the word *immigrant*, 71 also mentioned *Spain*, and 30 both *immigrant* and *Spain*. In 65 articles we find both the word *racism* and *football*, as expected. In sum, it appears that when *racism* is being mentioned in the majority of cases it does not apply to Spain or immigrants in Spain. Also, of the 358 articles that mention the words *racism* or *racist*, only 33 have the words in their titles, thus defining it as a concept that is part of the main topic. Of these articles about racism, the majority is about other countries and about football incidents. Note that one of the few headlines about racism in Spain (but not about football) emphasizes that Spain is NOT racist:

El Observatorio ya no cree que España sea el país más racista (*La Vanguardia*, 21.5.2005)

The observatory no longer believes that Spain is the most racist country.

In sum, as is the case for the national quality press, we find that also *La Vanguardia* continues to publish many articles with the words *immigrants* or *immigration* (half the amount of *El País*), though only 418 in the headline, that is, as part of the main topic. Many of these articles also are about 'pateras' and the police. Although many articles (at least one a day, on average) mention the word *racism*, the concept seldom appears in the headlines as main topic, and it applies hardly ever as racism against immigrants in Spain.

Topics

From the observations made above about the frequency of specific terms in the headlines, we have been able to draw some provisional conclusions on the relative frequencies of topics in the news and the opinion articles. These simple frequency counts seem to confirm that the major topics have not changed dramatically in the last years: 'illegal entry and border control (pataras, etc.), political reactions to irregular immigration, papers and regularization, and then a variety of 'social' topics, such as work, housing, social services, as well as forms of protest of immigrants, discrimination of immigrants as well as solidarity with immigrants.

We have also seen that the topic of racism in Spain, and especially among the elites, is taboo in the press —and only covered for specific incidents (for instance racist caills during football matches). The contributions of the immigrants to the economy of the country are mentioned (e.g., for pensions, in construction, etc.) but only incidentally, as predicted by the theory: Their good things are de-emphasized. Similarly, we seldom read about the everyday lives of immigrants, and virtually never about their elites (doctors, professors, PhD students), because such would be inconsistent with the stereotype of the typical immigrant as a poor worker.

The 'assault' on Melilla

After these more general remarks about the frequencies and topics of the coverage of immigrants in the Spanish press, let us examine some of this coverage in some more detail. We shall do this in the rest of this paper for the main quality paper, *El País*, because of its prominent position as the newspaper 'of reference' in the country, and because of its generally liberal, center-left, etc. policies and reporting, close to the socialist PSOE party (its slogan that it is an independent morning paper is a form of well-known positive self-presentation that is inconsistent with its overtly biased reporting in favor of the PSOE —and its government— and against the Partido Popular and its earlier government and leaders). More generally in my work on racism and discourse, I have focused rather on 'our' discourses, that is, the discourses of the mainstream elites, rather than on extremist or very conservative newspapers, organizations, and so on. Indeed, the contribution of the 'ethnic definition' by our quality newspapers, e.g., because of their influence on the (other) elites, and primarily the politicians, is fundamental.

If there is one story that stood out in 2005, it is the attempt of African (mostly young male) migrants to enter the Spanish city of Melilla in North Africa by climbing over the fence that separates this city from Morocco. Here

is a selection of the fragments from news reports between the end of August and October 2005.

(1) A las seis de la mañana de ayer se oyó un cuerno, y 250 subsaharianos surgieron de la maleza y se lanzaron al asalto de la vaila que separa Melilla de Marruecos. Avanzaron en tres grupos de unas 80 personas cada uno. Portaban más de cien escaleras para salvar las alambradas. [...] Fue como un asalto medieval. "Es la primera ocasión en que los subsaharianos se muestran agresivos", relata el portavoz de la Guardia Civil. (*El País*, 27.8.05)

At six o'clock in the morning yesterday, a horn could be heard, and 250 subsaharianos' [people from Africa South of the Sahara] emerged from the bushes and launched an assault against the fence that separates Melilla from Morocco. They advanced in three groups of each 80 persons. They carried more than 100 ladders to cross the barbed wire. [...] It was like a medieval assault. "This is the first time the `subsaharianos' behave aggressively", says the spokesperson of the Guardia Civil.

(2) 300 inmigrantes logran entrar en Melilla en dos asaltos masivos a la vaila en menos de 24 horas. (*El País*, 28.9.05)

300 immigrants manage to enter Melilla in two massive assaults in the fence in less than 24 hours.

(3) ¿Salto o asalto? Leo con sorpresa en su periódico y escucho en los telediarios de Telecinco y la Primera la noticia de que 70 inmigrantes subsaharianos intentan saltar la vaila de Melilla, sin éxito y con resultado de varios heridos. La sorpresa no viene de la tentativa fallida, ni del número "masivo" que componía el grupo. No. La sorpresa viene de la expresión usada: *asalto*. Acudo al diccionario de María Moliner y compruebo que las principales acepciones de *asaltar* apuntan al ataque a una fortaleza o posición enemiga para penetrar en ella o tomarla; o bien "atacar a alguien, particularmente para robarle", o "penetrar violentamente en un sitio para robar". (Daniel Pelegrín Nicolás - Zaragoza). (*El País*, 23 .9.05).

Jump or assault? It is with surprise that I read in your newspaper and that I hear on the news programs at Telecinco the first news item about 70 sub-Saharan immigrants who try to jump over the fence in Melilla, without success and with various people wounded as a result. My surprise is not caused by the failed attempt, nor by the "massive" number the group consisted of. My surprise was caused by the expression used: assault. I consult María Moliner's dictionary and realize that the main meanings of 'assault' refers to an attack of a fortress or a position of the enemy in order to penetrate it or to take it; or "to attack someone, especially to rob him" or "to penetrate a place violently in order to rob".

As we see from these few examples from a huge coverage of weeks, the dominant definition of the event is in the military or criminal terms of 'assaults' that is, in terms of violence. After criticisms such as the Letter to the Editor cited in example (3), the word 'asalto' was sometimes replaced by the similar word 'salto' (jump), which has a less negative connotation. This sensationalist coverage of an 'international assault on Spanish cities by black youths of course opens the Pandora box of well-known racial stereotypes, such as about the aggression and violence of black people. Note also the use of the metaphor in (1) about the 'medieval' character of the assault, because of the use of long ladders used to jump the high fence. As we know more generally from the association of time and the other (Fabian, 1983), the Others are often portrayed as living in another, past time—as also the common metaphor of being backward' (Spanish *atrasado*) suggests. The same is true for the use of a 'horn' to give the signal of the 'assault'. Thus, the African blacks are associated metaphorically with 'primitive' means (instruments 'we' used in 'our' Middle Ages). Throughout the coverage the aggression of the African men is being emphasized, as also a (police) source in example (2) suggests. Of course, in the primary coverage, only the police is the source of all news, and no African participants are (as yet) interviewed. This happens later, occasionally, in background victim-stories in weekly supplements, namely when the Africans have been forcefully removed by the Moroccan army and police and transposed back to the *desea* (or sometimes sent home by plane). Notice finally the typical use of numbers in example (1), is a well-known case of a rhetorical number game suggesting precision and objectivity and hence reliability and credibility of the news.

Evo Morales

The second topic in the 2005 coverage of *El País* that deserves critical analysis is the coverage of the election of president Evo Morales of Bolivia. Although not about immigrants or minorities in Spain, news and opinion about Morales shows surprising similarities with the coverage of minority leaders in Europe. More generally, it has often been observed that there are parallelisms between public discourses about non-European people residing in Europe as minorities, on the one hand, and the way Europeans speak and write about countries, cultures and people outside of Europe, on the other hand. In both cases they are groups that are dealt with as Others, and not only as essentially *different* from us, but especially as being *inferior to* us. Through the ages, and especially also since the conquest of the Americas, slavery and colonialism, Others have been systematically portrayed as *less*: less human, less smart, less beautiful, and so on. In contemporary discourse, such expressions of

superiority focus specifically on technology, medicine, culture, religion and politics.

Until today the Third World is typically represented as less democratic than Europe —thus ignoring the recency and vast international destruction brought about by the fascist regimes in Germany, Italy, Spain, Portugal and Greece, colonialism until only a few decades ago by several European countries as well contemporary military hegemony and aggression by the USA and its allies.

This also applies to current media and political discourse on Latin American countries, even years after democratic elections. That is, despite changes and improvements in some media, also Latin America is still often covered by the well-known "Coups and Earthquakes" frame of international news (Rosenblum, 1981), although since the 1980s we might add a some more topics: "elections", "drugs" and of course "terrorism".

Thus, also Bolivia is covered much more intensely during open conflict and presidential elections and their aftermath, with the stereotypical label of the "poorest country of South America", but hardly with some background articles about *why*, and *who* is keeping Bolivia so poor, despite its resources (such as gas) —controlled by 'our' internationals.

The earlier coverage of Evo Morales, therefore, is consistent with these general principles: Less attention is being paid to what he has done and can do for the poorest of his country (and if such contributions are mentioned at all, they are disqualified as being 'populise —which means democratic policies we do not like), than to his role as an opponent of the role of the multinationals and their local political protectors. For the same reason also Morales' association with Hugo Chávez of Venezuela, another pariah of Western politics and media, is enough to marginalize him and to brand him as another populist leader, instead as a respected, democratically elected president, who also has a heart for his people. His modest background and education, as well as his role as leader of the 'cocaleros' are further elements in a stereotypical portrayal as it characterized the quality press in the UE, also in *El País*.

Relevant for our discussion here is not only the typical superior and at times arrogant way the European media portray Third World countries and their leaders (*if* they portray them at all), but also the way Evo Morales was primarily defined as an 'indio'. Since the press loves to report 'historical events' and 'firsts', the election of the first indigenous president of his country (and one of the first in contemporary Latin America) provoked much special comments, descriptions, and a style of portrayal that does not characterize the description of 'white' (European) presidents, that is, of people more like Us' —though, as Latin-Americans, of course not quite like Us.

The press description of Evo Morales as an 'indio' is generally found denigrating today in Latin America, also while generally used in racist talk and text associating indigenous people with many negative characteristics. In fact, several readers protested against this use, and *El País'* ombudsman (*Defensor del Lector*), Sebastián Serrano, dedicated a special item to this question on January 2nd, 2006. That this journalist usually defends the newspaper rather than the readers (and hence cannot possibly be compared to an ombudsman) is also very clear from his discussion, in which he basically concludes that such critique is another form of political correctness. This is the standard defense (blaming the victim or the accusers) of the symbolic elites (typically white males) when they are criticized for sexist or racist language use. And not surprisingly, the newspaper's reporters continued to use the term occasionally, even when the appropriate form (*indígena*) was used more often, as is the rule in the South American media — as any competent journalist reporting from and about Bolivia should know. Here is a passage of his article that is revealing and typical:

(4) Creo que utilizar preferentemente *indígena* es una opción razonable porque evita que algunas personas se puedan sentir ofendidas. No es posible obviar el dato de que este diario tiene cada vez más lectores latinoamericanos, sobre todo a través de Internet. Pero tampoco sería razonable prescindir totalmente del término *indio*. La redactora de Internacional, Maite Rico, enviada especial a las elecciones bolivianas y con amplia experiencia en América Latina, considera que la connotación negativa se la da a ese término el hablante o el lector. "No hay más que ver", añade, "la infinidad de documentos en los que se habla de pueblos indios: desde las declaraciones zapatistas, a la Agencia Internacional de Prensa India o el Parlamento Indio Americano. Yo uso más *indígena*, pero el debate me parece artificial". Para esta periodista, la actual "fiebre de corrección política empieza a ser asfixiante". (*El País*, 22.1.06).

I believe that it is a reasonable option to preferably use the expression 'indígena', because it avoids that some people may feel themselves offended. It is impossible to ignore the fact that this newspaper has more and more Latin American readers, especially through the Internet. But it is not reasonable either to totally abandon the term 'indio'. The international editor, Maite Rico, special envoy to the Bolivian elections and with extensive experiences in Latin America, thinks that the negative connotation of the term is given by the speaker or the reader. "One only has to see", she adds, "the enormous amount of documents in which mention is made of "pueblos indios": from the declarations of the Zapatistas, to the Agencia Internacional de Prensa India or the Parlamento Indio Americano. I use 'indígena' more, but the debate sounds artificial to me". For this journalist, the current "political correctness fever begins to be suffocating".

This passage tells us something about the Defensor del Lector (DdL) and his norms and values, about the special envoy Maite Rico, as well as about the general policy of the newspaper —namely to send someone to Latin America who apparently has no idea (despite her experience praised by the Ombudsman) about norms in Latin America. First of all, the DdL accepts — after the critique of the readers— that the use of 'indígena' may be 'reasonable'. In other words, he does not agree that it is imperative for a modern newspaper to follow the norm that one uses the designation preferred by the people referred to. Rather, he only seems to want to take into account that "*algunas personas se pueden sentir ofendidas*" (*some people might feel offended*), which contextually implies (a) that such persons may be over-sensitive, and (b) that they are only few, which in turn implies (c) that most people or most Latin Americans or most 'indios' would not mind such use. More to the point from a commercial point of view, of course, is the argument that there are more and more readers from Latin America. That also people in Europe, Latin Americans or not, might feel that the newspaper is using racist denominators, and that in general, and for all readers and indigenous people it is *just* to use a correct name, is an argument that does not seem to hold. We see who this "*Defensor*" is actually defending, namely the journalist and the newspaper, and obviously not the readers.

The same is true for the reporter and her arguments. She first of all displays a fundamental ignorance about discourse and communication, when she claims that negative consequences are attributed by the speakers or the readers. She thereby ignores that word meanings change with their social context, and that if a word such as 'indio' in Latin America is more and more associated, socially and by indigenous peoples themselves, with negative stereotypes, she as a journalist should not only know this, but also act and write accordingly. If not, she is willingly using offensive language. Second, her argument that the notion of 'indio' is being used in many documents is incomplete and misleading. First of all, these uses are characteristic of the past, as is the case for labels such "Negroes" or "Colored People" in the USA and elsewhere. Secondly, when used today by indigenous peoples themselves, it is also as part of names of organizations, or in special contexts, as is also the case for the US organization NAACP (where the last letters denote "Colored People"). She should know that the preferred usage is "indigenous" or "original" throughout the Americas. And finally, the same journalist has no idea about ethnic relations and the requirements of multicultural societies when she deems the "debate artificial" —thus not taking seriously the arguments of indigenous peoples. One may wonder what the criteria of *El País* are to send this reporter to Latin America when she obviously shows so much ignorance and lack of respect for some basic social conditions. And finally, her

description of "political correctness" as "asphyxiating" qualifies her not only as professionally incompetent but also as a conservative. And one may wonder whether she would accept traditional macho terms to refer to women, and would reject feminist critiques of such labels as equally "asphyxiating." Indeed, there must be a reason why she says that she herself prefers the (longer) term 'indígena'.

That the retrograde use of terms such as 'indio' is not limited to one journalist is obvious from the rest of the coverage of Evo Morales and his election. El Defensor (de *El País*) claims in his article that *indígena* is the preferred word of the newspaper, "while free of negative implication", but at the same time, having counted, found 16 uses of the term "indio". The very editorial of *El País* of January 5th, 2006, again speaks of "*el primer indio eligido presidente*", so these preferences are not very stable. Indeed, they are mere 'preferences' not fundamental miasms of respect. A few days later, M. Á. Bastenier, reporting from various countries in Latin America around the days of the election of Morales, also uses the expression "*indio aymara*" in his column of January 8, 2006, as he does for "*otro indio*" 011anta Humala, in Peru —also in a generally negative evaluation of 'populist' presidents in Latin America. And then again on December 21st, when dubbing Morales "*el primer indio después de Benito Juárez*" (*the first Indian after Benito Juárez*), and even "*mestizo de indio*" when referring in the same article to Lucio Gutiérrez of Ecuador. *El País* is apparently consistent, because it also referred to "*el líder indio Evo Morales*" (*the Indian leader E. M.*) in another editorial, accompanied by the negative verb *catapultar*. And so on for the reporters on the spot (Mabel Azcui, 11.12.05), and then even in a headline, *Evo Morales, indio rebelde* (*E. M., rebel Indian*) (December 17th, 2005). Writer Vargas Llosa, in his column against populist regimes on January 15th, is no less sociopolitically insensitive when he uses *indio* several times. In sum, *El País* does not seem to care very much whether or not they name indigenous peoples by the description they prefer. Indeed, imagine someone would accuse them of being politically (too) correct.

Of course, the old fashioned or provocative use of *indio* in the newspaper is merely one aspect of the coverage of Evo Morales and Bolivia. We already mentioned the consistently negative accounts of his association with Hugo Chávez and Fidel Castro —by the simple tale that the friends of my enemies are my enemies. This is, by itself, no problem — any newspaper and political commentator should of course evaluate politicians by their own standards. Remarkable only is that the negative accounts seem to focus on those presidents that seem to be more left of center, more anti-American, and more 'populist' if their first policy is to want to fight poverty. Indeed, comparatively little negative commentary has been lavished on all those (white, European)

earlier presidents of the same countries, who were friendly with the USA and the multinationals, but contributed to the reproduction of poverty. But again, that is a *political* aspect of the coverage of Latin America, and not (always) an ethnic aspect, although it is not coincidental that the media opposition against Chávez, both in Venezuela, as well as outside, not only is a legitimate political critique, but also ethnic tinges, because also Chávez is not a white European.

Seemingly less relevant too is the way Evo Morales is portrayed. Not only are his indigenous roots and loyalties strongly emphasized, but as is often also the case for the (sexist) coverage of women politicians, there is extraordinary media interest in his clothes, and not only in the popular (populist?) European press. That Evo Morales prefers to dress in a colorful sweater and not in a traditional suit-with-tie, as most western politicians, is extensively covered and hence obviously important and relevant for the EU press. The references to his *chompa (sweater) in El País* range between the usual exotism in the account of ethnic others, on the one hand, and depreciative negative implications—as breaking the norms of international political etiquette—on the other hand, as we find in one of the Latin American columns of Bastenier:

(5) Morales [...] que va a los actos protocolarios ataviado con un jersey de la gama más modesta de Galerías Preciados (8.1.06).

Morales [...] who goes to official occasions dressed with a sweater of the cheapest kind from the Galerías Preciados.

The same is true for Vargas Llosa whose attacks on the "loony left" ("*la izquierda boba*") is also associated with "orgasmic enthusiasm" for the sweater of Morales (15.1.06). Javier Torrontegui is allowed to write a whole article (8.1.06), though in the less serious section "Gente", on the topic, apparently of major importance for the readers of *El País*. This is how that article begins:

(6) A la pregunta de cómo irá vestido el presidente electo de Bolivia *Evo Morales* el día de su toma de posesión como jefe de Estado, el senador *Antoni Peredo* ha respondido: "Cuidaremos de que lleve los calcetines nuevos". Así se ha visto en su propio ambiente la polémica suscitada por la indumentaria con la que el primer indio americano que llega a presidente ha afrontado el protocolo en su reciente visita institucional a España, donde acudió con una ropa que aquí se ha llamado informal a todas sus reuniones de trabajo, con el rey *Juan Carlos*, con el presidente del Gobierno, *José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero*, con los empresarios y con los especialistas en política internacional. Las críticas a la vestimenta que ha utilizado el líder boliviano han sido respondidas por éste con humildad, y en Bolivia se han visto como una señal de incultura. Evo Morales está acostumbrado. Y no sólo a eso. (8.1.06).

*To the question what clothes the president-elect of Bolivia **Evo Morales** will wear on the day of his inauguration as Head of State, senator **Antoni Peredo** replied: "We'll make sure he will be wearing new socks". It was thus how people in his own environment saw the controversy raised by the attire with which the first American Indian to become president faced the protocol during his recent Official visit to Spain, when he was dressed in clothes that we would call informal during his work sessions, with **King Juan Carlos**, with Prime Minister **José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero**, with business leaders and with specialists of international politics. The criticisms about the clothes worn by the Bolivian leader were responded to by him with humbleness, and were seen in Bolivia as a sign of lacking education. Evo Morales is used to that. And not only to that.*

To such commentary on his clothes, finally, are added negative comments on his Spanish pronunciation, also by Vargas Llosa, who incidentally never made it to the presidency of neighboring Peru, despite his undoubtedly posh Spanish accent. Here is how Vargas Llosa describes Morales, mixing dubious praise with many implied negative evaluations, and in the process also denying him his *indio* identity:

(7) Tampoco el señor Evo Morales es un indio, propiamente hablando, aunque naciera en una familia indígena muy pobre y fuera de niño pastor de llamas. Basta oírlo hablar su buen castellano de erres rotundas y sibilantes eses serranas, su astuta modestia ("me asusta un poco, señores, verme rodeado de tantos periodistas, ustedes perdonen"), sus estudiadas y sabias ambigüedades ("el capitalismo europeo es bueno, pues, pero el de los Estados Unidos no lo es"), para saber que don Evo es el emblemático criollo latinoamericano, vivo como una ardilla, trepador y latero, y con una vasta experiencia de manipulador de hombres y mujeres, adquirida en su larga trayectoria de dirigente cocalero y miembro de la aristocracia sindical. (15.1.02).

Mr. Evo Morales is not even an 'indio'. properly speaking, although he was born in a very poor indigenous family, and although as a boy he was a shepherd of llamas. One only needs to hear him speak his good Spanish with round rolling r's of the mountains, his shrewd modesty ("it scares me a little, gentlemen, to see me among so many journalists, I beg your pardon"), his studies and wise ambiguities ("well, European capitalism is good, but that of the United States is not"), to know that Sir Evo is the typical Latin American, lively like a squirrel, a long-winded social climber with a vast experience as manipulator of men and women, acquired during his long career as leader of 'cocalero' [peasants who grow coca] and member of the union aristocracy.

From these various passages about the coverage of Evo Morales we might conclude that *El País* and its journalists and columnists simply do not

like Evo Morales and his politics –as they also have shown for Hugo Chávez. However, this negative coverage is different from the negative coverage of other European (white) politicians they do not like. As is also shown by the 'joke' of the Spanish (conservative catholic) COPE radio journalist phoning Morales pretending to be Prime Minister Zapatero, we detect a lack of respect that is typical of sexism and racism –the other person is represented not only as a political or ethnic outgroup member, but also as inferior. The sociopolitical and conservative rejection of avoiding 'politically incorrect' denominations such as 'indio', further confirms this lack of what could be called interethnic correctness' of a leading newspaper as *El País*, a crucial condition for a newspaper in a multi-ethnic society in Europe.

6. THE DANISH ANTI-MUSLIM CARTOONS

Let us finally examine in some more detail some of the characteristics of the Spanish press coverage of the islamophobic cartoons published, in September 2005, in the conservative Danish newspaper *Jyllands Posten*, causing months later, in February 2006, vast international protests from Muslims and others around the globe.

The cartoon-affair of February 2006 in many respects reminds of the Rushdie-affair of 1989, when the Ayatollah Khomeini issued a 'fatwa' against writer Salman Rushdie for his book *The Satanic Verses*. Both in that affair, as well as in the current cartoon-affair, most of the symbolic elites who had access to the Western media not only vindicated the freedom of opinion and the press, but at the same time emphasized the religious intolerance, the fanaticism, and the backwardness of Islam and the Arab world. They thus continued a long tradition of Orientalism and anti-Arab racism, also in the mass media (Richardson, 2004; Said, 1979, 1981). Others in the debate, notably politicians and many scholars, emphasized that the freedom of the press should be exercised with responsibility and respect, and not be abused by insulting the icons of religious communities and thus exacerbate local and global ethnic tensions.

Conspicuously underreported in the cartoon affair, and also less emphasized in the many opinion articles, was the role of the affair and its coverage in the reproduction of racism –quite consistent with the general denial of elite racism by the press, as signaled above.

Also the Spanish press covered this affair extensively, not least because it construed the worldwide Muslim protests as an attack against the freedom of opinion in general, and as an attack on the freedom of the press, in particular.

Many journalists and columnists thus represented the affair as a prime example of the alleged Huntingtonian "clash of civilizations", rather than as a straightforward case of racism in the press—a seemingly minor incident with a tremendous international consequences. As we shall see, the alternative definition of this affair, namely as a case of press racism, was found totally taboo and was never even mentioned in the media, anywhere, even by those who found the cartoons insensitive, or even an expression of islamophobia. Despite hundreds of articles on the case, and many opinions, especially by those who defended the allegedly attacked freedom of the press, no background articles appeared with analysis of the growing racism in Denmark, and the role of the conservative press and politicians in its production and reproduction. That story, which could be told in an article in *Le Monde*, could not be told in the Spanish press in general, and not even in leading *El País*.

As we have found before in earlier analysis of the coverage of racist events in the press, such events generally tend to be defined in terms of denials or mitigations, especially when the perpetrators are (more) like *Us*. As we have seen above, we might find articles on racism abroad, in the past, in popular neighborhoods or among right-wing extremists, but *never* in our own party, business, university or newspaper. Since journalists are the only professionals who control what appears in the press about themselves, it is hardly surprising that newspapers *never* publish about racism in their own newspaper. At most, and even then exceptionally, this may be the case for the coverage of racism of an extremist newspaper or TV station.

In sum, the coverage of the Danish cartoon-affair is quite consistent with a very solid tradition of reporting ethnic affairs in general and the role of the media in such affairs in particular. More specifically, and in line with historical, deep-rooted anti-Muslim sentiments among the European elites (Said, 1979, 1981), we find that in the same way as many Muslims viewed the cartoons as an insult of their prophet, many journalists and other elites took the affair as a test of the cherished value of the freedom of the press. That such freedom was not at all under attack and no one who could potentially limit it in Europe even hinted at such an attack, did not prevent journalists to associate international protests against islamophobic cartoons as such an attack. Let us see in some more detail how the Spanish press covered this affair.

The dominant topics in the coverage of the cartoon-affair are organized by the familiar overall polarization strategies of emphasizing Our good things and Their bad things: On the one hand, as we see in examples (9) and (10), a very prominent focus on the Freedom of Expression as a major, if not absolute, European or Western value:

(8) El diario, el principal de Dinamarca, publicó los dibujos en nombre de la libertad de expresión, después de que el autor de un libro sobre Mahoma no hubiera podido encontrar ilustradores para su obra, por temor a represalias. (*El País*, 31.1.06).

The newspaper, the most important in Denmark, published the drawings in name of the freedom of expression, after an author of a book on Mohammed could not find illustrators for his work, out of fear of reprisals.

(9) "**La libertad de expresión no es negociable**" (Entrevista con redactor jefe de *Jyllands Posten*, *El País*, 1.2.06)

"The freedom of expression is not negotiable".

On the other hand, following the logic of polarization we find an emphasis on the topic of the violent protests, intolerance, fundamentalism and radicalism of the world of Islam, propagated by dictatorial regimes. More specifically, as we see, as is also the case for immigration, any form of 'outside' action relative to Europe is interpreted as another form of attack — in this case on one of the most important of 'our' values. As is generally the case for 'attacks' by outgroups, the ingroup shows that it is unified and shows solidarity with those of its members who are threatened, as we already saw in examples (9) and (10), and more explicitly in examples (11) and (12):

(10) **La UE defiende la libertad de expresión.** Los ministros de Exteriores de la Unión Europea mostraron ayer su solidaridad a sus colegas danés y sueco por las amenazas recibidas por sus gobiernos y sus empresas en varios países musulmanes [...](*El País*, 31.1.06).

The EU defends the freedom of expression. The Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the European Union showed yesterday their solidarity with their Danish and Swedish colleagues because of the threats received by their governments and businesses in several Muslim countries.

(11) Una decena de periódicos europeos han decidido reproducir las polémicas caricaturas de Mahoma publicadas inicialmente en el diario danés *Jyllands-Posten*, que han provocado una reacción virulenta en el mundo islámico y una tormentosa crisis diplomática. Los diarios han decidido mostrar así la solidaridad con sus colegas daneses, que ayer sufrieron una nueva amenaza de bomba, y defender la libertad de expresión. (*El País*, 22.06).

A dozen European newspapers decided to reproduce the controversial cartoons of Mohammed originally published in the Danish daily Jyllands Posten, which led to violent reactions in the Muslim world and a deep diplomatic crisis.

(12) La libertad de expresión es fundamento de la organización social de que se han dotado los países más progresivos del planeta, y Europa en particular. (Editorial, *El País*, 5.2.06).

The freedom of expression is the foundation of the social order with which the most progressive countries of the planet have endowed themselves.

These examples show clearly how the event of a (European) press insult against Muslims is constructed as an international conflict between Good and Evil, where We defend the basic values "of the most progressive countries on the planet" against "virulent" reactions and bomb-threats. That is, as is the case with one of the cartoons, the press thus associates, without much nuance, Muslims with radicalism and terrorism. At the same time, we witness the familiar move of all racist discourse, namely blaming the victim: those who were offended, and hence possibly would deserve our sympathy are transformed into the aggressor. Obviously, in such sympathetic coverage of their very own professional group, also the journalists of the Spanish quality press hardly show any discursive distance with respect to their Danish colleagues, and thus implicitly legitimate the publication of islamophobic cartoons in name of the freedom of the press.

Throughout the month of February 2006, thus, the coverage of the (violent) protests in the Muslim world remain a prominent topic —thus hammering home, and reproducing, the century old orientalist topos of the violent Muslim and Arab.

The polarization between our democracy and freedom, on the one hand, and their undemocratic fundamentalism is the main framework for the cognitive and discursive construction of this event. The tone of the coverage and the editorials in such a case may become explicitly paternalistic if not arrogantly superior, as in the following passage of an editorial in *El País*, in which the others are attributed not only violence and radicalism, but also being stupid and backward —as the euphemism "precario conocimiento" suggests:

(13) Si ciertos Estados árabes reclaman de las autoridades nacionales de los países acusados de blasfemar contra Mahoma una estentórea petición de excusas, debido arrepentimiento y garantía de que ello no volverá a suceder, es por su precario conocimiento de lo que es una sociedad abierta, donde la libertad incluye también caer en el error. (Editorial, *El País*, 5.2.06)

If certain Arab states loudly demand from the national authorities of the countries accused of having committed blasphemy against Mohammed an apology, sincere regrets and a guarantee that it won't happen again, this is

because of their scarce knowledge of what an open society is, where freedom also includes committing errors.

We see that in Eurocentric and racist polarization, negative other-presentation usually comes with positive self-presentation. Thus, we do not merely have a modest defense of what 'We' define as "Our" values, but at the same time a glorification of Our past —an ideological manifestation of Eurocentrism that is shared by some intellectuals from Latin America, such as *El País* columnist Vargas Llosa:

(14) [...] ¿Puede llegar a ocurrir lo mismo algún día en la Europa de Voltaire, la de las luces, la que instauró como un principio básico de la civilización el derecho de crítica, de irreverencia, no sólo ante los gobiernos, también ante los dioses, la libertad de expresión y la convivencia de diversos credos, costumbres e ideas en una sociedad abierta? (Vargas Llosa, *El País*, 12.2.06).

...] Could this also happen one day in Voltaire's Europe of the Enlightenment, which established as a basic principle of civilization the right of critique, of irreverent, not only for the governments, but also for the gods, the freedom of expression and the coexistence of various creeds, customs and ideas in an open society?

Unfortunately, Vargas Llosa and other intellectuals seem to forget that the same Europe is also the Europe of, say, Napoleon, Stalin, Hitler and Milosevic, and the vastest genocides committed by humans, both inside as well as outside of Europe. With such brief fragments of the 'other' history of Europe in mind, the intellectuals, journalists and other symbolic elites might have been a bit less arrogant in their unrestrained self-glorification. That such critique against Eurocentric Muslim-bashing might become relevant is also prefigured in Vargas Llosa's own argument, when he discounts any leftist critique of the USA or the West as a possible legitimization of Muslim wrath, in a passage that we should cite in full, because it is a prime example of well-known straw man fallacies in the rejection of counterarguments, by attributing positions (such as defending extremist Muslim attitudes) his opponents do not have at all:

(15) [...] Pero creo que la razón profunda es más grave y que buena parte del silencio de cierta izquierda ante este asunto se debe a que tiene serias dudas sobre cuál es la opción políticamente correcta en este caso. ¿Echarle la culpa de todo al pasado colonialista y racista del Occidente que por su política de humillación y saqueo de los países musulmanes creó el resentimiento y el odio que hoy se vuelven contra él? ¿Defender las actitudes de los extremistas musulmanes en nombre del multiculturalismo? ¿Demostrar, acogotando la sindéresis, que detrás de todo esto están las torvas garras de los Estados

Unidos? ¿O, mejor, evitar pringarse en un asunto tan especioso y replegarse una vez más en lo seguro, lanzando las valientes arengas contra la guerra de Irak y la avidez de la Casa Blanca para apropiarse del codiciable oro negro del ocupado Irak y del pobre Irán, que se ve obligado a armarse de armas atómicas para no verse engullido por las trasnacionales? (Vargas Llosa, *El País*, 12.2.06).

[...J But I believe that the underlying reason is more serious and that large part of the silente of a certain left about this matter is due to the fact that it has serious doubts about what is politically correct in this case. Blame it all to the colonialist and racist history of the West, whose policies of looting and humiliation towards Muslim countries created the resentment and the hate that today turn against it? Deferid the attitudes of extremist Muslims in name of multiculturalism? Show, ... that behind all this are the baleful claws of the United States? Or, rather, avoid to dirty their hands with such a specious affair and to withdraw again to the safety of addressing valiant speeches against the war in Iraq and the greed of the White House wanting to steal the black gold of occupied Iraq and of poor kan, which has to arm itself with atomic weapons in order to avoid to be gobbled up by the multinationals.

Although the defense of the freedom of the press is of course a touchstone of journalistic ideologies —while the basis of media power— it may be formulated in slightly less radical terms. The same is true for the representation of Them. Thus, a first editorial of *El País* on the cartoon-affair may be interpreted as the official voice of Spain's newspaper of reference':

(16) [...] La libertad de prensa y la libertad de expresión no deben tener más cortapisas que las que fija la ley para todos los ciudadanos, y quien se sienta ofendido o injuriado tiene el derecho a acudir a los tribunales, la única instancia que debe resolver estos conflictos. [...] El fanatismo es una planta que crece en muchas religiones, pero el mundo islámico ofrece hoy una cosecha muy extensa. [...] Creer que sólo en el mundo islámico existe la intolerancia religiosa sería un ejercicio fatuo de autocomplacencia. Pero ignorar que el integrismo religioso se expande vertiginosamente entre los creyentes musulmanes sería ponerse una venda ante la realidad. (Editorial, *El País*, 1.2.06).

[...] The freedom of the press and the freedom of expression should not have other limitations than those established by law for all citizens, and who feels offended or insulted has the right to go to court, the only authority that should settle these conflicts. [...J. Fanatism is a plant that grows in many religions, but the Muslim word offers today a very large harvest. [...] To believe that religious intolerante only exists in the Muslim world, would be an exercise in fatuous smugness. But to ignore the vertiginous expansion of religious fundamentalism among Muslim believers would mean to be blind for reality.

That is, freedom of the press is here not defined as absolute, but as limited by the law, and in principle its abuse might be sanctioned by the courts. In the same way, religious fanaticism is not limited to Islam —and hence condemned more generally. More specific examples of `our' religion (say, from Opus Dei in Spain to religious fundamentalists in the USA backing Bush) are not given, following the general strategy that Our bad things are always ignored, denied or mitigated. Note the structure of the last part of this fragment, however. The assessment of the ubiquity of religious fanaticism is followed by a *Pero* in the next sentence, thus turning the assessment into an apparent concession and the whole argument into a well-known disclaimer. The thrust of the argument in this case should be sought in the second part of the disclaimer, namely that it is especially among Muslims that religious fundamentalism is expanding.

A critical] assessment of religions, and especially of religious fundamentalism and fanaticism, is a consequent part progressive, atheist ideologies, and consistent with the positions of *El País*. However, when we examine the total coverage of the Western (quality and popular) press of Islam, and of for instance catholic and protestant fundamentalism in Europe and especially also in the USA, then it can hardly be denied that the balance is dramatically biased against Islam. Occasionally, the religious right in the USA is mentioned, and sometimes even cited as a background of Bush' international policies, and hence of his War on Terrorism (mainly waged against Muslims) and War in Iraq (a country of Muslims), but such is hardly the main story of anti-religious stances in the Western quality press. We can imagine that from a Muslim or Arabic perspective the protestant fundamentalists in the USA are indirectly guilty of much more violence in the world than Muslims —while immensely more powerful as one of the pillars of the administration of the most powerful State in the world. Of course, such arguments need and cannot ail be spelled out in detail in an editorial, but at least briefly mentioning them more concretely, as in this example, would have made the slogan of *El País* as an `independene newspaper much more credible.

In the vein of the same religious values, those journalists covering the cartoon-affair in terms of the struggle between the (their) freedom of the press and Muslim radicalism, violence and threats, might have been more balanced if they had recalled more critically the fundamental flaws their own societies.

Of course, the old topos of the Arabs and Muslims as a threat had been given a new life in political, media and academic discourse since the September attacks on the World Trade Center, so the current coverage is in perfect synchrony with a more general Western hysteria about (Arab, Muslim) terrorism and Islamism. As predicted by the general thesis of the role of the elites in the reproduction of racism, such ideologies always are backed up by `scientific'

research, in this case in terms of the alarmist notion of the 'class of civilizations' by Huntington, a major topic that is often referred to, also in the press:

(17) [...] Parece que el mundo se empeña en darle la razón a Hungtinton [sic], o así lo pareciera si nos quedáramos con el estridente titular de la polémica. Van los daneses y hacen lo que ha hecho Europa desde que descubrió la carta de derechos fundamentales: ejercer su libre opinión y llevada hasta los límites que su sistema legal le permite, un sistema legal que garantiza y protege esas mismas libertades. Además, y siguiendo una nutrida tradición de sátira religiosa, dan en el cogote a una de las grandes religiones monoteístas, quizá la menos acostumbrada a las querencias de la libertad. Y a partir de aquí, las hordas se levantan en grito, los actos de vandalismo callejero se convierten en una foto recurrente, desde el Mediterráneo hasta el Pacífico, y en los rincones del miedo, empiezan a proliferarse amenazas de muerte. (Pilar Rahola, *El País*, 4.2.06).

[...] It seems as if the world absolutely wants to say that Hungtinton [sic] was right, or so it seems if we limit ourselves to the strident headlines of the controversy. Here are the Danes and they do what Europe has done since it discovered the Charter of the Fundamental Rights: to exercise the freedom of opinion to the ultimate limit of what its legal system allows, a legal system that guarantees and protects the same freedoms. Moreover, following a rich tradition of religious satire, they jump clown the throat of one of the great monotheist religions, perhaps the one least accustomed to the basic principles of freedom. And from there the hordes raise their cry of protest, and the acts of street vandalism become a recurring photograph, from the Mediterranean to the Pacific, and in the corners of fear death threats begin to be made.

That this columnist of the quality newspaper *El País* (or the correctors) does not know how to spell foreign names is of course irrelevant here (though hardly exceptional in the Spanish press). However, that she has a very selective, self-serving memory of European history and at the same time emphasizes 'our' superiority over the 'hordes' of the outgroup, is more problematic. The familiar eurocentrist and racist schema is fully present here: We, the Europeans, invented the human rights, freedom, etc., whereas They, the backward 'hordes', are less used to the 'exigencies of freedom.' The concept of 'horde' implies and combines the notions of primitiveness and violence, historically associated with the Huns, who also came from the East. The further association of Them with those who threaten and cause fear completes this picture. The focus on our *historical* values as an European product of the Enlightenment, is not exclusive to this columnist and is another topos of Eurocentric discourse. As suggested above, this selective focus on Our (alleged) inventions of democracy obviously excludes any reminder of

less democratic European inventions of the last two centuries, beginning with colonialism, also of the very same Muslim countries who are now defined as our enemies, and continuing with fascism (Germany, Italy, Greece, Portugal, Spain) and imperialism until quite recently, if not today —and in Spain the very recent dictatorship of Franco. Obviously, freedom of the press in Europe has hardly been permanent and ubiquitous in the last two centuries. And as a critical, leftist journalist from Spain, Pilar Rahola should be the first to remind the Spanish readers of the profoundly reactionary positions of the Catholic Church, its support of Franco and its permanent influence on Spanish society and its freedoms until today. In other words, the Eurocentric celebration of the freedom of the press could have been a bit more modest, and with an explicit reminder of our own undemocratic past. That the same critical journalist does not seem to realize that her defense of, or solidarity with her Danish and other colleagues —who are no more threatened by street demonstrations and violence in the Muslim world than the European freedom of the press— is a direct support of the even more explicitly racist Right in Europe, only testifies to the superficiality of her political judgment.

The same column as well as elsewhere, also in the very editorials of the same newspaper about the cartoon-affair, also feature two of the icons of Muslim threats and violence: Salman Rushdie and Theo van Gogh. These victims of Islamism are particularly attractive to the symbolic elites, because they are a writer and a film maker, that is, one of Us. Again, the representation is of course glaringly biased, in the sense that the multiple Muslim victims of the 'West' in general, and of Europe in particular, are not even known or mentioned, although quite readily Palestine comes to mind. Moreover, even the presupposed knowledge is biased, when Theo (of course, misspelled again!) van Gogh is generally represented, also in Spain, not only as a victim of Islamism, but also as a defender of human rights —a portrait that hardly corresponds to reality for those, especially women and immigrants, who happen to know his role as talk show host on Dutch TV. But of course, *de mortuis nihil nisi tiene*. Here is how Ms. Rahola construes the facts:

(18) Como pasó con Salman Rushdie, condenado a muerte por ejercer libremente su profesión, y como pasó con Teo [sic] Van Gogh, asesinado por ello, otra vez nos damos de bruces con una lectura totalitaria del islam, no sólo incapaz de respetar los mecanismos de la libertad, sino abiertamente enemigo de su práctica. (Pilar Rahola, *El País*, 4.2.06).

As happened to Salman Rushdie, sentenced to death for having freely exercised his profession, and as happened to Teo [sic] van Gogh, assassinated by it, we again are confronted with a totalitarian interpretation of Islam, which not only is incapable to respect the mechanisms of freedom, but which is an open enemy of its practice.

7. DISSIDENT VIEWS

Finally, what makes *El País*, a 'liberal' newspaper, is that besides the dominant presence of news article after news article on Muslim violence and intolerance, and after opinion article after opinion article defending the freedom of the press, we also find occasional articles of dissidents who have a different definition of the situation.

Much of these other voices barely reach the status of a letter to the editor, as is the case for a Danish journalist, former correspondent in Spain, who *does* tell a bit about what *El País* refuses to cover during the whole month: the prevalent and increasing racism and Islamophobia in Denmark, both in politics as well as in the conservative and popular media.

From Spain itself, only a select elite of those academic specialists who more generally have access to the newspaper are allowed to formulate a different point of view, as is first the case for Professor Gema Martín, a sociologist of the World of Islam and hence a specialist with a different and more detailed view of Islam and this affair than most journalists. The publication of the cartoons for her —and surely much of the coverage legitimating this publication in the name of the freedom of the press is thus evaluated as follows by her:

(19) Se transmite así un peligroso mensaje que estigmatiza y humilla a una parte muy importante de la humanidad. A partir de ahí la cuestión no es religiosa, es política, porque concierne a algo tan detestable como el racismo y la xenofobia. Y con respecto a esto sí que la libertad de expresión no puede ser un valor absoluto que, desprovisto de todo sentido de la responsabilidad, se convierta en el abuso de ese privilegio. (Gema Martín Muñoz, *El País*, 22.2.06).

Thus, a dangerous message is sent that stigmatizes and humiliates a very important part of humanity. From then on the question is no longer religious, but political, because it concerns something as odious as racism and xenophobia. And with respect to that the freedom of expression can't be an absolute value that, without any sense of responsibility, becomes an abuse of that privilege.

We see that she is one of the few writers who actually dares to pronounce the hated R-word in this case, a judgment that of course the majority of journalists would energetically reject, as they have done nearly anonymously after each academic publication on racism in the Western press. She understands that as always power corrupts and that absolute power corrupts absolutely, as the saying goes, and that this also applies to the press if freedom is defined in

terms of power—as being responsible to no one. She is also the one who locates the notion of threat or danger *not* with Muslims demonstrating in the streets, but rather with those who exacerbate ethnic tensions with provocation. Again, adequate balanced coverage in the quality newspaper would not just have included a detailed background aside on racism in Denmark, but also a historical feature about the role of the media in the incitation of ethnic violence and racism in the past and the contemporary world. The role of the Serbian media in the genocide in Bosnia, and of the radio in the genocide of Rwanda, in the last few years would have been enough—without recalling the role of the German media in the victory of the Nazis and the attacks against the Jews in the 1930s, the us media during segregation, the role of the South African press during Apartheid, and of al' European media during colonialism: a long and so faz untold story.

Enrique Calvo, another sociologist of the Complutense University, finally provides what has been missing in the coverage and the debate on the cartoons, namely a serious definition and analysis of what the freedom of the press really means:

(20) La libertad de opinión está para criticar al poder y a los poderosos, no para abusar de los débiles sometidos. Y si la prensa europea desea tomarse libertades escandalosas, que provoque a los amos de las multinacionales, en vez de hacerlo con sus siervos musulmanes. (Enrique Gil Calvo, *El País*, 17.2.06).

The freedom of opinión is to criticize the power and the powerful, not to abuse of those who are powerless. And when the European press wants to use its freedom to raise scandals, let it hassle its multinational masters, instead of doing so with its Muslim serfs.

The critique of the press in this case could not have been formulated more concisely. In this and similar debates on the freedom of speech it is often forgotten that this freedom is especially a privilege of the symbolic elites—and a right especially obtained in the struggle against political control of the press. That such a right is not *carte blanche* to abuse of this privilege to attack, misrepresent, insult, discriminate against all those without power, and without the power of access to the media, may be clear from the results of a host of critical publications on the representation of women, minorities, immigrants, refugees, in general, and of 'gitanos' and 'gitanas' in Spain, in particular. One may suppose that no journalist would vindicate the freedom of speech of Goebbels and his propaganda against the Jews—among others. That is, the freedom of speech is both precious, when used to fight those in power, and dangerous when excluding, ignoring or attacking those who will suffer more from the prejudices thus produced in society.

8. CONCLUSIONS

Racism is a system of dominance, of power abuse, reproduced by social practices of discrimination and sustained by ideologies shared by dominant ethnic groups. Discourse is one of these social practices, and it is at the same time through discourse that racist ideologies and practices are learned and legitimated. Especially the various discourses of the symbolic elites', such as the politicians, the journalists, professors and writers, play a leading role in this reproduction process. They are the one whose power is defined by the preferential access to public discourse, and hence, indirectly to the minds of the people.

The media in general, and the press in particular, play a key role among the symbolic elite institutions. What most politicians and most scholars know about immigrants and minorities, they also see on TV or read in their newspapers, unless they are themselves engaged in research on the topic.

Indeed, such research shows time and again that the press is part of the problem of racism, rather than part of the solution. Newsrooms in Europe are generally white, and discrimination of minority journalists is widespread. Despite the presence of many highly qualified minority journalists, virtually no quality newspaper in Europe employs more than a token minority journalist, if any. Similarly, the process of news gathering and news production is systematically biased against non-elite and non-European sources, in favor of the ingroups own powerful institutions and spokespersons. Press releases and press conferences of minority groups, even on very relevant topics, tend to be ignored, in favor of 'own' experts —if at all, because in matters of ethnic coverage any white journalist will do. It is not surprising that news and opinions in the newspaper reflect these racist biases: A general focus on topics, style, and rhetoric that emphasize Our good things and Their bad things. Immigration is defined as an invasion, integration a threat to our culture, and their crime as prevalent. Whereas their contributions to our economy are ignored they are blamed for unemployment, and while Their religion is highlighted Ours is conveniently forgotten.

Application of these findings to the Spanish Press generally confirms these conclusions, but with some modifications. First, Spain has no right wing, explicitly racist tabloids as is the case in the UK and Germany —nor extremist right wing parties represented in Parliament, as elsewhere in Europe. That is, there is little public, official discourse that is blatantly racist, with some exceptions of more marginal individuals who may occasionally have access to the press because of their position. It should not be forgotten that one of the reasons of lacking extremist press and parties is precisely Spain's recent past of Franco's dictatorship —based on arch conservative, catholic forces who still

have much influence in Spain today, for instance in organization of the Opus Dei, as well as in segments of the conservative Popular Party.

Despite the absence of openly racist media, this does not mean that the Spanish press, in its own way, does not also contribute to the quickly spreading racism and prejudices in Spanish society.

First of all, as is the case in the rest of Europe, newspapers barely hire minority journalists —so newsrooms are not diverse. Secondly, as elsewhere there is no routine of getting news and commentary on ethnic events from organizations of immigrants —who therefore are seldom cited.

The most conspicuous contribution to prevailing stereotypes and prejudices are undoubtedly the dominant topics of the coverage, such as the alarmist emphasis on border control and the 'invasion' of *pateras* from North Africa, immigration mafia, and as we have seen in the coverage of the assault' on Melilla, the repeated attempts of African youth to enter the country. The same is true for the extensive coverage of immigration policies, immigration laws, regularization, and so on —emphasizing the general opinion that immigrants and immigration are a serious problem, and not a boon for the country. Secondly, the emphasis on *papeles* conveys a dominant picture of immigrants who are not only *sin papeles*, but also 'ilegal' —that is, one step removed from being criminal, while breaking the law. On the other hand, unlike the rest of the European press, there is —as yet— little emphasis on 'ethnic crime'. Thirdly, less prominently, but no doubt increasing are the stories about the actual presence of immigrants among 'lis', and especially about their cultural differences and threats (typically religion, Islam, head scarves, etc.).

On the other hand, *not* topicalized, as is also the case elsewhere in Europe, is first of all the increase of racism, especially among the elites. Everyday discrimination, suffered by thousands of people, is barely covered. Racism of the press is a total taboo as a topic, for obvious reasons. We seldom see and hear about the everyday lives of immigrants. Typically, whereas we daily read about our elites, we seldom read about theirs. Indeed, the basic stereotype is that immigrants are poor workers from Morocco or Ecuador —and not academics from Argentina or Chile, whose problems (such as the endless red tape to get their foreign titles recognized) are ignored in the press —of course in favor of autochthonous professionals.

As we have seen in the coverage of Bolivia's new president Evo Morales, even a quality newspaper like *El País* hardly manages to suppress its racist and Eurocentric superiority when describing Morales ethnic background and appearance —not to speak of its populist policies and contacts with Hugo Chávez.

The denial of (media) racism has been most clearly shown in the coverage, also in quality newspaper *El País*, of the affair of the Danish cartoons

portraying Mohammed. Especially in this extensively covered affair, that is in the alleged threat of the interests (freedom) of the press itself, we see most clearly how the press represents ethnic events. Thus, all the positive things of 'our' democratic European values, ideologies, and system are highlighted, our own racism and xenophobia ignored or denied, and their violence, intolerance, threats, backwardness, etc, dramatically emphasized and generalized, as if all Muslims were rabid fundamentalists. Topics, topoi, lexical style, rhetoric, argumentation and so on are systematically biased in favor of such a deeply ideologically and historically based elite polarization between Us in Europe and the West, and Them Muslims and Arabs in the (Middle) East.

It is in this way, how the quality press reproduces racism, also in Spain and especially also among those who will need to give the good example, namely the other symbolic elites –that is, those who, literally, have everything to say in society, and hence have vast influence on the public at large.

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