

Jofrge Vala (ICS-ULisboa), Cícero Pereira (Univ Federal da Paraíba, ICS-ULisboa) | *Biological racism: a new outbreak?*

Some years ago, we wrote a paper reviewing the dynamics of racism in post-Second World War European societies. We called that paper: "Racism: an evolving virus." The chapter that we now propose stems from theories that support our previous work, and uses some empirical data from that paper, but it broadens our theoretical framework and presents new data that justify the title of this new paper.

The general theoretical framework of our approach is that racism constitutes a social representation or an implicit social theory about the role that the idea of race plays in the construction of the nature of the differences between social groups. This social theory is consciously or unconsciously activated in certain inter-individual or interinstitutional social relations and legitimates discrimination, extermination, domination, segregation or exclusion of specific social groups. Although this approach involves a strong institutional dimension, we focus our attention on the configuration and reconfiguration of racist beliefs and attitudes shared by the ordinary man / woman and expressed in everyday life.

The chapter focuses mainly on data from Portugal in a European context, although references to data from the United States of America are inevitable, as it was in this country that empirical research on racism and racial prejudice started, not just earlier but more systematically.

The analysis of the dynamics of racist beliefs we propose is supported by the concept of social norm. In this regard, we suggest that the events surrounding the Second World War and those that followed determined the emergence of anti-racist legislation, but also the creation and diffusion of an anti-racist social norm. This legislation, though very scarce in most European countries, and the social norms associated with it, were not sufficient to eliminate the beliefs that constitute the core of racism. Moreover for most people the anti-racism norm was not object of identification but only of circumstantial compliance.

The resulting dynamic process led to a "hidden racism", whether or not accompanied by racism based on inferiority conceptions anchored on "cultural essences" rather than on "biological essences". However, what recent studies seem to show is that there is a return to the salience of biological racism, which is probably not independent from the emergence of the psychological salience of immigration flows of people perceived as belonging to different "racial, ethnic or religious" groups.

The proposed chapter thus follows the authors' previous research, taking into account the research of other ICS researchers on the topic, as well as other research on racism that emerged in recent years in Portugal.

At this stage, our chapter could evolve towards a greater focus on the relationship between racism and exclusion / inclusion and/or towards the articulation between racism and citizenship.