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Repertoires of diversity and collective boundaries. Diverging paths between Portugal and Brazil?<sup>1</sup>

Max Planck Institute for the Study of  
Religious and Ethnic Diversity

Max-Planck-Institut zur Erforschung multireligiöser  
und multiethnischer Gesellschaften



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Max-Planck-Institut zur Erforschung multireligiöser und multiethnischer Gesellschaften,  
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## Abstract

The article argues that two divergent paths in the conception of diversity between Europe and Latin America can be traced, with implications at the policy level: Portugal and Brazil are taken as illustrations of these trends. On the one hand, the trend is towards the blurring of ethnic and racial boundaries broadly under the policy concept of “interculturalism”; on the other hand, the Brazilian trend is towards traditional multicultural policies such as the recognition of group specificity according to ethnic boundaries and belonging, with impacts on the distribution of symbolic and material resources. The article sets out the concept of *repertoires of diversity* as a way of mitigating both the normativity and uniformity of the national model approach. Four differentiated repertoires with implications for collective identity narratives are highlighted. Finally, the main aspects of this comparison are summed up and a number of general conclusions drawn that concur with the idea of distinct pathways in the social organization of collective ethnic and racial belonging.

**Keywords:** repertoires of diversity, ethnic boundaries, collective identification, institutions

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# 1 Introduction

In the current debate that contrasts the vices of multiculturalism with the virtues of interculturalism (Cantle, 2012; James, 2009; CE, 2008), reference is often made to the ability to build bridges, promote the intermingling of cultural attachments and challenge the entrenchment of separate communities. If multiculturalism has undergone numerous analyses of various theoretical persuasions (Taylor, 1992; Kymlicka, 1995; Castles and Davidson, 2000; Koopmans et al., 2005, to name but a few), the same cannot be said of interculturalism. While in the political sphere, we witness a marked rejection of the so called “multi-culti” and Europe has embraced interculturality as its preferred model for managing diversity<sup>2</sup>, this has, largely, remained unspecified. However, one thing seems to be taken for granted in this distinction. A key aspect of multiculturalism, following Modood (2007: 2), is the recognition of group differences in public arenas such as law, policies, state discourse, shared citizenship and national identity. Thus, what distinguishes multiculturalism from simple differential policies or the safeguarding of social space for cultural diversity in precisely its group dimension? The way this recognition is built and institutionalized can serve as a benchmark in a debate whose terms are muddled. For instance, despite all rhetoric against it, and the fact that European institutions embrace the new intercultural model, a number of authors, Modood included, maintain that multicultural policies are in place (Meer and Modood, 2012; Banting and Kymlicka, 2006; Koopmans et al. 2012. This sometimes confusing relationship between political claims and normative ones is fully consistent with what Bertosi and Duyvendack (2012) have called the “instrumental ideal-typical approach”.

These authors have criticized the theory of national models inasmuch as they are treated as independent variables that explain cross-national differences in integration

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- 1 This paper was written in the context of my participation in the Fellow Group “Governance of Cultural Diversity – Socio-legal Aspects”, headed by Prof. Matthias Koenig. I would like to thank Prof. Koenig for the possibility of preparing this paper during my stay at the Max Planck Institute for Religious and Ethnic Diversity, with one of the Institute’s post-doctoral fellowships, and for the opportunity to discuss a first draft in the fellow-group seminar. I would like to acknowledge all MPI colleagues’ comments on that initial draft, although the responsibility for the final content is entirely mine.
  - 2 In a span of approximately six months, the President of France at the time Nicolas Sarkozy, the German Chancellor Angela Merkel, and the British prime-minister David Cameron, , publicly stated that multiculturalism should be abandoned.  
See Koopmans (2013) for an appraisal of the meaning of these public statements.

policies or citizenship traditions. Their rejection of the theoretical importance of national models should not be confounded with the importance of national frameworks that key-actors mobilize in their strategies to organize diversity. One should bear in mind that such conceptions exist independently of any presupposed fixed national matrix. These authors themselves acknowledge the performative status of these models not only because they structure political and public discourses, but also because they become routinized in institutional discourses (Bertossi, 2010: 245-246). Therefore, instead of attaching labels to countries with regards to their modes of inclusion – which in every case is superseded by historical mutability – one should consider the interplay between institutional settings and the meaning systems of a plurality of actors. I suggest that Lamont's repertoire theory may be a good tool for this task. It allows an investigation of the principles of classification used by the actors themselves and their embeddedness in specific institutional configurations. These principles that actors avail themselves of, to make sense of their social worlds, are used to evaluate and frame how ethnic and cultural difference should be managed within national polities.

This article analyses different conceptions of the organization of diversity in Portugal and Brazil, highlighting modalities of collective boundary construction and its recognition – what I call *repertoires of diversity*. It seeks to link measures, policies and institutional configurations with the repertoires that actors engage in the definition of ethnic and racial diversity, and mobilize when evaluating its accommodation in particular institutional settings. Issues such as the influence of national identity on these assessments, the institutional modalities of their social organization, the space of its expression and the legitimate definitions of collective boundaries are weighted by the actors and used in their own strategies. Thus, the combination between public narratives and repertoires and institutional solutions gives us an indication of how the fundamental problem of the social organization of difference is addressed in different contexts. Other attempts should be underlined in the pursuit of a critical stance towards the model approach: Bertossi (2012) on the use of “schemas” to characterize French integration policies; Scholten and Duyvendack (2012) on the option of framing as an analytical tool and Streiff-Fénart (2012) on government classifications.

My main thrust is to understand what I consider to be two divergent paths in the conception of diversity, with their implications at the policy level. On the one hand, a European trend towards the blurring of ethnic and racial boundaries, which can be classified broadly under the umbrella of the policy concept of “interculturality” for which Portugal opted; on the other hand, a Brazilian trend towards traditional



multicultural policies such as the recognition of group specificity according to membership ties, within ethnic and racial boundaries, and with implications for symbolic and material resource distribution.

Methodologically, this paper follows the idea of comparing contrasting cases and understanding what is singularly distinct between them. By comparing the institutional incorporation of immigrants in Portugal and the institutionalization of affirmative action for the black population and its impact on collective identities in contemporary Brazil, it follows the strategy of paired comparisons of uncommon cases (McAdam et al., 2004: 83). I understand both cases as addressing the same fundamental question: How can ethnic diversity be accommodated considering specific symbolic and institutional resources?

The comparison is justified for two reasons. There is a wealth of comparative research on Europe and North America, as well as between European countries. Far less work has been carried out in understanding the differences between Latin American notions and those of European countries. Secondly, the history of Portugal and Brazil – of incorporating and accommodating racial and ethnic diversity – shares an ideological matrix called lusotropicalism, which posits the two countries as exemplary cases of hybridity. This ideological matrix is currently under revision in Brazil. The comparison allows us to focus on a context (Brazil) where this sole script is being contested and another where it has achieved the naturalizing condition of a cultural template.

This paper is based on qualitative fieldwork and data collection both in Portugal and Brazil in 2010 and 2011. Semi-structured interviews were carried out with key-actors in both places (40 in total). The pool of interviewees resulted from a previous selection that took the structures of power into account, along with how people were positioned in power configurations. Thus, interviews targeted key-actors such as state officials responsible for the institutionalization of rules and codes; academic actors and players in the definition and discursive articulation of cognitive and moral models; social movement leaders and power brokers between collectives and state institutions (Campbell, 2004: 101). All interviews were coded and analysed using Maxqda, which allowed me to identify, inductively, the patterns of response in both countries, on the basis of primary-code frequency. Besides the interviews, the data gathered consists of texts published in online sites, documents from civil society and public authority institutions, and a collection of legal texts.

In the first part of the paper, I provide a theoretical review of symbolic boundary construction and elaborate on the concept of ‘repertoires of diversity’. I suggest a

way to link this to the governance of cultural diversity, which has to take into account the intertwining between cognitive frameworks and policy-making. I borrow the idea that cognitive and political aspects should be integrated into the analysis of institutionalization and institutional change from new institutionalism (Thelen, 1999: 385). I suggest that this reasoning can be integrated into an approach to the governance of cultural diversity focusing on repertoires and symbolic boundaries and how these intertwine with legitimate frameworks within specific institutional configurations. In the second part, the incorporation of immigrants in Portugal is analysed according to this principle. Brazil is examined later, and the process of gradually collectivizing rights, with implications for plural collective narratives, is highlighted. Finally, the main aspects of this comparison are summed up and a number of general conclusions drawn, which concur with the idea of distinct pathways in the organization of difference.

### *1.1 Repertoires of diversity, group boundaries and institutions*

Lamont and Wimmer insistently establish links between symbolic boundaries, cultural repertoires and institutions (Lamont, 1995, 2000a; Wimmer, 2013). I deem such intents fundamental to grasp national differences between collective understandings and their institutionalization. Lamont (1995, 2000a) has insisted that members of different national communities are unlikely to draw equally on the same cultural tools to construct and assess their social worlds. Hence, there are national differences in the availability of social symbolic systems that make certain classification principles more prominent in some contexts than others. Against the critics pointing out that this does not accommodate intra-national variation, Lamont and Thévenot (2000: 9) argue that the elements of repertoires vary proportionally within national contexts. Thus, cultural traditions and institutional and structural conditions constrain the use of specific boundaries and principles. This explicitly links cultural repertoires to historical institutional configurations.

Understanding these patterns involves considering mechanisms and resources that influence the dynamics of ethnic boundary-making. Wimmer (2013) emphasizes such elements as power control in a given social field, institutional arrangements providing incentives for specific boundary configurations, modes of categorizing groups, cultural markers defining belonging, and political organization reinforcing ethnic categories. Such analytical specifications coincide with Brubaker's analysis of the cognitive import of group construction or "groupness" (Brubaker 2004). Both stress

the strategic nature of categorization practices and association and how these are constituents of the struggle for the legitimate divisions of the social world. This relationship between the inter-subjective and structural levels highlights the historical, procedural and relational dimension of ethnic boundaries and calls for an analysis of social phenomena such as political speeches, the narratives of national identity or the public repertoires of social movements. In view of this affinity, it is possible to distinguish the historical times when in fact ethnicity becomes the “ethnic politics” of other situations, where the ethnic boundary is irrelevant, giving place to the establishment of other social boundaries. Furthermore, this is consistent with Tilly’s insight that there is a link between repertoires, relationships and cultural understandings. In this sense, collective boundaries must be thought of in relation to the state and the collective definitions of other groups (ranging from group identifications to meta-level identifications such as national identity). The way collective identifications are reinforced derives from how “formations” (Tilly, 1978) network with the state and members’ perceptions of such configurations in a feedback loop that either strengthens or weakens the definition of collective boundaries and their repertoires.

A second aspect ties in with the relationship between discourses and institutions. Institutional arrangements play a crucial role in defining these representations and possibilities. Citizenship-regime theory has qualified the strict dichotomy often found distinguishing between an ethnic and civic state, providing a more heuristically nuanced perspective on the relationship between discourses and institutions (Munch, 2001; Favell, 2001; Soysal 1994; Bommers, 1999 Joppke, 1999). Be it as it may, such approaches can rightly be criticized for their emphasis on legal frameworks or the unidirectional historical-genetic processes of constituting these same frameworks. In other words, each country is assigned its own regime of incorporation, which is often traced back to a nation’s pre-existing self-awareness (Brubaker, 1992; Favell, 2001). Recently, Bertossi and Duyvendack (2012) have pointed out that this seeming reification of national models filters every analysis through a normative idea. Contrary to their ideas, however, this is not simply because “ideas precede social and institutional actions”, but rather that, in this case, models are premised on the value of integration as a normative regulatory framework. To avoid the regulatory value system that is inherent in such approaches, the comparison deployed here deals not only with migrants, but also with two differentiated instances of the organization of difference.

Furthermore, Bertossi (2010: 246) underlines the polysemic nature of models, whereby they respond to various interpretations according to differently positioned

actors. It calls for a “sociology of enunciation” (who justifies what) that brings out the “schemas” that legitimate options and construct temporary consensus. Yet they have a performative function; even if they are polysemic because they are assigned different meanings, they still perform a kind of epistemic closing that serves as a guidance for actors. Hence, I suggest that the concept of *repertoires of diversity* can be a good theoretical device on which to anchor this “sociology of enunciation”.

Repertoires are important because they mitigate unified conceptions of culture such as those that underlie national cultural models. Moreover, they point out the difference between settled situations, where culture and action coincide, and those from which unsettled conditions emerge (Swidler, 1986). Contested narratives thus arise and the coincidence between a cultural model and strategies of action no longer occurs. Finally, they make the historical contexts relevant without presupposing path-dependency. While it is important to acknowledge the performative effect of national models, it cannot be overlooked that the effect is never solely rhetoric but has to be buttressed by institutional understandings and shared conventions. The difference between this and the concept of a national idiom is that they are not predicated on historical-genetic conditions but on struggles to define legitimate conceptions of diversity and collective identification frameworks.

Thus, repertoires of diversity are meaning systems that organize legitimate conceptions and evaluations of how cultural diversity should be accommodated within a polity. They are not reduced to migrant integration models and policy, as they encompass the broader issue of the social organization of difference, specifically ethnic and racial difference. Hence, accommodation of the diversity brought by migrants is one case among others, of the unfolding of the social organization of difference over time<sup>3</sup> – in other words, an extension of how difference is produced and reproduced in historically variable relational matrices (Somers, 1994). As meaning systems, the accommodation of diversity is embedded in context-specific social-cultural and institutional relations. Cultural repertoires, as classification principles, are unavoidably tied in with institutional settings, and these, in their turn, are constructed by power relations. In other words, to analyse modalities of the recognition of ethnic boundaries, we need to understand the role played by institutions and the struggles within institutional fields (Wimmer, 2013).

Thus, it permits the reintegration, into the normative model approach, of the multiplicity of cognitive frameworks upholding specific conceptions and their legiti-

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3 I draw this idea from a presentation by Steven Vertovec in the MPI for Religious and Ethnic Diversity.

mating principles. Contrary to Lamont, however, the current article does not deal with the conceptions and frameworks of reference of “ordinary people” (Lamont and Mizrahi, 2011). We deem power to be an important dimension of agency. Considering that macro-actors, in Mouzelis’ (2008: 260) sense, are those actors assumed to have greater structuring capacities, this entails a qualification of frameworks upheld by “ordinary people”, given that “unequal access to the means of social construction”, quoting Mouzelis’ paraphrasing of Marx, implies the ranking of discourses, strategies and legitimate visions of the social world. Hence, in an effort to complement Lamont’s programme, the focus is on “promulgators of the social order” (Eisenstadt, 2003) such as policy-makers, community leaders, academics and those with public responsibilities.

In what follows, this paper compares one context, namely Brazil, where the sole script is being contested (theoretically depicted in various ways as a paradigm or national idiom), and another one – Portugal – where I argue that the script has achieved the naturalizing condition of a cultural template<sup>4</sup>. I begin with the Portuguese case and the construction of interculturality as a state-sponsored model upheld by a very specific repertoire, which I call *ethnic conviviality*. I will start by giving an overview of the genesis of the incorporation process of migrants at the institutional level; then I will focus on certain reorganizing patterns that, in my judgment, characterize the intercultural model and its Portuguese application. I finally link this to national cultural repertoires and how they are appropriated by actors as a blueprint for the governance of cultural diversity.

## 2 *Ethnic conviviality* and state-sponsored interculturalism

### 2.1 *Genesis of the political field of immigrant minorities*

Two main aspects should be emphasized regarding the genesis of the political field for the government of ethnic minorities and immigrants in Portugal: firstly, the secondarization of identity claims not only in migrant associations’ collective repertoires, in racial and ethnic formulations, but also in the institutional state repertoires; sec-

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4 Ann Swidler (1986) has argued, in relation to culture, that it works as an automatic template when in stable conditions, whereas, in unsettling ones, a plurality of “competing ideologies” organize action.

ondly, the social organization of (non-)ethnic representation and the dependency of its opportunity structures upon the state.

The former is largely explained by the cultural framework underpinning the incorporation of immigrants and post-colonial populations. Since both originated mainly in the former African colonies, there was a correspondence between the cultural structure and the reality of immigration flows. This understanding is due to a representation of the imagined community still impregnated with the imperial imaginary, what Trenz (1998), rather euphemistically, called the transnational imaginary community.

This cultural narrative was premised on the claim of a transhistorical affinity that made belonging and hybridity uncontested within the colonial empire. Most of the narrative was founded on lusotropicalist ideals, such as the proclivity of the Portuguese people for miscegenation, the non-existence of racial discrimination within the moral order of the colonial power, and a favourable comparison between the Portuguese colonial venture and all of its counterparts.

The narrative of historical and cultural affinity, though criticized in certain political circles, sustained the main political attitudes during this period. MPs' discourses clearly insisted on the idea of unproblematic mixing and the obligation to host African immigrants due to historical ties (Oliveira, 2012). The "African vocation of Portugal", in the words of one centre-right MP<sup>5</sup>, had to be rendered compatible with the "European Portugal"<sup>6</sup>.

In contrast to other European examples, such as the United Kingdom or the Netherlands, the institutional and discursive framework for the integration of immigrants was not set against a social script of racial and ethnic inequality, with the consequent social measures. Thus, while we find a semantic of discrimination and inequality in the heyday of decolonization in the UK and the Netherlands (cf. the British Racial Act or the Dutch authorities' definition of an ethnic minority, corresponding to the structural situation of immigrant groups), in Portugal these references are absent. On the contrary, from the start, social integration has been premised on the extension of the legal system and the deepening of citizenship rights, both codified as individual fields. According to Pires (2003: 243), this conception resulted from the strategic intervention of the state during the post-colonial period, when Portugal received over 500,000 postcolonial migrants. It prevented the collectivization of rights through the

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5 In Portugal the political right is occupied by the Social Democratic Party, whereas the centre-left is occupied by the Socialist Party, which is in fact the harbinger representative of social-democratic policies.

6 *DAR [Official Journal, June 1996, Calvão da Silva (PSD), p. 2909]*



“contractual” individualization pursued by various formal channels of aid, and by managing the situation of a “*retornado*” (returnee from the former colonies) as a transitional category. While pursuing this orientation left no room for a rationale of “collective negotiation striving for integration”<sup>7</sup>, it did establish the foundations for the subsequent phases.

These legal and political aspects had implications for the creation of opportunity structures for the immigrant populations. There was great ambiguity regarding the institutionalization of the migration field. While the institutional framework assumed the concept of ethnic minorities, following northern European models, there was never a legal backing to define and legitimize the concept. Instead, the first High Commissioner for Immigrants and Ethnic Minorities (ACIME) defined integration as a process

*“(...) based on the value of individual citizenship (...) refusing the tendency for segmentation whether from xenophobic reactions or multiculturalist mistakes, both? converging towards a positive assessment of ethnicity”<sup>8</sup>.*

Underlying this challenge was a rejection of political representations in the public sphere that was mediated by ethnicized meanings. Consequently, this institutional framework, which nominally admitted the existence of ethnic minorities, had neither a corresponding legal definition nor a social framework that acknowledged the meaning (and thus circumscribed the scope) of “ethnic minority”.

When we identify the first publicly expressed immigrant claims, dating from the early nineties, the main contentions are: the legalization of immigrants, participation in local elections, and access to social housing. As a whole, these claims were conducted through normal parliamentary channels and framed in the language of universal, abstract citizenship. An exception to this pattern was the case of Fernando Ká, who was from a Guinean association (AGUINENSO), and was well-placed on the Socialist Party’s election list in 1991. As an MP, he was the only one to include more ethnic undertones in his speeches, drawing inspiration from contemporary positive discrimination experiences in the “Anglo-Saxon” countries. He went as far as to suggest quotas for black people in the universities and in parliament. His “ethnicized” positions caused unease inside the Socialist Party, which was why he was eventually turned down (Viana, 2010).

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7 It avoided, for instance, the implementation of affirmative action and the recognition of ethnic and racial belonging.

8 Information Bulletin No. 46, August, 2000.

A second important aspect was the political consensus achieved on migration policies among all political tendencies. To be sure, this consensus was largely propped up by a belief in the historical affinity between Portugal and its post-colonial others. In spite of the stringent conditions demanded by the Schengen Agreement of 1996, Portugal maintained a dual approach to its migrants: on the one hand, legalization and the enforcement of controls in line with the Schengen rules; on the other, a number of concessions granting special conditions to African immigrants. This is clearly seen in the legal framework of the two legalization processes, where PALOP (African Countries with Portuguese as an Official Language) migrants were granted a moratorium to allow them to obtain their documents. The National Commission for Extraordinary Legalization, set up in 1996, can be considered the first official relations of the Portuguese state with migrant associations. While the regularization process triggered the political engagement of migrant representatives with the state, the process was driven by the protest initiatives of grassroots organizations. It was organized by what Sidney Tarrow (1996) called “influential allies” such as members of parliament (MPs) and church representatives. However, it brought the subject to the attention of the media and can be credited with the institutionalization of the High Commission for Ethnic Minorities.

## 2.2 *Organizing cultural diversity: centralization and social disappropriation*

At the end of the 1990s, as the “traditional” African immigration flows continued, there was a shift in the migrants’ national origins. This new wave of immigrants from independent post-Soviet states was made up of sizable inflows from countries such as Ukraine and Moldova. Moreover, new immigrant flows from Asia, mainly Pakistan, Bangladesh and China, gained importance. The diversification of inflows implied that the previous link based on historical, cultural and linguistic affinities was no longer effective. Yet, no backlash or political schism occurred. The previous consensus was strenuously maintained and this was reflected in the general lack of anti-immigration rhetoric in the political arena<sup>9</sup>.

The organizational body that gave form to the interactions between the immigrants’ representatives and the state was the Advisory Council for Immigration

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9 Only the PNR (National Renewal Party) uses anti-immigrant rhetoric, but it has had minor electoral success, achieving the best results in the 2001 national elections with 0.3% of the votes.



Affairs (COCAI), set up in 1998<sup>10</sup>, firstly at the national and later the local level. As Migdal said, accommodation in the junctures between components of the state and other social forces can produce a range of outcomes, including the state incorporation of existing social forces (2001: 126-127). The setting up of the Advisory Council within the Portuguese institutional framework is a logical consequence of the legalization and recognition of the immigrant associations stipulated in Law 115/99. According to the list published by the High Commissioner for Immigration and Intercultural Dialogue (ACIDI), in 2011 there were 129 recognized immigrant associations, of which 109 were actually operating<sup>11</sup>. These associations map out the resident immigrant populations and their descendants in Portugal, from the more numerous groups such as the Brazilians, Ukrainians, Cape Verdeans and Romanians<sup>12</sup> to smaller ones such as the Turks, Bangladeshi or Togolese. It has been argued that many of them do not actually represent their countries, given their weak penetration within the populations they claim to represent. Be it as it may, they have functioned as brokers between immigrant communities and state authorities. Yet, in spite of variations in migrant figures, the number of recognized associations has remained almost constant over the years. This grew from 109 in 2001 to 129 in 2011; meagre growth considering the increase of 70 per cent in immigrants over the same period (Census, 2011). In itself, this information is not particularly notable. What supports the idea of state penetration into civil society is that, conversely, the number of Local Immigrant Support Centres (CLAIs), the state *one stop shops* for immigrants, has grown continuously, currently reaching over a hundred. Evidence of overlapping is provided in various statements by COCAI advisors, for whom the extension of the CLAI network has largely occupied the functional place of the associations. What characterizes this configuration is its occupation of the same instrumental/political social space, which is seen as a problem of the state's penetration into civil society, leading to the limitation of the latter.

*It is the actual structure of the work... of ACIDI... it is the structure of the association movement. The high commissioner has put in the field everything that we did in the field.* (Interview 6: advisor at the Advisory Council for Immigration Affairs)

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10 Decree-law No. 39/98 of February 27, published in the Official Journal I Series-A, No. 49, of 27.02.98.

11 See Activities Report 2011, Lisbon: ACIDI.

12 The order of presentation follows the size of these groups. SEF Annual Report, 2008: 29.

However, this tension is mitigated by the structural relations of dependence in which the associations found themselves in relation to the central power. These relations have undergone transformations that are at the core of the logic of the implementation of an intercultural model. The extent and subsequent penetration of the state into society reflects the full assumption of a model of proximity orientated by the fact that state structures replace the more conventional models of corporative pluralism from which the Consultative Councils drew inspiration. These councils continue to be part of the mechanisms for creating interfaces between the state and immigrant organizational structures. Despite this, the state is currently refocussing its actions towards its own network of proximity, and not towards the associations' network. Consequently, contrary to the thesis of the weak state underlying most interpretations of the precariousness of the Portuguese welfare state, the state has undergone a notable expansion concerning immigration. As a backdrop, this centralization process had a traditionally weak civil society, which research shows is even weaker for immigrant associations (Marques et al., 2008; Sardinha, 2010; Albuquerque, 2010). The fragility of the association fabric has led to the fact that a substantial part of the functions originally prompting the establishment of the associations<sup>13</sup> have been displaced to what is now a state network. This trend grew constantly until the IMF structural adjustment programmes of 2011, after which these functions began to be rolled back to the association network.<sup>14</sup>

Are the state's structural features particularly suitable for the intercultural programme? Regarding the forms of anti-racism, Lentin (2004) cogently argued that they should be seen in the light of their relationship with the state and their relative independence from or dependence on and interaction with the state. But while Lentin equates this as public culture, it is also important to sketch how structures of opportunity may play a role in this determination. This configuration implies an alignment between the interest and willingness of the state and that of the immigrant communities' organizations. This does not prevent a communitarization of the immigrant populations, though it constrains them to the national format of constructing a collective and its narratives. It is in this sense, that there is an adjustment between the central definitions of civic community and their integrating discourse,

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13 Typically, those functions were aiding immigrants on legal and regulatory matters, advising on labour issues and providing psychological counselling, among others.

14 See 'Action 1 – Reception, Integration and Valorisation of Interculturality' in the Annual Programme 2013 in the context of the European Fund for the Integration of Third Country Nationals (FEINPT), according to the guidelines followed by ACIDI.

and the peripheral identities of the groups which gravitate around state opportunity structures. The discourse which presided over this adjustment is constructed under the banner of interculturality.

In this sense, the repertoire used both by individual actors and institutions asserts the non-problematic coexistence of communities, which, occupying a public space of a certain visibility and recognition, should never be converted into a differentiation capable of breaking a consensual value judgement.

*Now intercultural Portugal is the same as saying that Portugal opens the door to all communities within Portugal so that they can make a decent living, united and holding hands, and work for the construction of Portugal. I interpret interculturalism in this way: a union, an intersection.* (Interview 7, counsellor at the Advisory Council for Immigration Affairs)

The symbolic and institutional space of the governance of diversity is organized around the communities that constitute this very diversity and endow it with a specific configuration (certain types of nationality, with particular forms of becoming visible and being granted visibility). This configuration, expressed in community form, corresponds to a consensus about group boundaries fundamentally being delineated by national membership status. Although references to specific cultural characteristics frequently arise, the discourse of nationality remains present in this latent ambiguity, between an abstract status, with a universal horizon, and its contrast with the host society where the “national” – from the country of origin – is ultimately narrated as a cultural specificity.

### 2.3 *An (almost) uncontested repertoire. Consensus and cultural horizontalisation*

A multiculturalist conception of the organization of collective belonging and its political application has never found an echo in Portugal. This rejection is observable both on the part of the state and academia, and even associations, which have always avoided very strong expressions of ethnic attachment in the public sphere. In Portugal, the intercultural framework provided the bases of understanding the accommodation of diversity well before this had become a structuring aspect of official European discourse. The definition laid down in the first Plan for Immigrant Integration made interculturality part of the national legal framework<sup>15</sup>. It antici-

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<sup>15</sup> This definition was set out in a document issued by the Council of Ministers, according to which the “principle of interculturality” would assure social cohesion by “accepting the

pated the one set down in the White Paper, with its focus on mutual understanding and cultural interpenetration<sup>16</sup>. In principle, the rhetoric of interculturality does not accommodate either the semantics of ethnicity or an ethnicization of politics (Cantle, 2012; Bouchard, 2011). Ethnic mobilization has never been pursued by the groups themselves. On the contrary, it is discouraged by the withdrawal of its associated symbols and semantics from the public sphere. The suppression of the term “ethnic minority” and appearance of “intercultural dialogue” in the High Commissioner’s title and the subsequent disappearance of the symbols and discourses structured around the majority/minority relationship provide a good example. As expressed by the Portuguese Minister of the Presidency in 2006, in relation to the title of the High Commissioner:

*Ethnic minorities, a very controversial expression in many immigrant associations, [...] will no longer be included in the name. The expression intercultural dialogue is more significant and open and will appear in the designation of the High Commissioner. (Minister of the Presidency, Minutes of the Advisory Council for Immigration Affairs, 11-12-2006)*

From then on, the word “communities” conspicuously replaced the more politicized term “minority” in the relations between the state and the migrants’ representatives. Yet, for all the performative capacity of such attempts, the structural conditions of some migrant groups do surface, as they cannot be suppressed under layers of rhetoric that ascertain a non-hierarchized social space.

*(...) one must be aware that there are minorities. (...) Now it changes to interculturalism – well done! But the problem does not disappear just because we legislate (...) But there are ethnic minorities from other countries ... for example, Africans are a minority. First, they are Africans, and are from Africa, or are born here but from Africa. You must have this awareness. (Interview 18, immigrant association representative from the Advisory Council for Migration Affairs)*

*Because African communities are located in ghettos, and their conditions will often push communities into them (...) then there is a great manifestation of what the difference is,*

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cultural and social specificity of different communities and emphasizing the interactive and relational nature between them, supported by mutual respect and compliance with the laws of the host country”. [Resolution of the Council of Ministers No. 63/2007 of 3 May, *Plan for Immigrant Integration*, 2007: 6].

16 In the Council of Europe’s *White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue*, a new model for the management of ethnic-cultural diversity is envisaged, where “interculturality” is understood as “an open and respectful exchange of views between individuals and groups with different ethnic, cultural, religious and linguistic backgrounds and heritage, on the basis of mutual understanding and respect”. (CE, 2008: 10)

*difference becomes manifest. (Interview 20, immigrant association representative from the Advisory Council for Migration Affairs)*

The shared repertoire does not, however, focus much on inequality or racial discrimination. Interculturality posits diversity as something that has no structural correspondence. An aspect corroborating this conclusion can be found in the refusal both by association representatives, and by state actors, to seriously consider ethnic monitoring, affirmative action measures, positive discrimination or, even less, group rights. In this sense, the repertoire organizes discourses excluding social differentiation, symbolically amplifying the dimension of cultural diversity. This culturalization, which does not coincide with the national identity culturalisms of other contexts already mentioned here, pragmatically reflects a de-politicization of collective belonging. Moreover, by erasing, under its ideological cloak, the “social question”, and redefining every social relationship as a matter of cultural interaction and dialogue, it implies that creating awareness of problematic situations is itself a stumbling-block for such an endeavour.

Although the relationship majority-minority is represented in the symbolic field of communities’ representatives, it is not politically operative because it is judged as discriminatory. The understanding that this structure “violates the principle of equality” (Interview 10, Immigrant Association Representative from the Advisory Council for Migration) is reiterated by several immigrant advisors and fully supported by state actors. In terms of the construction and definition of boundaries, belonging is not reformulated beyond what is authorized by the central definitions of that membership; accordingly, it does not jeopardize solidarities constructed as central. Rather, it is adjusted in a process of relinquishing strong collective identification at a state sub-level.

On this issue, there is a remarkable agreement between centrally sustained definitions of belonging – those of state institutions – and those that are subject to the policies defined by these institutions. First, there is a significant consensus regarding the narrative of ethnic dilution, among almost all political and religious forces, based on the virtues of a society where immigrant communities can freely express their culture and where differences between groups, when existing, are reduced to their culturalized aspects.

*Today’s Portugal is just that; we can say there will no longer be a homogeneous culture as it existed in the past – but rather this mix of cultures, other people, other races, other languages, other types of music, cooking, so many other things, the stuff that human culture*

*is made of, intertwined within the confines of Portugal. (Interview 8, representative of the Catholic Church branch of Migration Affairs)*

The discourse of integration is not dominated by culturalist topics and demands, unlike the French or Dutch situations, where a majority culture is seen as being under threat from the minority cultures. On the contrary, the discourse highlights the dynamics of symbolic interpenetration, the exchanges between the host society and immigrant communities, and the malleable nature of these relations. The exception is a trend emerging among third-generation descendants of Africans, which reformulates this consensus in terms of the structural place of race and its impacts on unequal opportunities.

To a large extent, this consensus is based on cognitive and cultural background assumptions that constrain decision-making and institutional change. Its specificity gains significance when observing the recurrent invocation of a particular historical matrix. Indeed, this repertoire is pervasive, constituting one of the structural axes of the official discourse on the integration of immigrants<sup>17</sup>. In the words of a high commissioner: “(...) this diversity was always part of the Portuguese DNA, as it sailed off around the world and mixed its blood with other peoples”<sup>18</sup>. In another instance, according to a statement made by a former high commissioner for immigration, Portuguese history is *full of examples of intercultural experiences (...) in terms of present day demography, in terms of DNA (...) there are many intercultural experiences that are part of the Portuguese identity.*”

As seen above, this repertoire insists on highlighting a specific historical cultural matrix, of cordiality and absorption, where ethnicity cannot become a carrier for political claims<sup>19</sup>. This script is particularly present among state agents, less in the associations, and reflects the weight that a certain version of history has in the elabo-

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17 The work of Manuela Ribeiro Sanches stands out in its insistent criticism of the normalization of this discourse and its acritical presence in the public sphere. See “Malhas que os Impérios Tecem” (Sanches, 2011:12).

18 Taken from the editorial of B-i “Portugal e a Diversidade. Um país em transformação”. Journal No. 93, April 2012, Lisbon: ACIDI.

19 In the words of the Deputy State Secretary of the Deputy Minister of Parliamentary Affairs, Feliciano Barreiras Duarte, “Faithful to our history as a people who, throughout their very long progression of nine centuries, has always known how to develop cross-relations with other peoples, other cultures, other civilizations (...) which transform us as a people in our genetics, our manner of being and our standing in the world”, B-i “Portugal e a Diversidade. Um país em transformação”. Journal No. 93, April 2012, Lisbon: ACIDI, p. 3.



ration of national identity. The topic of a “shared society” is recast against the backdrop of this historical narrative. Intercultural dialogue takes place under the tutelage of this overwhelming narrative.

The governance of cultural diversity in Portugal is thus examined against the backdrop of a largely undisputed repertoire. The system of social symbols, which is more prominent, is deeply influenced by a certain conception of national culture and history. The persistence of an image of harmony and cohesion as the institutional repertoire shared by most actors is induced by the state. This central narrative is found in an acritical vision of a cultural idiom that provided the backbone of imperial and nationalist projects.

But this undisputed status is also buttressed by a specific institutional configuration. This configuration is premised, on the one hand, on mechanisms of social disappropriation, mainly via state penetration of the associations’ social and political space. This process gradually constrains institutional power-distribution channels that could otherwise be perceived as political opportunities. The resulting organization of diversity is founded on a top-down interculturalism, strongly centralized, that might be seen as state-sponsored interculturality.

This logic of governing ethnic and cultural diversity has been present over the various high commissioners’ terms of office and, with it, an ambivalence regarding the recognition of cultural and ethnic group status. Much of this ambiguity can be found in the problematic relationship between the culturalization of the symbolic and social transactions among agents and the lack of political space for collective claims. Although there is no official recognition or legal framework stating the status of the group representation of immigrant populations, this has tended to be established through a symbolic operator, that is, the “community” that has replaced the “ethnic minority”. However, this identification is never racial or ethnic in nature, i.e. it does not involve the “needs of an ethnic culture”. As regards the admittance of alternative cultural expressions in the public sphere, it suggests that the Portuguese intercultural model is built around “symbolic ethnicity”, that is, ethnicity stripped of the “ethnic”, or rather of ethnic “consciousness” and “identity”<sup>20</sup>. Thus, this con-

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20 The concept of “symbolic ethnicity” is used in the sense posited by Gans (1979). According to this, there is no correspondence between the visibility of certain ethnic features and the investment either in ethnicized institutions or in ethnic cultures. Therefore, only the symbolic and individualized dimension will remain in “the ethnic”, which would no longer bear social costs for the individual, because it is detached from a group identity.

sensual repertoire is labelled here as *ethnic conviviality* because of its emphasis on a merely symbolic ethnicity recognized in the public sphere by its culturalized aspects.

In defining the space of such diverse practices as a field of exchanges and porous boundaries organized by a syncretic national identity, the institutional dynamic does not in fact allow groups to coalesce around reinforced collective identities. A shared repertoire, where value is assigned to boundary permeability and where topics such as *interpenetration*, *interrelation* and *mutual understanding* are prominent, organizes the meaning of diversity and its management. Strong identification and group membership are avoided as they are likely to cohere around unsettling social and cultural divisions in a society, expectably without friction. Similarly, for the French situation, Lamont (2000b: 47) observed a repudiation of the “social balkanization” felt to be latent in ethnic politics and its threatening influence on national identity. In the Portuguese case, an overarching national identity tends to subsume a burgeoning plurality of cross-identifications. Nevertheless, the prominence of this “national idiom” is the outcome of a certain institutional configuration whereby the state maintains its national identity narrative as a “primordial belief”, undisputed by alternative narratives. Finally, it is one matter to claim that this primordial belief shapes immigration policy (Joppke, 2005); it is another to argue that a coherent identity narrative is superimposed on contesting accounts by means of the distribution of power and the hoarding of symbolic resources.

### 3 Brazil, collectivisation of rights and differentiated citizenship

#### 3.1 *Developing a framework for collective claims – The “making” of an ethnicized boundary*

In order to understand the dynamics of the collective reinvention that Brazil has lately undergone it is necessary to grasp the social dynamics that led to the consolidation of policies against racial discrimination. This process, with the associated institutionalisation, marks a turning point in the paradigm of hybridism that has upheld *racial democracy* towards a multiculturalism of political-state origin. This model offers the black population a space of representation premised on a symbolic and practical recognition of the importance of collective membership as a criterion both for rights and exclusion. At the same time, it reformulates the traditional national identity nar-



rative by challenging the social harmonization narrative. The fragile nature of this commitment is, however, evident in the controversy surrounding racial quotas in the educational system. This contention revolves around the developments in the system of ethnic/racial classifications (based on colour or race) and their implications for the cohesion of Brazilian society.

During the 1990s, political claims were voiced by social movements concerning white hegemony and racial discrimination<sup>21</sup>. This questioning was followed by the official recognition of racial discrimination which led President Fernando Henrique Cardoso to nominate a national commission to find solutions for the phenomenon (Souza, 1996 Fry, 2000). This meeting gave rise to the creation of the *Interministerial Working Party for Improving the Black Population's Status*, which was charged with developing public policies for the inclusion of this population. The first *National Human Rights Programme*, formulated in 1996, accommodated the suggestion of the black activist Dora Bertúlio<sup>22</sup> to “aggregate the category brown [*pardo*]<sup>23</sup> and black [*preto*] into a single category *black* [negro] to be used in the official statistics produced by IBGE (National Statistics Institute)” (Telles, 2004: 86). The document set out a number of measures against racial inequality, including the adoption of affirmative action in the educational sector and the recommendation to amalgamate the previous colour categories into a single category for the ‘black’ population<sup>24</sup>. In the

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21 Nobles shows the importance of political activism and academic intervention in dispelling the ideology of racial democracy. See Nobles, Melissa (2000) *Shades of Citizenship: Race and the Census in Modern Politics*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

22 This suggestion was ventured at the *International Seminar on Multiculturalism and Racism: the Role of “Affirmative Action” in the Contemporary Democratic States*. The conference was attended by renowned Brazilian academics and North American specialists on Brazil, for the purpose of gathering guidelines for the formulation of policies directed specifically at the black population.

23 According to Loveman et al. (2011), *pardo* “translates literally as brown colour, but in the context of official surveys it may also refer to mixed race” (p.4). It is one of the five “colour or race” groups used by IBGE (Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics) to classify the Brazilian population, along with branco [white], preto [black], amarelo [yellow or of Asian ancestry] and indígena [indigenous]. It is important to understand that one of the most controversial issues in terms of ethnic statistics in Brazil has been the subsistence of the *pardo* category as the intermediate term between “white” and “black”, which to a large extent represents the symbolic resistance of the paradigm of “*mestiçagem*” (miscegenation). On the other hand, the term black assumes different meanings in classifications, such as “preto”, which was the original categorization, and black, and “negro”, which has been adopted to conflate “preto” and “pardo”.

24 Programa Nacional de Direitos Humanos (Pndh-1) Decree-law 1904, 13 May 1996. <http://dhnet.org.br/dados/pp/pndh/textointegral.html> [accessed on 21-06-2011].

second National Human Rights Programme of 2002, 29 measures targeting people considered to have an African background are detailed. Finally, in the third version of the programme, in 2009, a vast array of short-term and long-term measures aiming towards the equality of the black population were laid down. Thus, the consistent widening of measures targeting black people shows the consolidation of the recognition of a population according to an ethnic criterion.

However, this recognition did not develop independently of the emerging trends in civil society. These had been gaining strength since at least 1978 when certain civic freedoms were restored. Among them, it is important to highlight the growing organization of the black movement. A new generation of activists and recent university graduates radically changed the perception that had focused on the cultural and assimilation goals of former times<sup>25</sup>. The accelerated process of democratization that had been occurring intensified the creation of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and the emergence of new social movements into which its militancy was channelled. Simultaneously, the decentralization movement to which the state was now submitting enabled the appearance of initiatives and options outside the state. As a consequence of the increasingly more audible claims of the black movement, certain regional governments established councils to support the black population, e.g. the Council for the Participation and Development of the Black Community of the State of São Paulo (1984), with their creation involving the leaders of the largest black organizations in the region. This first experience was followed by others, in Bahia (1987), Rio Grande do Sul (1988) and Rio de Janeiro (1991), and also expanded to smaller localities.

As noted by Guimarães (1999), as of 1985, the state sought to redefine its relationship with social movements, including the recently formed MNU (United Black Movement). The legal implementation of this priority took place, first of all, through the criminalization of racism, enshrined in the Constitution of 1988 (Article 5, XLII)<sup>26</sup>. Initially, black activism imprinted its action on what are the traditional institutions of a class society, such as the unions and political parties, and ideologically its intervention was likewise guided by these premises: the “labour issue” had priority over the “racial issue”. Although this penetration was maintained, and also expanded to other arenas such as the universities and intellectual circles, black activ-

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25 On this issue, see the autobiographical stories recounted by individuals, reproduced in Alberti, Verena and Pereira (2007) *História do Movimento Negro*, Rio de Janeiro: FGV.

26 The text of the Constitution states “The practice of racism constitutes a felony and indefeasible crime, subject to imprisonment, under the terms of the law”.

ism gradually shifted towards the NGOs. It then gained independence in relation to the “social question”, interpreted in class terms, and, at the same time, from the state apparatus. A number of activists and militants did not emerge directly from the black movement but rather from community activism (in the shanty towns, for example), supported by non-governmental organizations. This is the case of Benedita da Silva, a federal representative of the PT (Workers Party) and governor of the State of Rio de Janeiro, whose origins are tightly linked to grassroots community movements and whose line of political action has merged the PT’s central themes with the black movement’s political agenda (Silva, 1999)<sup>27</sup>.

In general, the movement has achieved a presence in Brazilian society that can no longer fail to be reflected at a political and institutional level. The case of Abdias do Nascimento is a good example: he was the first parliamentarian to propose “policies of compensation and reparations for descendants of African slaves in Brazil” (Jaccoud, 2009: 52). Abdias do Nascimento was elected Federal Deputy for the State of Rio de Janeiro for 1983-87 and Senator of the Republic for the periods 1991-92 and 1997-99<sup>28</sup>. Other black deputies followed, e.g. Carlos Alberto Caó, Maria Benedita Pais and Paulo Paim, with the latter subsequently proposing the Statute of Racial Equality. In common they shared the need to turn the racial equality agenda into law. Another instance where racial and ethnic criteria became part of a set of collective claims involved Article 68 of the Temporary Constitutional Provisions Act (part of the adoption process of the 1988 Brazilian Constitution); it recognized the land title of the “remaining members of the quilombos”, lands owned by runaway slaves in the imperial period, and ensured them title deeds granted by the Brazilian state (Mattos, 2005). The definition of who was actually entitled to the land caused controversy regarding whether this should be defined according to anthropological or historical cannons. A document drafted by a working group created for this pur-

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27 As she herself describes in Silva, Benedita (1999) “The Black Movement and Political Parties”, in *Racial Politics in Contemporary Brazil*, Michael Hanchard (ed.) Durham and London: Duke University Press, pp. 179-187.

28 In 1983, the Deputy Abdias do Nascimento presented Draft Law 1.332/1983 to Congress; this objectively stipulated a series of compensatory-type proposals aimed at fostering equitability between black and white people in fields as diverse as education, access to work, remuneration and police treatment. Draft Law 1.332/1983 was shelved in 1989. During this period, the issue of racial equality received practically no special mention, although the legislation inclined towards combating discrimination. The specific topic of racial inequality later returned to parliamentary discussion through the efforts of the Deputy Paulo Paim.

pose by the Brazilian Anthropology Association (ABA) tried to offer an operational definition that understood the members of the quilombos as “ethno-racial groups, according to criteria of self-attribution”. In 2001, the Brazilian delegation to the Durban Conference was authorized by the president to advocate the adoption of racial quotas in order to attenuate racial inequalities<sup>29</sup>. The preparation of the Durban committee as well as the questions raised during the meeting became milestones in the discussion of affirmative action programmes in Brazil (Machado, 2004: 74). One of the main reports presented was the *Text for Discussion No. 807, “Racial Inequality in Brazil: Evolution of Living Conditions in the 1990s”*, prepared by the economist of IPEA (Institute of Applied Economic Research) Ricardo Henriques. The report sought to demonstrate the degree of racial inequality in Brazil and argued for the implementation of racial quotas. Ricardo Henriques followed the methodology used in the studies of Carlos Hasenbalg and Nelson Silva (1988), in particular the division between the white and non-white categories. Showing that “racial belonging is of significant importance in the structuring of social and economic inequalities in Brazil” (Henriques, 2001: 1 in Machado, 2004: 75), the report concluded that this inequality resulted from a “cumulative cycle of disadvantages” affecting the black population<sup>30</sup>. But what is important to emphasize here, is that Henriques used two systems to classify the colour of those affected by this inequality. On the basis of IBGE’s five standard categories, he graphically summarizes the comparison with the categories of “white population” and “black population”, where the latter aggregates brown [pardo] and black. Affirmative action in favour of the “black population” was thus given a symbolic and technical boost, separating two major groups of “racial” membership in terms of their social and structural disadvantages.

### 3.2 *Affirmative action and the officialization of ethnic semantics*

The subsequent period was one of intense legislative activity regarding affirmative action. According to a compilation of laws organized by the IPEA, the period between 1991 and 2003 recorded a definitive turning point in punitive federal measures on racism and discrimination towards “affirmative action” strategies. Indeed,

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29 Referred to in Pereira, Amauri (2003) “Um Raio em Céu Azul. Reflexões sobre a Política de Cotas e a Identidade Nacional Brasileira”, in *Estudos Afro-Asiáticos*, Year 25, No. 3, pp. 463-482.

30 The expression “cumulative cycle of disadvantages” was coined by sociologists Hasenbalg and Silva.

compared with the previous period, the legislative production concerning this type of strategy increased by over 90 per cent (24 affirmative actions were recorded during the period). If we consider that a punitive strategy targets the offence of an individual and that affirmative action obeys a perspective of group compensation, clearly a strategy of the collectivization of rights was underway. Affirmative action ranges from the institution of quotas for “black men and women” in ministries as diverse as Justice, Culture or Agrarian Development to the inclusion in the official compulsory education network of the teaching of Afro-Brazilian and African history and culture (Law 10.639 of 09/01/2003). In 2002, for example, a decree established a programme of affirmative action in the Federal Public Service, to be observed by all direct and indirect administration bodies (National Affirmative Action Programme, Decree 4.229 of 13/05/2002). The programme is explicit with regard to the achievement of percentage-based goals for Afro-descendant participation in federal agencies (Article 2 (I)) and firms under contract to Federal Public Administration bodies (Article 2 (IV))<sup>31</sup>. Most recently, President Dilma Rousseff sent to Congress (6 November 2013) Draft Law No. 6738/13, which reserves 20 per cent of the positions offered in the public sector for the black population.

However, it was under Lula da Silva that measures considered during the government of Fernando Henrique Cardoso, began to take effect. The PIR bodies (promoting racial equality, with over 500 across the country at present) operate under the aegis of the SEPPIR (Secretariat for Policies Promoting Racial Equality). They were first led by a black woman, Matilde Ribeiro, and subsequently, in 2011, by the minister Luiza Bairros<sup>32</sup>, a former activist in the United Black Movement, in the tradition of appointing a black person. Their creation has helped to mainstream racial equality policies. These bodies have effectively brought black activism closer to the state.

Senator Paulo Paim, a prominent black activist, was elected by the senate as a vice-president right at the beginning of the presidency of Lula da Silva. Paulo Paim was to become the proponent of the Statute of Racial Equality, which underwent various reformulations until reaching a significantly attenuated version in relation to its first intentions (Law 12.288 of 20 July 2010)<sup>33</sup>. Moreover, it was during the first Lula

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31 IPEA, Directoria de Estudos Sociais, *Instrumentos Normativos Federais Relacionados ao Preconceito e às Desigualdades Raciais – 1950-2003*, Projeto BRA/01/013 PNUD, 2012.

32 Luiza Bairros took office in 2011 during the government of Dilma Rousseff.

33 Law 12.288 of 20 July 2010 institutes the Statute of Racial Equality and amends Laws 7.716 of 5 January 1989, 9.029 of 13 April 1995, 7.347 of 24 July 1985, and 10.778 of 24 November 2003.



government that the president appointed Joaquim Barbosa Gomes to the Supreme Court, the first black person to hold office in this national institution. Finally, the PT government inscribed “the overcoming of racial inequalities” in its multiannual programme.

The policy of quotas for universities is a clear example of this advance – especially considering the controversy stirred up by Law 3.708/2001, which was presented by Deputy José Amorim and sanctioned by the Governor of Rio de Janeiro, Anthony Garotinho. Article 1 established a quota of up to 40 per cent for the black and brown [pardo] populations in Rio de Janeiro State universities. Nevertheless, the institutionalization of affirmative action in the educational system was challenged in 2003 by the Federation of Private Schools with respect to the legality of the norms of the State of Rio de Janeiro. Simultaneously, white students complained of being discriminated against. The two combined actions led the state government of Rio de Janeiro, during that same year, to significantly reduce the percentage of “quota” students. In 2012, the Federal Supreme Court ruled the policy of “racial quotas” constitutional, though transitional. The president of the Supreme Court justified this decision by the historic nature of the prejudice and the fact that “those who are not affected by colour prejudice are already at an enormous advantage”<sup>34</sup>.

The National Human Rights Programme of 2009 reinforces the stance inaugurated by the Fernando Henrique Cardoso government. The III National Human Rights Programme (PNDH) enshrines as government proposals: the “inclusion of the ‘colour’ question in all public information and registration systems on the population and in databases” (subparagraph 9); the fostering of affirmative action in professional university courses and in cutting-edge technology fields (subparagraph 141); emphasis on educational manuals telling the “history and struggles of black people in the construction of our country, with the elimination of stereotypes and discrimination” (subparagraph 144); and finally, the issuing of instructions to the National Statistics Institute to consider “mulatto, brown and black people as part of the black population” (subparagraph 144).

In 2000, Paulo Paim submitted Draft Law 3.198/2000, embodying the Statute of Racial Equality. From its submission in 2000, the statute underwent various reformulations until finally being passed as Law 12.228 of 20 July 2010. A specific group is targeted by the racial equality measures in the light of its ethnic-racial nature.

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34 Taken from <http://www.brasil.gov.br/noticias/arquivos/2012/04/26/cotas-raciais-sao-constitucionais-diz-stf> [accessed on 12/05/2012].

Although the statute has a broad scope, covering all situations where discrimination occurs based on “race, colour, ancestry or national or ethnic origin” (Article 1 (I)), it proposes an operational definition of the black population.

Detractors of the statute considered this the consummation of the legal racialization of Brazil<sup>35</sup>, whereas the NGOs sympathetic to the racial equality cause felt that, by not legally imposing definite quotas, the statute had basically betrayed the aspiration of “Brazilian blacks”<sup>36</sup>. In effect, the final version of the statute retains little of its original formulation. This first version established tax breaks for employers with a 20 per cent proportion of blacks in their workforce and a compulsory 20 per cent quota of blacks in media organizations. It also introduced mandatory colour identification in all official records. In fact, the final version excluded many of the affirmative action measures endorsed previously. Consequently, the importance of the statute is more symbolic than material. Nevertheless, it defines a collective that emerges as a target of rights. This definition covers “the group of people who declare themselves black [preto] and brown [pardo] in response to the colour or race question” used by the IBGE (Article 1 (IV)). Therefore, it adds together the two categories and definitively establishes the black population as a target group for public policies. With the Statute of Racial Equality, ethnic semantics are endorsed both in the legal framework and institutional repertoires. When political groups successfully reposition ethnic boundaries, they may not only disturb the previously existing consensus on the meaning and location of these boundaries, but they also undermine and denaturalize existing power hierarchies, political structures and political alliances (Wimmer, 2008: 1006). Accordingly, this process arises from an endogenous mechanism of change, through which ethnic-political movements manage to transform field structures through concerted political action. The incorporation of black elites into state structures and the concerted policy that the state has followed towards greater racial justice embody a strategy of social appropriation, simultaneously giving rise to the redefinition of hegemonic identity classifications. The ways decision-makers and stakeholders frame collective identifications play a role in this reformulation. Different principles of classification are used in order to draw new symbolic boundaries contesting the previous ones. Institutional unsettling impacts on the repertoires held by people; competing models on organizing difference are contending for dominance and ultimately institutionalisation.

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35 See “De Nixon a Vicentinho”, by Demetrio Magnoli and Yvonne Maggie, in the newspaper *O Estado de São Paulo*, 17 September 2009 [accessed on 23-09-2011].

36 Interview with Jurema Werneck, held in Rio de Janeiro on 30-08-2010.

### 3.3 *The core identity narrative in peril. Contentious repertoires and the politics of belonging*

Brazil is actually part of a wider civilizational process that saw ethnic and racial mixture as paramount for nation-building (Silva, 2012). The celebration of ethnic and racial mixture was paramount throughout Latin America during the early twentieth century under different labels: *Raza Cósmica* in Mexico, modern *Criolismo* in Peru, racial democracy in Brazil, Afro-Latin non-racialism in Cuba and national ‘*mestizaje*’ in Colombia. These ideologies were part of these countries’ nation-building projects and were employed as nationalist unification projects aimed at overcoming acute class differences through ideologies of *mestizaje*. This was a national-populist consensus rooted in a corporate society and laden with a traditionalist paternalism whose pattern was repeated in various countries (Touraine, 1988; Linz and Stepan, 1996). After the seventies, this national consensus disintegrated. Social movements supported by evidence supplied by scholars started to denounce the persistence of racial inequality as the most compelling evidence that, regardless of the ideology of mixture, asymmetries based on ethnic and racial classifications were widespread. One instance where contentious forms of defining national and group belonging were pitched against each other was the implementation of the affirmative action system described above. The public-sphere polemics over what some have called the “racialization of Brazil” reveal the emergence of multiple repertoires defining what collective identifications should be recognized. One instance where such competing repertoires could be accessed was the controversy over the specific issue of a university quota for blacks. What began as a discussion of applicants’ merits within the context of a liberal meritocracy, soon slipped into a debate on the meaning of group-belonging and its place in the national identity paradigm. This dispute sharply contrasts with the homogeneity of the Portuguese repertoire. I follow Swidler (1986: 278) in positing that, in unsettled cultural and institutional conditions, competing ways of organizing action develop and strive for dominance. In this case, these competing ways are the emerging plurality of repertoires of diversity. Of these, I highlight the three that appear the most notable, followed by a brief explanation. As said, the following repertoire classification is the outcome of the analysis of a corpus of interviews and documental evidence collected during fieldwork in Brazil, both in Rio de Janeiro and in Bahia de Todos os Santos.

The first repertoire we may call *social-fusionist*. It may be considered the up-to-then hegemonic repertoire within the symbolic and institutional restrictions on the national narrative of miscegenation. As in Portugal, it derives its main tenets from an



overwhelming national identity whose narrative is crucial in organizing this system of meaning. Social cohesion is premised on the cultural belief that group differences are inconsequential both at the wider structural level and in everyday social interaction. Brazilian society has a singular cultural characteristic that preordains conviviality and supersedes instances of social distance:

*But there are other ways of imagining Brazil: you can say, for example, that it is a country of fusion, of various populations, there is no need of “race”. This idea of fusion is the old idea that is being strongly rejected. But that was part of the citizens’ mentality. (Interview 6b, an academic).*

In this sense, it comes close to the Portuguese repertoire. It also contrasts with multiculturalism in its strong form, i.e. as an inscription of ethnic identity in the state structure with subsequent impacts on public policies towards a given population and its institutional visibility. Social cohesion is maintained through an identity pact that expresses the Brazilian national character – a certain *Brazilianness* – where the prominence of racial-ethnic categorizations has no effect. Differently from the following repertoire, however, the importance of individual citizenship combines with the centrality of the logic of miscegenation and hybridization, not only cultural, but also biological. Society is coherent and unitary but runs the risk of fragmentation if the racial identities arising from this are publicly recognized. Boundaries between groups are fuzzy; social and cultural mixing are part of this national ethos, as stated by the letter protesting against affirmative action, published in the press,

*(...) the Brazilian nation has engendered an identity that falls back on the anti-racist idea of “mestizaje” and has produced laws criminalizing racism [...] The artificial fabrication of “official races” and the selective distribution of privileges according to racial labels injects the bloodstream of society with the venom of racism, with its parade of hatred and resentment. In Brazil it would amount to a radical revision of our identity and to renouncing the attainable utopia of universal citizenship [quoted from 113 Anti-racist Citizens against Racial Laws, *Folha de São Paulo*, 14-05-2008, my translation]*

Clearly, this repertoire establishes continuity between ethnic and racial mixing and the principle of citizenship. Thus, hybridity is also the symbolic space for integration and relates not only to a cultural horizontalization, but ultimately to an essentialist sharing of the same ethos that makes every differentiation ineffective. Social fusionism derives its meaning from the combination of social integration and a cultural and biological merger.

Exactly the opposite is true of the second repertoire. This is organized around the subjects of the perennial division of Brazilian society, the rejection of the identity pact, and the perception of society as being delineated by operational racial lines, impinging on the individual's social status and trajectories. This repertoire emphasizes the overlapping between racialization and social structure. It is thus labelled *structural-categorical*. A reformulation of the previous allegiance to national identity is woven around racism, racial inequality and the historical subordination of black people. Indeed, the nation is no longer the symbolic place generating unity, or any of its cultural attributes. The story of this construction is one that subordinated black people, so they could never gain equal footing in its narrative. In order to assume a new role in this collective narrative, it is necessary to incorporate the category that defines a very specific social position mediated by ethnicity; it is necessary to gain an "ethnic conscience". As Nilma Bentes, an old militant from the Black United Movement, puts it, it is not enough to be conscious of your colour, "you need to have an acute perception of belonging to a subjugated and exploited people in the past and in the present" (Alberty and Pereira, 2007: 526). One interviewee formulates this conception as follows:

*(...) There is a very important thing in this issue of black consciousness: it is crucial that you accept yourself as black. Why is it so hard to be black in Brazil (...)? And it's one of the things we call black consciousness, that is, being aware that you are black. You are not ashamed to be black, are not trying to become whiter, as happened to me in my adolescence. (Interview. 1b, state manager)*

This repertoire is organized by ideas of difference and fracture, not unity. Ethnic identity is no longer a matter of identification. It has a primordial inescapable characteristic. Simultaneously, it is open to politicization, particularly because it is conceived as a competitive ethnicity that seeks to establish more equitable access to the state's resources (Pieterse, 2007). While it states that racialization precedes "state social engineering", it endorses a strategic racialization by which group boundaries depend upon strong collective identifications:

*(...) black consciousness goes further than the Black Movement because, in order to be aware, you only need to accept, you don't need to have [political] links, you have them in your inner self (...) a worker, for example... one thing is to say, I'm black, I'm proud of being black, and if he can, if he is black, he can look his boss in the eye and say: I'm black, I'm proud of it. (Interview 18b, an academic)*

Culture is not enough to supersede what is considered to be deep structural asymmetries. Co-existence is merely the surface hiding deeper mechanisms of discrimination and social distance. This implies a thorough revision of the miscegenation paradigm and the consequent negation of a hegemonic version of the national identity. Boundaries between groups are thus symbolically reinforced. Mixing is no longer an option whereas “becoming black”, as one interviewee mentioned, amounts to “not letting yourself whiten”.

Finally, the third repertoire bridges the two previous ones. Dimensions such as *national identity*, *racialization*, *categorization* and *inequality* are also its salient features. However, it takes an intermediate position with regard to constructing boundaries between groups and how these play out when disputing memberships. The importance of a specific national ethos for the organization of everyday social relations is recognized, provided it allows the inversion of the hegemonic culture by those who are considered falsely represented by it. In other words, this representation can be stated polyphonically, rather than serve as a vehicle for expressing the ideology of an elite.

*The construction of nationality remains very much a nationality based on miscegenation. (...) In a way, phenomena such as indigenous law, quilombo recognition etc. put into question the idea of a homogenising national identity. And racial discrimination, as well, as is evident, this myth is questioned. But I think that it still holds value; it continues to serve as a regulatory framework for social relations. (Interview 5b, an academic,).*

Reckoning the importance of the ethos of mixing is consequential for the fluidity of ethnic identity boundaries. Racial and ethnic categories become a matter of choice, based, however, on situational conditions where racism and prejudice operate. Identities are negotiable. They stand as identifications, because there is nothing inevitable in them. This reasoning is akin to the definition of optional ethnicity (Waters, 1990). Contrary to the previous repertoire, ethnic identifications are not fixed and individuals can choose those aspects that are more appealing to them.

*He [...] is of Japanese descent and identifies himself as brown in the census, because he is not white; yellow is not a category that he finds satisfactory... so he has a skin that is a little darker – you know Japan has some unrecognized ethnic contradictions. The Okinawa people have a slightly darker skin colour, right? So he may well say: What is my colour – brown! (Interview 11b, a state manager)*

Furthermore, ethnic identifications may assume a public character, due to their political mobilization. This assumes the need for compensatory conditions, target-

ing particular groups that are culturally and racially classified, without denying the importance of universalistic solutions. For example, the category black is taken as political and symbolic but mobilized as a metaphor for public claims. Because collective identities are permanently subjected to reflexive processes determined by the inter-subjective quality of these classifications, we call this repertoire *dialogical-categorical*.

In sum, we find considerable variation in the way symbolic boundaries are constructed and in the repertoires used to organize their social meanings. National identity remains a salient feature of any of them. However, classifications such as that of Bouchard (2011), which, in Brazil, identify the paradigm of miscegenation par excellence, fail in their historical account as well as in their consideration of competing discourses in the public sphere. This leads us to conclude in favour of a plurality of repertoires, and against the unity of a national cultural paradigm. I have linked this plurality to the unsettled institutional conditions, which pitch descriptions of the accommodation of diversity against each other.

A second aspect is that the prominence of categorization is not (always) elided by a discourse on the fluidity of ethnic and racial classifications. They still matter when contexts of discrimination and inequality shape peoples' opportunities and interactions. Though this last consideration is trivial, interculturality and hybridization as ideological supports for the perceptions of diversity, tend to negate the enduring importance of categorizations.

Thus, these three repertoires indicate three forms of using boundaries fleshed out by the relative influence of cultural and institutional changes. This ranges from a dilution of the national ethos, where the boundaries of social solidarity are circumscribed by the specific history of the Brazilian nation, to the salience of new boundaries in the strategic options of social movements, and on to the dialogism of optional ethnic-racial identifications. In turn, these do not constitute definite formulations of particular social groups, but rather are variable in their social origin. We find different adherence among academics and senior civil servants, though less among the activists of social movements, which can be explained by the necessary instrumentalization for political action.

Two of the repertoires draw systematically upon national identity scripts. In fact, the central narrative of national identity upholds these repertoires to a far greater extent than their contender. In spite of cosmopolitan or transnational criticism of national meanings it remains important to acknowledge the structuring power of these scripts in our understanding of the way ethnic and racial diversity is accommo-

dated. This does not mean a slippage into the resilience of national models; instead, national history remains a significant framework with which to build conceptions of collective boundaries and the space of their recognition.

## 4 Concluding remarks

Two main aspects may be underscored as a conclusion, one claiming a higher level of generality and the other delving into specific detail. Regarding the former, the national cases examined suggest two broad tendencies. On the one hand, what seems to be a return to multiculturalism in its strong form is represented in the contested repertoires of Brazil. The recognition of collective identities and its inscription in the sphere of the state are part of this package. On the other hand, state-sponsored interculturality and the discursive support of the accommodation of diversity as ethnic co-existence, rejects both strong membership ties and state recognition of such boundaries.

More specifically, the cases examined suggest a system of binary comparisons that avoids teleological sequences induced by the idea of an incorporating nation-state's normativity, such as the logic sequence *assimilation-multiculturalism-interculturality*. With the brevity that this space required, I have tried to take a historicizing view of two paths that contribute to the social organization of difference. In these processes, again following Eisenstadt (2003), I have paid particular attention to the role of elites as the promulgators of visions and codifications of belonging. I conclude by listing as the seemingly essential aspects of these processes of social change.

Firstly, the process in Portugal suggests a de-ethnicization trend, while in Brazil we are witnessing re-ethnicization. In our view, Portugal reflects a European trend that ethnic consciousness stems from stigmatization or a closing-up. The Brazilian case shows that ethnic consciousness is displayed in the public sphere, taken to reframe and symbolically reposition a once subordinate identity. The most concrete example is the recognition of the *Quilombo* communities and their search for their unique ethnic and racial roots. The strengthening of this process lies in the expansion of racial and ethnic codifications in institutional grammars and the actors' repertoires, e.g. the "structural-categorical" and "dialogical-categorical" ones coined here.

Secondly, at the level of the codification of ethnic belonging, we witness, on the one hand, an insistence on multiple-identity affiliations (the fragmentation of subject positions) and their interchangeable properties, which were suggested by the intercultural-

tural rhetoric in Portugal and which was labelled the “ethnic conviviality” repertoire. On the other hand, in Brazil, the formal political and institutional discourse prefigures a shift from open and interchangeable categories towards assertive collective definitions. Membership of collective identities with primordial characteristics – or subjective adhesion to primordial categories – seems to be an effect of the politics of belonging to ethnic groups in Brazil today. In this context, particularisms gain prominence in the public sphere as potential mediators of emancipatory claims. They aim at the extension of political and legal mechanisms in order to accommodate other (new) political categories.

Thirdly, the politicization of identities has led to the collectivisation of rights (the logic of differentiated citizenship), materialized in affirmative action measures and positive discrimination. In its turn, this collectivisation has reinforced the politics of membership and its expression in the public sphere in a dialectic movement of rights and identities (Benhabib, 2007), as opposed to a growing tendency towards the individualisation of rights (universal liberal citizenship) supported by the idea that “strong” identifications are naturally replaced by civic memberships where the liberal citizenship bond absorbs all collective differences and distinctions.

Fourthly, rearranging ethnic and racial boundaries as a result of problematising previous social hierarchies of colour or ethnic labels contrasts with a social logic of the dilution of ethnic boundaries towards culturalised horizontalisation. In other words, the culturalisation of relations between groups and of exchanges with the state in Portugal, under the banner of interculturality, contrasts with the social distribution of resources and power in the relations between groups and in exchanges with the state in Brazil. Finally, institutional rearrangements have not been accomplished without fundamental changes in cognitive frameworks. Thus, in order to launch an affirmative action campaign, Brazilian society had to imagine itself in a different way. The three repertoires that we have singled out are the result of an institutionally unsettled situation and its respective indefiniteness in terms of organizing meaning and order in the social world. Power relations and institutional arrangements intertwine with cognitive frameworks, which, by implication, freeze into something like a model (or paradigm). Yet, in institutionally unsettled times, cognitive frameworks are themselves displaced and power relations reassessed. In such conditions, conflict between repertoires is likely to emerge. For instance, when Bouchard (2011) assigns Brazil a paradigm that he calls “mixity”, he is actually referring to a historical definition of national belonging. As I have tried to show, this specific “idiom” is under strain and can no longer claim hegemony over competing definitions of belonging.

In this case, I argue against such unitarian visions, setting a multiplicity of repertoires against them, that, as Ann Swidler (1986) shows, emerge in situations of institutional disarray. Contrariwise, when institutional arrangements are settled and popular and institutional repertoires correspond, we may expect to find a regime of incorporation revealed in discourses consensually shared, policies no longer contested, and an undisputed national idiom.



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