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Bounded inclusion: racialization and community-building in  
the EU discourse on 'immigrant' education

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## **Introduction**

The European Union (EU) represents one of the most ambitious supranational political projects in current world affairs. Its main objective is the creation of a common economic, social and political space across Europe. To achieve this goal, EU institutions, especially the European Commission, have supported policies that encouraged the liberalization of the movement of goods, capital, services and people across the borders of the Union's member states (MSs). Policy areas such as trade and, more recently, border control have been at the forefront of EU policy-making activity. Over the years, however, the EU has paid a growing attention to the cultural dimension of the European integration project (Shore 2000). The rationale for this interest is that the political and economic pillars of this project alone would not have been sufficient to make it successful unless they were supported by common ideas and values among European citizens.

Education is one of the most important components of this 'EU cultural policy'. Since its inception in the late 1950s, the EU (then 'European Communities' and later on 'European Community') has engaged with educational issues. Until the late 1970s, education was seen mostly through an economic prism as a means to further the Community's economic integration. Since then, the scope of EU involvement in this field has noticeably increased, to the point that today scholars talk about an autonomous 'European educational space' (Novoa and Lawn 2002). This space comprises initiatives, networks, institutions and texts regarding the strategies and goals of education in the EU. Within this space, the organization and content of education has been transformed from a purely national issue to one in which the EU as supranational entity plays a major role. The EU educational space has also progressively become more layered. From the initial economically-driven emphasis on vocational training, now the EU engages with broader issues such as 'culture', 'diversity', 'integration' and 'citizenship education'. The integration of immigrants has acquired growing relevance in EU educational activities (Eurydice 2004; Gundara 1997). From its initial interest in making MSs respect the cultural and educational rights of temporary guest workers, the EU now calls for the

implementation of intercultural education<sup>1</sup> (IE) to foster inclusion and integration of (EU and non-EU) migrants and non-migrant youth and the European dimension of education to construe a ‘new’ trans-ethnic European identity.

The emergence of a European educational space, and especially the initiatives directed at the integration of immigrants, is generally portrayed in the mainstream literature as a progressive and welcomed development in European educational approaches, for it represents a move away from the nationalistic approaches that historically have characterized this field in the region (and elsewhere) and a more suitable framework to deal with the challenges of today’s multicultural societies (Campani 2002; Leclercq 2003). When addressing the shortcomings of EU educational initiatives for immigrants, most authors tend to refer to the inappropriate implementation of intercultural practices by EU member states, and to the contradiction between educational policies that welcome and foster diversity and border policies which are restrictive towards non-EC migrants (see, for example, Campani 1998, 2002; Gundara 1998). Moreover, European scholars of IE seem to not see a contradiction between the stated goal of IE of construing a flexible and trans-ethnic identity and that of a European dimension in education of promoting a new European identity and citizenship based on common

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<sup>1</sup> Interculturalism is the educational approach that from the 1980s has mustered support throughout the Europe to respond to the challenges posed by the free flow of EU nationals within Europe and the increasing presence of non-EU migrants in its member states. This pedagogical approach, often referred to as the pedagogy of ‘welcoming’ and ‘dialogue’ (Sirna 1997, 88), aims at addressing the problem of immigrant students’ poor academic performance and their limited social integration in the host society. One of the approach’s main premises is that cultural and linguistic differences constitute the main obstacle hindering the integration of immigrants or sojourners students with local populations (Paige 1997; Alred et al. 2003; Rapari 2007b). To overcome these barriers, scholars in the field of intercultural education recommend that schools promote openness and tolerance towards cultural and linguistic differences and equip students with the cognitive skills and knowledge necessary to deal with diversity, while providing teachers and other school staff with the professional skills to work effectively in multicultural environment. One of the main goals of this educational approach is the creation of an intercultural identity which is apt for post/modern times in which cultural encounters have become the norm in modern nation-states (Alred et al. 2003, 4). This identity is anti-racist, free of prejudice and mobile since the boundaries between self and others “may be flexible, dynamic, under constant review” (Murphy-Lejeune 2003).

cultural heritage, universal values, and a future characterized by ‘unity in diversity’. Other scholars have pointed to the key role that the European dimension in education is playing in creating an ‘ethno-cultural’ community which excludes non-EU and non-OECD students (Hansen 1998)<sup>2</sup>. However, their analysis shares with those of scholars who are more supportive of the EU project and the official EU narrative the uncritical acceptance of the tropes of ‘migrants’, ‘integration’ and ‘multiculturalism’.

In this paper I argue that these tropes are not innocent and unproblematic; rather, they are part and parcel of an evolving discourse about immigrant education that allows the EU to maintain a façade of multicultural benevolence founded on human rights, good governance and equality<sup>3</sup>. In this discourse, both the intercultural education and the European dimension in education are deeply interconnected insofar as without IE – and related intercultural identity – the emergence of the European dimension of education – and related new European identity – could have not emerged. Crucially, these dimensions are central to the “bounded” inclusion of EU migrants and the differential inclusion of non-EU migrants, with the former construed as members of the community and the latter as ‘outsiders within’ (Cederman 2001; Balibar 1991c, 99). In this sense, IE constitutes the epistemological foundation that renders possible and legitimate the production of the racializing discourse of the European dimension in education.

In order to critically analyse the EU educational project and trace its trajectory over time, in this paper I will focus on the main policy initiatives<sup>4</sup> on immigrant youth education elaborated by the EU from the 1970s onwards. These initiatives will not be examined not as a formal and transparent set of educational policies containing guidelines, measures and neutral categories, but as a type of

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<sup>2</sup> European immigration policies are less restrictive towards nationals of western industrialized countries who belong to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (Brochmann, 1999).

<sup>3</sup> For the ‘productive’ role of ambiguity in policy discourse see Pease Chock, 1995.

<sup>4</sup> In this paper I include among policy initiatives documents produced by the Commission of the European Communities, the Council of Europe and the Council of the European Union. I do not make a legal/conceptual distinction between directives, recommendations, resolutions, green papers, white papers and reports since they all contribute to the discursive formation I analyse to assess its coherence.

discursive formation. Understanding policies as discourse means considering them as practices of truth and power production reflecting the interests of their producers. As other discursive productions, policies construe the objects on which they center and articulate the ways in which can speak about them. As projective and enactive texts, they describe future contexts and “present a plan of action in response to a perceived need, but also construct the action and need in particular ways.” (Liddicoat and Diaz 2008, 138, 137). Despite their veneer of social reform, policies as a form of social regulation tend to support, rather than undermine, the status quo (Teasley 2008, 250). EU educational policies on immigrant youth – I contend – follow similar political dynamics.

The paper is structured as follows. In the first part I will outline the main tenets of the analytical framework guiding this work. In the second section I consider the policy developments characterizing the EU educational field during the 1970s, while in the third, fourth and fifth section I examine the evolution of these policies from the 1980s up to today. In concluding, I will consider some of the implications of my argument for the study of educational practices in the EU.

### **Discourse, racialization and (supra)nation-building**

Critical scholars have stressed the ongoing centrality of discourse in shaping the knowledge and practices that legitimate inclusions and exclusion in modern nation-states (Razack 2002, 1-20; Balibar 1991d, 86-106; Foucault 1997, 239-264)<sup>5</sup>. Given that discourse provides an important way of linking knowledge and power, in my paper I will reveal how the EU discourse on immigrant education helps realize the

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<sup>5</sup> In this paper, I consider the EU space of education as a discourse in a Foucauldian way; that is, as “a group of statements which provide a language for talking about—i.e. a way of representing—a particular kind of knowledge about a topic” (Hall 1992, 201-202). When statements about a topic are made within a particular discourse, “the discourse makes it possible to construct the topic in a certain way. It also limits the other ways in which the topic can be constructed” (ibid.). Therefore, in analysing educational discourse regarding the education of immigrant youth we must pay attention both to the “plenitude of meaning” and to the “scarcity of meaning” with what is ‘impossible or unreasonable within certain discursive locations’ (Hook 2001, 527).

EU community-building project while aiming at the bounded inclusion of EU youth and the differential integration of non-western youth. As Said notes “the will to exercise [...] control in society and history has also discovered a way to clothe, disguise, rarefy and wrap itself systematically in the language of truth, discipline, rationality, utilitarian value and knowledge. And this language in its naturalness, authority, professionalism, assertiveness and antitheoretical directness is [...] discourse” (Said, quoted in Hook 2001, 524). It follows that a critical analysis of educational policies requires that we dismantle the constituents of the discourse to reveal what they conceal, including “the institutional supports and social structures and practices underlying the production of truth” (ibid., 526). In analysing the discourse of immigrant education in the EU, I will pay particular attention to the ambiguity of the discourse’s main tropes namely ‘im/migrant’, ‘multiculturalism’ and ‘integration’<sup>6</sup>.

I consider EU educational policy for immigrant youth as a special kind of *racialized* educational discourse based on culture that establishes and naturalizes a distinction between the white EU migrant or national and non EU-migrant as perennial cultural ‘other’. Critical scholars have emphasized how liberal discourses produced within modernity about nations, identities, citizenship, and universalism serve to “legitimate ideologically and to rationalize politico-economically prevailing sets of racialized conditions and racist exclusions” (Goldberg 1993, 1; see also Balibar 1991b, 1994; Martiniello 2002). From this perspective, race is an indispensable organizing principle in the ongoing discursive and material boundary construction both within and outside nation-states, even in self-defined multicultural ones (Ahmed 2000; Hage 2000; Thobani, 2007). This is also true in the construction of a supranational and multicultural community such as the EU. A central component of this racialized discourse is ‘whiteness’. Whiteness is considered a position of epistemic and material privilege in modernity and/or

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<sup>6</sup> Tropes, together with other figures of speech such as metaphors, are crucial in discourse analysis, for it is through their repetition over time that the discourse about a particular social domain (such as education) constructs the very objects which it pretends to ‘realistically’ describe and objectively examine (White 1978; Goldberg 1993).

postmodernity (Frankenberg 1993; Wiegmann 1999; Ashcroft 2001). Racialized discourses centred on whiteness, which uphold and render invisible the domination exercised through and for the maintenance of white privilege, are central to not only to 'universal' conceptions of citizenship, human rights and education, but also to the 'unmarked' and 'unnamed' practices that stem from these discourses such as intercultural education (Frankenberg 1993, 1).

In this reading, the EU initiatives on immigrant education as a liberal racialized discourse of bounded membership and differential integration are tightly linked with the Union's contemporary supranational-building project. As Shore notes, the EU community-building project can be understood as the process leading to the creation of a more unified '*nation-state of Europe*' (Shore 2000, 2, emphasis in the text)<sup>7</sup>. One of the main problems haunting the EU is that of creating a 'common culture' and a unified 'people' that can be hailed by the project and ultimately legitimize it. In the case of the EU, the cultural elements that underlie national identities tend to divide European nationals (Shore 2000, 18; Soysal 2002). To achieve this goal, from the 1980s onwards the EU has been actively deploying its cultural politics to create a common past and future for its people, when it became obvious that economic means were not sufficient to create a EU community. Critical scholars of nationalism have pointed to both the importance of manufacturing 'common' pasts and futures in creating national communities and creating the 'people' to legitimize the racialized, gendered and classed external and *internal* boundaries of communities (Balibar 1991b; Yuval-Davis 1997). In more recent times, national projects have managed the arrival of previously 'non-preferred races' (e.g. Canada) by including them as 'outsiders within' despite the granting of formal citizenship. This 'inclusion' did not challenge the foundations of these projects as 'white nations', and scientifically-based notions of 'race' (Ahmed 2000; Bannerji 2000). As Bourdieu notes, the creation of 'the people' of a community

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<sup>7</sup> The Single European Act of 1987 and the Maastricht Treaty of 1992 have laid the foundations of an 'embryonic European state' (Shore 2000, 17). The problem at the moment is to create a "(...) common culture around which Europeans can unite. There is no popular 'European consciousness' to rival that of the nation-state (...)" (Shore 2000, 18).

requires a 'principle of classification' "(...) capable of producing the set of distinctive properties which characterize the members of this group, and also annulling the set of non pertinent properties which part or all of its members possess in other contexts (i.e. nationality, age or gender)" (Bourdieu 1997, 130).

National policies such as immigration and citizenship perform the same function of governing access and differential membership even in multicultural national communities (Thobani 2007; Ahmed 2000). However, within the nation, educational discourses and practices have played an important role in creating 'citizens' and maintaining hierarchies of race, class and gender (Bourdieu 1976; Dei 1996; Apple and Franklin 2004). Under their innocent gloss, educational discourses create "new histories of the nation, the 'self' and 'the other'" (Popkewitz 2001, 180; Ladson-Billings 1998). Thus, from a critical perspective, the EU educational discourse of immigrant education is one of the means of creating the community's identity, people and the much-needed distinction between the 'genuinely' and 'falsely' members (Balibar 1991c, 100; Ahmed 2000).

### **Setting the stage: the education of immigrant youth in the EU in the 1970s**

The EU's interest in migrant education begins in the 1970s, following the mass migration from Southern Europe and the Mediterranean basin to Northern Europe in the two previous decades. The Mediterranean Basin functioned as a 'reserve army of labour' for Northern Europe's industries and labour needs in low status employment sectors. While some countries allowed for limited family reunification (e.g. France), others adopted a *Gastarbeiter* system, which did not allow the stabilization of immigrant communities (e.g. Germany). Although by the 1970s many Portuguese, Spanish, Italian and Maltese communities became permanent in Northern Europe, it was believed that most migrants would return to their countries of origin (King 2000, 5-7; Cullen 1996, 119).

In this context, cultural and educational strategies were recognized as important in construing Europe as a common space (Novoa and Lawn 2002, 2-3). During the early 1970s the activities related to education increased hesitantly, since education was a sensitive issue touching on core 'assets' of a nation, such as history,



culture and language. These educational initiatives enabled the formation of a common policy of education<sup>8</sup>. As a result, educational policy was included in established institutions, and new institutions for educational policies were established (e.g. the Directorate for Research, Science and Education in 1973). However, the first EU initiatives in the educational field caused resistance by MSs<sup>9</sup> (Karlsen 2000).

Despite the opposition to the European institutions' activism, a number of policy documents regarding the education of immigrant youth were produced in this period<sup>10</sup>. In these documents equal opportunities in the field of education between migrants and nationals are established. The cultural 'encounter' between the two groups is presented as mutually enriching and contributing to the unification of Europe (COE 1976). Yet, the intervention of MSs is required since migrants' different cultural values and the educational difficulties they experience can lead to conflicts (ibid). MSs are recommended to provide information about the migrants' cultures to avoid prejudice and misunderstanding among nationals, to mainstream migrants' vocational training and to foster their educational and cultural development through the establishment of classes for the learning of the language and culture of origin (COE 1976). They are also invited to draft legislation promoting equal opportunities in education for migrants' children by meeting their specific educational needs, offering free tuition and the establishment of the second language courses (Council of the European Communities, 1977)<sup>11</sup>. Equal access for Community migrant workers to all levels of education is also recommended (COE 1977). Moreover, there is an attempt to expand the notion of equal opportunities for

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8 The term 'common policy of education' refers to "formal decisions about the aims of education and training and use of the intended means to achieve these means" (Karlsen 2002, 25).

9 Such initiatives included the 'Resolution of the European Council on European identity' (1973) and the first 'action program for education' (1976) (Karlsen 2002).

10 These are the Recommendation on the education and cultural development of migrants (COE 1976), the Council Directive on the education of the children of migrant workers (Council of the European Communities, 1977) and the European Convention on the legal status of migrant workers (COE, 1977).

11 However, this policy directive referred only to the educational rights of EU migrant workers' children (see. Art. 1).

migrants and their children to “all aspects of living and working conditions” to favour their social advancement based on the *close* ties among MSs. Finally, the initiatives aiming at ensuring that community migrants are not treated in less favourable terms than nationals are to be understood as a result of the Council of Europe’s goal “to achieve a greater unity between its members for the purpose of safeguarding and realising the ideals and principles which are their common heritage and facilitating their economic and social progress while respecting human rights and fundamental freedoms” (ibid.)<sup>12</sup>.

The EU policy initiatives of the decade have been simultaneously praised and criticized by EU educational scholars. They are praised for the Community’s attention to migrants’ educational and cultural needs and the acknowledgment of their educational disadvantage (Campani 2002, 76-78). In the EU mainstream discourse, the documents of the 1970s are considered innovative and a sign of the community’s progressiveness and benevolence since the measures provided for migrant youth included all migrant youth, even third country nationals<sup>13</sup>. Yet, they are criticized because they confirm the notion held by MSs that migrants would return to their country of origin, hence the focus on teaching languages and cultures of origin (ibid., 76; Cullen 1996, 121). While the educational provisions have grasped scholarly attention, the trope of ‘im/migrant’ and the Community’s cultural politics of integration have been under analysed. The attention to culture and the equal access to education for all migrants should not be taken automatically as a progressive or anti-racist stance on the part of the Community. In the 1970s the Community’s various immigration systems consisted in guest worker regimes and therefore the presence of EC and non-EC migrants did not call into question the racial/national identity of the individual member-states (Rex 1995, 247). More importantly, the Community’s organization of ‘im/migrant education’ as non-discriminatory reflects a broader international trend in processes of nationalization

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12 The European Convention of the status of migrant workers refers only to migrants who are nationals of the Council of Europe member states (COE, 1979b, Introduction).

13 See for example the Report on the Education of Migrants’ Children in the European Union (1994,13-14) and Facets of Interculturality in Education (Leclercq 2003, 13-19).

and racialization in modern western states identity (Goldberg 2001, 181). On both sides of the Atlantic, in the period following anti-colonial and civil rights movement the maintenance of overtly racist policies would damage national and supranational interests both economically and symbolically (Thobani 2007, 147; Small 1993). So the progressive and civil inclusion of non-EC migrants can be understood as a response dictated by an international 'crisis' of whiteness as a transnational racial identity (Thobani 2007, 148; Balibar, 1991b; Bonnett, 2000). However, a response, or the transformation of whiteness, came via the *racialization* of cultural identities (Goldberg 1993).

Educational initiatives in this period also allow for important insights into the European community project as a whole. Even if at the time the Community's right to intervene in immigrant education stemmed from its power to ensure individuals' mobility rights for establishing the common market, in these initial documents the EU begins to construe itself as a unit consisting of "cultural, social and political areas, as well as functioning as an organ for economic co-operation" and education is seen as instrumental "to the full and healthy development of the Community" (EEC 1976, quoted in Hansen 1998, 10)<sup>14</sup>.

By expanding its role beyond economic co-operation and into to the cultural, social and political arenas, the EU starts to imagine and realize itself as a state (Cullen 1996, 115; Anderson 1991, 21). Simultaneously, a (supra)national narrative begins to take shape, a narrative based on common values and mutually enriching contacts. In other words, the EU cultural politics are already at work construing a convivial community of European nations (Shore 2000, 1; Karlsen 2002, 25-26; Ahmed 2000). However, in this early period there are two separate sets of policies regarding the education of 'migrants'. On one hand, the Recommendation on the

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14 Hansen is referring to the "Resolution of the Council and of the Ministers of Education meeting within the Council, of 13 December 1976, concerning measures to be taken to improve the preparation of young people for work and to facilitate their transition from education to working life". The document promotes promoted pupil and teacher mobility and interchange within the community and contacts between educational establishments concerned with teacher education and educational activities with a European content.

education and cultural development of migrants (COE 1976) includes non-Community migrants, while, on the other hand, all the other documents produced in this era only refer to Community migrants and their families. If in the first document both Community and non-Community migrants are included and reference is made to migrants' cultural values, educational difficulties and the potential for conflict that their presences may engender, in the other documents regarding Community migrants there is no reference to such possibilities. Moreover, it is in the second set of documents that equality of treatment in all aspects of life between (EU) migrants and nationals is recommended. So while the 1976 document allows for the Community to construe a façade of cosmopolitan benevolence and inclusion, other policy initiatives clearly made a distinction between EU and non-EU migrants.

### **Consolidating the discourse: the EU and the education of immigrant youth in the 1980s**

The 1980s can be considered as a transitional phase for the EU and its Member States. Most European countries become net receivers of immigrants, thanks to large migratory flows from the 'East' and the 'South'. Governments denounced the 'migration pressure', voicing concerns over their labour market, welfare systems, and security. Anxieties were also related to threat that migrants' settlement posed to national identities, the ethnic and religious composition of the people and political stability (Brochmann 1999). Receiving countries responded with stringent immigration policies, which allowed for the stabilization of immigrant communities but also kept them in place by making the acquisition of citizenship more difficult. In many cases, even when citizenship was acquired, it was more formal than substantial (Solomos and Wrench 1993; Andall 2002).

It is in this context that the EU reformulated its policy regarding im/migrant education. The policy initiatives of the 1980s dissolve the ambiguity of the previous decade in relation to migrants' eventual return to the countries of origin. The new initiatives reveal a focus on cultural identity, integration and a strong support for intercultural education for migrant youth and, later for all youth (Rocha-Trindade and Sobral Mendes 1997). Sociological terms such as 'identity' and 'culture' begin to surface in the EU discourses, even the educational one (Shore 2000). Moreover, it is

recognized that the European integration project cannot be realized only relying on an economist model of inclusion. For the project to gain momentum and legitimacy, the social and cultural dimensions of the community have to be built as well as a European 'identity' and 'people'. A "People's Europe" had to be created (ibid.). This shift, coupled with an awareness that many migrant communities had permanently settled in the host countries, had a significant impact on the Community's discourse on 'immigrant' education and on the most significant policy documents produced in this period<sup>15</sup>. Taken together, the EU initiatives in this field signal the consolidation of the new Union's discourse about education in general and immigrant education in particular.

To foster the integration of settled immigrants, it is necessary that MSs pay attention to their "educational and cultural development" (COE 1983). The education of migrants becomes an increasingly multifaceted affair. National educational policies must allow migrants "to participate fully in the social life of the host country", to have "equal opportunity in relation to nationals of the host country for their personal and professional development" and "to foster their own development and to *enhance their contribution* to the society in which they live." (ibid.). Consistent with the construction of EC migrants as 'friends', MSs are encouraged to enhance migrants' contribution in the host society in economic, social, cultural and demographic terms (Council of the European Communities 1984a). The close and amicable relationship between migrants and natives is revealed in the description of second-generation migrants. These individuals, who constitute the largest migrant group in the 1980s, are characterized by "possible *familiarity* with the habits, customs, and culture of the countries in question" and "the extent to which they may have become *integrated* in the society there" (Council of the European Communities 1984a, emphasis added). Moreover, MSs should sponsor activities in which second-generation migrants "foster their *own cultural*

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15 The documents considered are: the Council of Europe Resolution on migrants' education (COE 1983), the European Council's Recommendation on Second Generation Migrants (Council of the European Communities 1984), the Recommendation on the training of teachers in education for intercultural understanding (COE 1984) and the Recommendation on the education of migrants' children (COE 1989).

*identity* and (to) establish *friendly* contacts with the local population, and participate in the *local cultural life*" (ibid., emphasis added).

In addition to the educational provisions recommended during the previous decade, the 1980s are characterized by the introduction of IE for the academic success and social integration of migrants (COE 1983). In the 1983 Resolution a specific research agenda is proposed, which include the creation of parameters for defining "cultural identity" and "related behaviour", "rigidity of cultural attitudes, rejection of other cultures, racism" and "situations and processes of social marginalization". By the end of the 1980s the use of IE is recommended for the education of *all* youth since it is "only way of making use of the valuable asset represented by the presence of young migrants in schools", to meet the needs of schools which are transformed by migration into multicultural schools and to prepare all youth to live in a multicultural society (COE 1989). These elements will also be reiterated in the initiatives on teacher education. Given the central role teachers have in the socialization of youth, IE must be incorporated in their professional training. To overcome their own cultural biases, teachers in training should know more about educational systems and cultures other than their own, use materials that give a 'truer' image of other cultures and engage in teacher exchanges (COE 1984).

The 1980s policy initiatives define the EU as a multicultural community. This phenomenon is presented as irreversible and positive, since it may lead to "*closer links* between the *peoples of Europe* as well as between Europe and other parts of the world", through "a fuller understanding of the cultures and ways of life of other peoples, as well as, in the event, of their *common cultural heritage*" (COE 1984, 1, emphasis added). For this reason, the educational interventions at the Community level are influenced by the goal of developing "a greater unity *between its members* promoting, *inter alia*, their economic and *social* development" (ibid., emphasis added). However, in the documents integration within a multicultural society requires appropriate management. All EU youth need to be prepared to life in this 'new' type of society. The documents of the period all promote IE as means of overcoming prejudice against difference heightened by 'traditional' forms of

nationalism. The extension of the educational approach to all students becomes a way to ensure integration by teaching open-mindedness, understanding of cultural diversity and reciprocal dialogue.

The community's interventions in the educational field in the 1980s are generally regarded by European scholars, particularly those supportive of IE, and by EU mainstream discourse as a series of progressive moves promoting the integration of all 'migrants', the positive understanding of cultural identities and differences and an understanding of Europe as a multicultural society<sup>16</sup>. However, as Pease Chock (1995) argues, the ability to construe a discourse as apparently non-racializing, classing and gendering, yet actually reinforcing these structures of domination can be achieved through the use of ambiguity. The first of these ambiguities consists in the use of the term 'migrant'. In the EU discourse the term 'migrant' refers to all migrants (EU and non-EU); 'integration' is understood as that of all migrants; celebration of 'diversity' is of all diversity; and 'multiculturalism' encompasses all cultures present in Europe including non-Western cultures. However, the EU initiatives refer to the *EU migrant*, to the celebration of *EU diversity* and *identities* and the multiculturalism to be fostered is that of *EU cultures*<sup>17</sup>. It is therefore possible to provide an alternative reading of the EU educational discourse with its tropes of 'migrant', 'integration' and 'multiculturalism' and the role of IE. In this reading, the EU initiatives are meant to be part of a broader effort of the Community to construe a 'people' with a 'European identity' and to support 'social cohesion' (Shore 2000; Hingel 2001, 6).

How is this identity constructed? Consistent with previous descriptions, the Community workers and their children are presented as non-threats to the host country, as a 'source of enrichment' and a 'valuable asset' since they contribute to the economic success and the social and cultural fabric of individual nations and to the Community to which the peoples of Europe belong (COE 1983; COE 1984; COE

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16 See for example Chang and Checchin 1996; Rocha-Trinidad and Sobral-Mendes 1997; Campani 2002 and Eurydice 2004.

17 It was only in 1988, after most documents were drafted, that a Council Directive attached to the 1977 Directive pledges MSs to apply the educational provisions to non-EU youth.

1989). While previously the equal treatment and non-discrimination of EU migrants was a consequence both of their mobility rights within the community and the community's ideals and values, in the 1980s the "exaltation"<sup>18</sup> of migrants is based on the construction of a similarity between EU migrants and nationals, namely their common 'cultural heritage'. In fact, it is this 'cultural heritage'-Europeanness- that allows for second-generation migrants to naturally cross cultural-boundaries and become familiar with and partially integrated in the host cultural community *prior* to the implementation of IE for migrants (COE 1984). IE is then simply a tool to hone this natural ability of EU migrants and to give scientific legitimacy to this possibility. Educational policies, among other legislative interventions at the Community level, naturalize these migrants' belonging in the Community through their cultural background, or their 'Europeanness'. Moreover, Europeanness allows for the recognition of (national) differences but most importantly for the recognition of an underlying "we-ness". By doing so, however, the EU discourse of immigrant education perpetuates and legitimizes what is done at Europe's borders and through national immigration and citizenship policies. Indeed, it does not contradict, as many European scholars claim, the racialized external boundaries of "Fortress Europe" (see, for example, Campani 2002; Gundara 1997; Hansen 1997; Verma, 1997)

If the construction of EU migrants is that of a 'friend' so are the Community's nations. As Ahmed notes, the nation-building process does not entail that all nations are defined against other nations; rather, nations are defined as "close to some others (friends), and further away from other others (strangers)" (Ahmed 2000, 100). So the (EU) migrant gains visibility as a potential friend. In the EU educational discourse, despite their differences, the Community's nations are construed as 'friends' bond by their common Europeanness. These cultural differences are to be

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18 According to Thobani "exaltation" is a technique of power which has been "key to the constitution of the national subject as a particular kind of human being, a member of a particular kind of community, hence ontologically and existentially distinct from other the strangers to this community" (Thobani 2007, 5).



cherished, because they stem from a shared heritage, and a common belief in democracy and the rule of law.

While the Europeanization of states is in the making through the harmonization of policies in various policy areas, the introduction of IE is the first step in the Europeanization of citizens. This process does require assimilation of migrants to the culture of the host country, but, at first, the acknowledgement that 'multiple' identities are possible and, then, the creation of a homogenizing 'intercultural'/trans-ethnic European identity. For this reason the Community forcefully supports the expansion of IE to EU nationals. What better means to create a community and communal identities if not through schooling? While the promotion of IE to all youth has been hailed by scholars as a positive move away from the creation of monolithic national identities, they 'forget' that the adoption of IE has to be set in the context of the EU integration project, and that the adoption of an intercultural identity is a political tool which allows for the co-existence of national identities within a broader community, a community which is nonetheless highly raced, gendered and classed. In fact, from the Community's point of view, the goal is to "strengthen in young people a sense of European identity and make clear to them the value of European civilization and the foundations on which the European peoples intend to base their development today" (Hansen 1998, 11-12). Moreover, the European cultural model " (...) is distinguished by the fact that it is not designed to supersede or replace national cultures (...).In the relationship between European culture and national cultures there is no substitution, no transcendence, no conflict or even compromise, simply reciprocal enrichment and cross fertilization." (CEC 1988, quoted in Hansen 1998). In this context, IE constitutes the epistemological grounds of the notion of multiple co-existing identities as a form of knowledge that is a central component of the "strategic formation" underlying the racialized discourse of Europeanization (Said 1979, 20)<sup>19</sup>.

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19 In exposing his methodological devices for studying a discourse such as Orientalism Said highlights the notion of strategic formation which refers to a way of "analysing the relationship between the texts and the way in which groups of texts, types of texts, even textual genres, acquire mass, density, and referential power among themselves and thereafter in culture at large." (Said 1979, 20).

Ultimately, the discourse of 'immigrants' education, similarly to other educational discourses and practices, allows for the construction of an ideal trans-ethnic European 'self', 'nation' and non-European 'other' (Popkewitz 2001). The establishment of a sameness within the community allows EU nationals, whether migrant or not, to recognize one another as members of the same community. While the politics of recognition is construed through the complex processes of EU educational initiatives, it simultaneously organizes the mis/recognition of other 'cultural identities' that do not belong. The cultural differences that cannot be arranged along the spectrum of European differences will be those of Europe's 'outsiders within' The 'politics of recognition', which begin to emerge in the 1980s, will be fully developed in the following decade.

### **The discourse reaches maturity: towards a 'European dimension in education'**

One of the most important institutional developments affecting the EU educational policies in the 1990s is the Maastricht Treaty. The Treaty, which was drafted in 1991 and entered into force in the following year, enabled the Community to propose cooperative action in the field of education, in particular in school-level education, and laid the foundations for a comprehensive and coherent approach to complement actions taken by MSs. This new focus has "intriguing implications for educational policies dealing with cultural issues" (Hansen 1997, 8). Indeed, while being resisted in the previous years, the cultural politics of European identity and people take a front seat in EU-led initiatives in this period (Shore 2000; Hansen 1998)<sup>20</sup>.

The urge to link education with culture is one of the key components of the project of a 'European dimension in education' (Hansen 1998; Karlsen 2002). This dimension is emphasized in various policy documents (see, for example,

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<sup>20</sup> The documents considered are: the Green Paper on the European Dimension in Education (Commission of the European Communities 1993), the Report on the Education of Migrants' Children in the European Union (Commission of the European Communities 1994), the White Paper on Education and Training: Towards the Learning Society (Commission of the European Communities 1996) and the report Accomplishing Europe through Education and Training (European Commission 1996).

Commission of the European Communities 1993, 1994, 1996, European Commission 1996). The educational goals set by the Community are that of providing youth with the skills necessary for the new economy and the skills needed for 'social' challenge. Education is understood in a holistic manner and therefore should 'form' the individual and the people for tomorrow's society. In other words, education and training provide "the reference points needed to affirm *collective identity*, while at the same time permitting further advances in science and technology. The independence they give, if shared by everyone, strengthens the *sense of cohesion* and *anchors the feeling of belonging*. Europe's cultural diversity, its long existence and the mobility between different cultures are invaluable assets for adapting to the new world on the horizon." (Commission of the European Communities 1996, 28; European Commission 1996, 15, emphasis added).

In order to create the 'people' through the 'European dimension in education', all educational and training systems at the compulsory and non-compulsory level must actively promote a 'European vision' (Commission of the European Communities 1996, 28; European Commission 1996, 15). The promotion of Europeanness is to be sustained through language teaching so that youth are proficient in three European languages, by embedding the teaching of European citizenship across the curriculum and by modifying content in the fields of literature and social sciences, with particular attention to the field of history which should be cleared of nationalistic undertones (European Commission 1996, Commission of the European Communities, 1994). The European dimension in education has also the role of promoting "civic-mindedness and the values of pluralism and tolerance" (Commission of the European Communities 1994, 10), and in this sense it can be used in fighting racism and xenophobia. The Union in fact must defend non-EU nationals "both in the interest of its *own position in the world*, and in the name of human rights and fundamental freedoms" (ibid., 14, emphasis added).

An important tenet of the emerging European dimension in education is the emphasis on the EU as a multicultural society in which integration must occur through the respect of 'differences' and the maintenance of national identities (Commission of the European Communities 1994; European Commission 1996).

The multicultural citizens of Europe (whether EU or not) must be “identifiable as citizens of their own countries but integrated in the host societies, they remain attached to their countries of origin, but are open to their everyday environment” (Commission of the European Communities 1994, 10). However, if integration and the peaceful co-existence of culturally different communities are to be achieved, the number of non-EU migrants has to be regulated by managing migratory flows (ibid.,10-11).

The idea of making European citizenship a ‘rallying point’ for European youth does not place IE on the backburner. The intercultural school is presented as the ideal type, since “interculturality in the school focuses the whole problematic of citizenship” (European Commission 1996, 19). The most appropriate pedagogical approach employed in these schools is ‘border pedagogy’, a strategy for “learning about the cultural Other, by looking critically at how images, representations and texts are constructed and at their hidden messages” and that “facilitates learning of how to identify one’s own ‘borders’, those of others, and the borders of the external social world”. The skills necessary to the European citizen are compared to those practised in modern ethnography or as developed through IE, that is “making the familiar strange and the strange familiar: being able *to switch between standpoints and identity positions*, and empathy and critical distance.” (ibid., emphasis added).

When addressing the issue of categorizing EU and non-EU migrants, in the EU discourse elaborated in this period there is an initial recognition of differences between the two groups. It is acknowledged, for example, that while the former has mobility rights within the Community, the latter does not. However, this particular difference must not have a bearing on the educational rights of non-western immigrant youth. The academic success and social integration of all migrants is in fact in “the interest of Member States themselves and of the Union as a whole” (Commission of the European Communities 1994, 16). The integration of all migrants is necessary to avoid ‘social exclusion’ (Commission of the European Communities 1996; European Commission 1996).

In commenting upon the EU’s educational initiatives of the 1990s, some IE scholars tend to ignore the European dimension in education altogether. Others,

echoing the EU mainstream discourse, are reassured that it is a non-racist dimension in education since, as IE, it is applied to all students equally. Other scholars who are generally more favourable to the project have supported the European dimension of education and the notions of a European identity and citizenship by highlighting the 'universal' values they contains and by forgetting that these universal values co-exist with 'particularities' which make them forms of *racialized knowledge* (see for example Campani 2002 and Soysal 2002) <sup>21</sup>. On the other hand, other scholars have recognized the importance of this dimension as a fundamental political tool in furthering the EU project (Karlsen 2002) or have criticized it for creating an exclusionary 'ethno-cultural community' (Hansen 1998). What brings together these interpretations of the EU educational discourse in general, and of the European dimension in education in particular, is that both assume that (supra)nation-building is realized and performed 'visibly' and overtly. However, nation-building is a continuous process which adapts to external social – historical circumstances and can be carried out 'invisibly' (Bennett et al. 1994, Thobani 2007)

My argument is that from the 1970s the supra-nationalization of EU citizens, both migrant and non, has indeed been carried out 'invisibly'. Nationalist practices of community-building are not always explicitly elaborated. Some are certainly more 'secretive', for instance immigration and citizenship policies in multicultural countries such as Canada. These practices do not need to recur to notions of 'race' in order to allow previously 'non-preferred races' to settle and to maintain the original nation-building project of a "white man's country" (Stasiulis and Jhappan 1995; Anderson 1991; Dua 2000). Bennett et al. (1994) point out that a distinction

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21 Consider, for instance, the definition of European citizenship in the "Accomplishing Europe through Education and Training report", where European citizenship is defined as "humanist concept, founded in the construction of a greater Europe characterized by cultural differences, by different economic conceptions and by different natural realities- but united by a sense of belonging to a common civilization. It is on the basis of a shared democratic culture that this greater Europe will construct itself and in which Europeans will recognize themselves as citizens of Europe."(European Commission 1996, 16, emphasis added).

between 'old' European countries and white settler societies such as Canada rests on the fact that while in the former nation-building is 'invisibly' carried out, in the latter it must be done in a 'visible' and 'defensive' manner (Bennett et al., 1994). Moreover, 'universality' is the hallmark of western modern nation-building and of whiteness itself (Balibar 1991b; Lentin 2004, 433-434)

If we turn to the EU context, we can notice that from the early stages of EU interventions in education it is not any 'migrant' who is the source of enrichment and an asset for the host society and for the community. It is the *EU migrant worker*. During the early 1980s, the second-generation migrant who was construed as already and naturally intercultural since s/he was able to cross cultural borders and to contribute economically, socially, culturally, demographically to the host society was still the *EU migrant*. In the moment in which non-EU migrants are entitled to the same educational and cultural rights of EU migrants, the Community introduces its second educational dimension, the European one, which upholds and promotes all that is European, be it universal or particular values, all of which are instantiated in (white) European bodies. Therefore, in the 1990s, despite the continued use of 'migrant' for both EU and non-EU migrants, the EU migrant is not an 'authentic' migrant, s/he is a border crosser who can easily adapt to the various communities in which s/he settles, while the non-EU migrant will remain a migrant, even if settled for a long time or has gained citizenship.

While the term migrant continues to be used ambiguously, an initial distinction is therefore made between migrants. Some migrants are the result of intra-community movement, others are the result of global movements. While the existence of various cultural identities continues to be seen as positive and inevitable because of globalization, cultural identities are not all equal. Some cultural identities have to be limited and their numbers policed through Community and national control of migratory flows. If these are not controlled, the possibility of integration and peaceful co-existence among different cultural communities is at stake. Moreover, non-EU nationals can also constitute a burden to the national and supranational welfare system (Brine, 1995; European Commission, 1996, 94-95). Thus, while the (EU) migrant has been portrayed positively, the non-EU migrant is

construed as a threat which can be included in the community, but only in a limited number. Non-Community migrants' identities and cultures are therefore a challenge to a multiculturalism that encompasses only European diversity.

Over time, the EU as other national formations, recognized that it was necessary to integrate non-western migrants for 'pragmatic' purposes (i.e. economic needs, avoidance of social conflict). However, inclusion does not entail 'equal' inclusion or full membership in the (supra)national community (Thobani 2007, 146-147; Hage 2000,94-113). Differential inclusion along the lines of race, class and gender has in fact been a hallmark of community-building and belonging. IE and the European dimension in education respond precisely to this need. On one hand, IE legitimizes the possibility of multiple identities (e.g. an original cultural identity and an intercultural identity), on the other, far from constituting a radical form of knowledge, it neither undermines racialized modernist assumptions about the links between culture, identity and community, nor does it challenge the humanist assumption that identity exists prior to social processes (Thobani 2007, 140). IE makes a distinction between those who belong to traditional, homogenous non-western national communities and those who belong to multicultural and progressive western national communities. The 'intercultural identity' seems to be easier to achieve for the latter.

Conceptualized in this manner, IE represents an opportunity for the EU to legitimize the creation of a European identity, since it will not erase original national/cultural identities and, despite its particularity, it can be 'open to the world' and to difference. So ultimately there is no difference between a (white) intercultural identity and a (white) new European identity, despite the latter being criticized as more racializing. The 'right' to intercultural education and to the European dimension in education of all youth in Europe will lead to a differential outcome. On one hand, EU and non-EU nationals will have the right to maintain their cultural identities and acquire the skills for a tolerant intercultural identity. On the other, cultural identities will allow for the identification of the 'genuine' members of the Community based on Europeanness and for the mis/recognition of the 'false' members who cannot claim Europeanness. The same function of creating tolerant

identities will be reinforced through the European dimension while simultaneously strengthening the belonging of EU nationals to the community thanks to their shared cultural heritage.

### **Integration and educational policies in the 21<sup>st</sup> century**

With the Treaty of Amsterdam, which came into force in 1999, the EU's competence in the field of immigration and integration has further increased. Today the issue of 'im/migrant education is comprised in the category of 'integration policies' meant to further integration, support equality and prevent ethnic/racial discrimination (Eurydice, 2004). Throughout the new decade no new educational approaches or provisions that explicitly regard im/migrant youth have been introduced and no attempt to contrast the different racialization of EU and non-EU immigrant youth has been made<sup>22</sup>. However, the invisible process of racialized (supra)nationalization, which has been ongoing since the 1970s, has become more visible. In this context, the 'European Space of Education' takes a more definitive shape, and since common educational principles are being agreed upon among MSs, the trend is towards the creation of a 'European Model of Education' (Hingel, 2001, 4).

The emergence of a European model of education leaves little doubt that the creation of a racialized community that is inclusive of non-western migrants and that can view itself as progressive and benevolent will be challenged. For instance, while the ambiguity of the term 'migrant' still exists in the EU discourse, the use of 'third country nationals' allows us to gain insights on the differential integration and the dubious equality reserved for non-EU and non-OECD migrants (e.g. Conclusions of the Seville European Council, 2002). The construction of the category non-EU

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<sup>22</sup> See Conclusions of the Seville European Council (Council of the European Union, 2002), the Council Directive concerning the status of third-country nationals who are long-term residents (Council of the European Union, 2003a), the Declaration by the European Ministers of Education on intercultural education in the new European context (Council of the European Union, 2003b); the White Paper on Intercultural dialogue (Council of Europe, 2008).



migrant and youth does not contradict the process of community-building and racialization that has occurred during the previous decades. Non-EU migrants, whether first-, second-, or third-generation, are granted “as near as possible” the same rights as other nationals within the EU (which include EU migrants) (Council of the European Union 2003a, art. 2). However, despite the rhetoric of human rights and democracy, non-EU migrants continue to be presented as those whose numbers must be managed and whose presence in the territory is justified by their economic and demographic contribution to the MSs and the Community. Their entry and concession of long-term residency should in fact be based on a shared assessment of the economic and demographic developments within the Union and MSs (Council of the European Union 2002, art. 28; 1999b, Section 3, art. 20). For instance, non-EU migrants are granted long-term residency only if they “they have adequate resources and sickness insurance, to avoid becoming a burden for the Member State.” (Council of the European Union 2003a, art. 7).

The notion that non-western migrants are to be integrated as ‘second-class’ members of a nation and the Community is also exemplified by the fact that the granting of social and cultural rights should be “a key element in promoting economic and social cohesion, a fundamental objective of the Community (...).” (ibid., art. 4). The EU migrant and national continue to be necessary for the legitimacy of the community building project as ‘demos’, for he/she embodies the ‘new Europe’ through his/her mobility, intercultural/European identity and contribution to the Community’s economic, social and *cultural* development. Non-western migrants and youth continue to be included for the economic progress of Europe and social advancement of the EU project and its people.

As in the previous decades, the multiculturalism to be fostered is that “(...) of our European societies” (Council of the European Union 2003b, Introduction, 1-7). Other non-western cultures are to be respected and practiced, but do not contribute to the European ‘shared cultural heritage’. While educational policies are to contribute to integration, the national historical and cultural heritage are to be respected (Hingels 2001, 3). Moreover, while intercultural dialogue and debate are encouraged, they must occur within the respect of “the basic *values of European*

*societies and their cultural heritage.*” (Council of Europe 2008, 11, emphasis added). Therefore, integration policies “must necessarily cover all areas of society, and include social, political and cultural aspects. They should respect immigrants’ dignity and distinct identity and to take them into account when elaborating policies” (ibid.). Respect and dignity of non-western cultural identities must not entail a negotiation of the community’s European values and heritage.

Today IE and the European dimension in education continue to hold a pivotal role in the EU education and integration policies (Council of the European Union 2003b, art. 10). IE and the European dimension in education are also still understood as tools for the differential management of cultural diversity and to avoid social conflict “arising in our schools as a result of discrimination, racism, xenophobia, sexism and marginalization and to resolve conflicts in a non-violent way” (ibid.). What is unsaid is that they limit the ways in which non-western immigrants can make demands to oppose the racist policies, practices and structures within the EU. According to IE and the European dimension in education, racism is not a political tool inherent to community-building, but simply the result of individual ignorance (hence the need to educate about difference) or stemming naturally from the encounter between cultures. Demands for inclusion and equity can only be made insofar as they do not counter the EU supranation with its fictive identity and people. For this reason IE and the European dimension in education are, like liberal multiculturalism in other contexts, not radical tools that counter racism or nationalism, but nation-building tools that can make the community *adapt* to new economic and social circumstances without countering its original racialized and racializing power. IE is promoted since it offers “a forward-looking model for managing cultural diversity.” (Council of Europe 2008).

IE and the European dimension in education are also complicit in reinforcing a white European identity. The EU acknowledges that IE is an identity-building device necessary in a multicultural society and a means to manage “multiple cultural affiliations in a multicultural environment” (ibid.,18). IE scientifically recognizes the possibility of peaceful co-existence of multiple identities, thereby not challenging the existence of nationalized cultural identities and legitimizing the possibility of

multiple belongings to another community. In this way it supports the EU's need to build and emphasize 'common grounds' amongst MSs and their nationals. This particular construction of identity is not new, and does not challenge humanist and western understandings of (white) identity influenced by modernity and the birth of the nation-state. Similarly, it does not question the historical construction of the hegemonic (post)modern white identity, constructed as the border-crossing, global, and moving between the 'universal' and the 'particular' (i.e. a white ethnic/national identity), while continuing to portray non-western identities as "embodied" and "immobile" (Wiegman 1999, 119; Mohanram 1999, 4, 15). The new intercultural identity, white and western, is simply the modern 'tolerant' and liberal anti-racist version of modern whiteness based on biological racism, which has historically been a unifying category that allowed for the maintenance of European hegemony during colonial times (Wiegman 1999, 120-150; Anderson, 1991, 23-25). Moreover, the fact that an intercultural/new European identity can shift from one form of identification to another (from the national to the supranational) is not a testimony to the non-nationalistic and non-racialized characteristics of this new identity, since the interplay between universalism and particular is identical to the one of older versions of racial knowledge and related notions of nation (Balibar 1991b, 1994; Goldberg 2002).

### **Conclusions: the EU racialized discourse about immigrants' educations and its implications**

In this paper I have tried to foreground the ambiguities at the center of the educational discourse produced by the European Union to face the challenge of im/migrant education. For this purpose I have analyzed educational texts related to immigrant education as a discourse within the context of a raced, gendered and classed project such as the EU and shown how from its inception 'im/migrant' education has been a means to select and nationalize certain immigrants in order to include them in the Union's supranational community. I have also tried challenge the notion that post-modern nationalism is about inclusion and exclusion and showed that 'exclusion' in the EU is not only about 'keeping them out', but about

allowing non-western migrants in without full membership in the Community. From this perspective, the educational discourse on 'immigrant' education is yet another practice that furthers the selection of members carried out by immigration and citizenship policies at the EU and the nation-state level. The EU discourse on immigrant education is therefore a "white nationalist practice of exclusion" (Hage, 2000) disguised as a benevolent and innocent form of knowledge production.

This discourse has been articulated and performed by privileged members of the EU community, such as EU bureaucrats and researchers, who have the power to 'imagine' how the (supra)nation ought to be and are able to define the obstacles to the realization of this image. White and/or liberal scholars are key producers of the knowledge that belies these practices. From the privileged positions they occupy in western nation-states, they have the ability to 'objectively' define the homely white space of the nation and imagine themselves as possessing "governmental belonging" and legitimate "managerial' capacities" (Hage, 2000, 31-47). These white nationalist practices of exclusion, under the guise of anti-racist practices and knowledge, have not only the power to maintain white supremacy, define white identities and subjectivities as not being invested in white power, but also the effect of highlighting the racism and racist actions as performed only by the 'lower classes', the uneducated, and extremist neo-fascist groups, while 'covering up' racialized knowledges and practices stemming from the 'civil' and non-racist privileged members of the EU community.

The analysis of EU policy initiatives in the field of immigrant education and integration as racialized discourse has begun to unravel how these policies are articulated within, and instrumental to, the broader project of EU community-building. The inclusion of non-western migrant youth in these policies does not challenge the necessarily raced community formation, but simply makes it more difficult to question its exclusionary nature. The definition of 'persistent' cultural identities, whether national or supranational or multiple, is indeed not a means to respect cultural differences, but one to create political identities and characters in the same manner that biological racism did (Thobani 2007, 140-147). Therefore, this type of cultural identity is used to either exclude, or include or differentially

include, and to prevent non-western migrants from benefiting from de jure and de facto membership in the Community. Not acknowledging the socio-historical contexts in which educational discourses emerge when analysing educational initiatives entails a “politics of forgetting” and “remembering” (Kowalczyk and Popkewitz 2005). This politics parallels that of all nationalist practices, and therefore raises issues of complicity with these practices.

Critical scholars have been repeatedly pointed to the central role that ‘legitimate’ knowledge production has had in imagining and realizing racialized knowledge and practices. If that is the case, is it possible to counter the mainstream and liberal EU discourse on education? The implication of the analysis carried out in this paper is that a first step in that direction could consist in situating education within the context of national projects that are inherently exclusionary even in the case of officially ‘inclusive’ multicultural or intercultural projects. This move would imply the overriding of a self-serving distinction between ‘good’ and ‘bad’ nation-building and nationalism (Balibar, 1991c). Multicultural/intercultural projects necessitate the creation of a raced, gendered and classed notion of ‘people’, which, even if worded through universalism, are still exclusionary (Balibar 1991b; Kowalczyk and Popkewitz 2005). A second step to counter the mainstream EU discourse on im/migrant education could be that of understanding ‘race’ and ‘racism’ in their present articulations not in biological terms but as stemming from culture and as a typical political tool of identity and community building in modernity (Lentin 2004). When looking at the role of race in the EU case, it is therefore necessary to consider European whiteness and, above all, how it has evolved into a more benevolent liberal form without severing its link to symbolic and material privileges. Finally, and related to the previous point, it should be a priority to examine how the EU educational discourse actually reinforces the hierarchical organization of belonging through what Razack calls ‘interlocking systems of domination’ *inside* supra/national boundaries (Razack 1999,13). In sum, to continue to theorize about education and integration without questioning the racialized, classed and gendered dimension of knowledge and power, and the reproductive function that education performs in (post)modernity does not further

the sociological imagination of a just society. On the contrary, it perpetuates the 'rational' *delirium* of Western elites who strive for inclusion while protecting their white privilege.

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