

A JOURNALISTIC CONSTRUCTION OF RACISM, RACE AND "THE OTHER" IN THE MIDST OF A DENUNCIATION OF RACISM IN FRANCOPHONE BELGIUM



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CONTEXT

September 5th, 2018 : The RTBF' weathercaster publishes a video on her Facebook.

A woman called to say she was "too dark" to be on television and that it was impossible to see her.



MAIN QUESTION

What representation(s) of the "other", race and racism are conveyed by press articles about the weathercaster's denunciation of racism?

THE RACE IN JOURNALISTIC DISCOURSES

- Biological race VS sociological race

“ But there is no race, white or black, explains Ben Jelloun : there is an human race made of more than 7 billions human being”.

- Distancing from the word "race": autonymous modalization, quotation, ... (Calabrese & Joncret 2023)

« M. François reminds that the « race » remains the first criterium leading to opening a case on discrimination or incitement to hatred. »

- Not a topic in French-speaking Belgium ?

RACISM IN JOURNALISTIC DISCOURSES

- SURPRISE (Lentin, 2016)
"In 48 hours, Belgium woke up to discover the racist claims made by a (tiny) part of the population"
- INDIVIDUALISATION / OUTSIDERIZATION / JUDICIARISATION (Dhume & Cohen, 2018)
"The racists who take a stand on the internet, apparently, stopped school before they learned to write."
- MORAL VISION (Ahmed, 2012)
"Some of us don't even know what a racist comment or a racist act is anymore. We look for explanations, we suspect and the climate is unhealthy especially when we see certain politicians who regularly cross this red line."

THE "OTHER" IN JOURNALISTIC DISCOURSES

- Othering :

- Exceptionalism > exoticization (Staszak, 2008: Ricordeau, 2011)
- Tolerance

"Cécile Djunga was a real gamble for the presentation of the weather. A daring move that paid off, as her infectious smile refreshes the airwaves. And the most colourful part is undoubtedly her clothes."

- Model of society:

- Valorization of the in-group "Journalists/media workers" (N'Dobo, Gardair, Lacassagne, 2005)
- Valorization of the in-group "Belgium"
- Diversity

+ Emotions

"Obviously, what Djunga reveals is shocking, sad, distressing, even terrifying. And obviously, we must be indignant about it, which the media did not fail to do [...]"

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