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It is not that funny. Critical analysis of racial ideologies embedded in racialized humour discourses on social media in Brazil

by

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ABSTRACT

Previous studies reveal that reported cases of racism on Facebook in Brazil have soared from 2,038 cases in 2011 to 11,090 in 2014. This phenomenon has triggered growing concerns amongst several social actors and the Brazilian society at large. Within this context, this qualitative study employs critical discourse analysis to investigate the embedded meanings of the construction and dissemination of colonial-like racialized discourses against Black Brazilians on social media. For this purpose, 217 public Facebook pages and 224 news articles have been gathered, combined with eight interviews conducted with different social actors in Brazil. The data reveals that 81 percent of the victims of online racism are upwardly-mobile Black women aged 20-35 years, whilst 65.6 percent of the proponents of such ideologies are young men in their early twenties. Moreover, in 76.2 percent of the cases analysed, the proponents had no previous relationship with the victims. Therefore, I argue that different from ordinary daily social interactions, the technology enables these people to disregard any social distance that might exist between themselves and the victims. Furthermore, since they believe that online anonymity shields them from being held accountable for their attitude; they have no *crise de conscience* in disseminating their racialized discourses. This scenario suggests that they have turned social media in a sort of modern-day pillory to perform virtual whipping through derogatory humour posts and associated comments. Within that, the study also reveals that such derogatory discourses tend to develop a long tail, meaning that potentially, the posts can keep attracting like-minded people for the same derogatory conversation for around three years. On the other hand, I also argue that Black women in Brazil have understood the possibilities that social media can afford them. Consequently, they are using the technology to convey their political position and, on top of that, amplify the reach of their voice in ways that in the offline context would be more difficult to achieve. Within that, they are managing to decentralise the Brazilian anti-racist discourse, inspire other oppressed women and establish new empowering communities both online and offline to deconstruct ingrained racist ideologies.

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IT IS NOT THAT FUNNY. CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF RACIAL IDEOLOGIES EMBEDDED IN RACIALIZED HUMOUR DISCOURSES ON SOCIAL MEDIA IN BRAZIL

Luiz Valério de Paula Trindade

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DECLARATION OF AUTHORSHIP

I, Luiz Valério de Paula Trindade declare that this thesis and the work presented in it are my own and has been generated by me as the result of my own original research.

"It is not that funny. Critical analysis of racial ideologies embedded in racialized humour discourses on social media in Brazil".

I confirm that:

1. This work was done wholly or mainly while in candidature for a research degree at this University;

2. Where any part of this thesis has previously been submitted for a degree or any other qualification at this University or any other institution, this has been clearly stated;

3. Where I have consulted the published work of others, this is always clearly attributed;

4. Where I have quoted from the work of others, the source is always given. With the exception of such quotations, this thesis is entirely my own work;

5. I have acknowledged all main sources of help;

6. Where the thesis is based on work done by myself jointly with others, I have made clear exactly what was done by others and what I have contributed myself;

7. None of this work has been published before submission:

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Acknowledgements

The process of writing up a PhD thesis has proved to be, by far, one of the greatest challenges I have ever faced in my life. It is challenging first for being highly demanding (much more than we can envision before starting) and drains a lot of energy from us. Second, because it requires a great deal of patience, perseverance and resilience, otherwise, you stay along the way. It is also challenging because, in fact, there is no such thing as an endpoint per se, but you rather reach a stage where you (and, of course, your supervisors) realise that enough is enough. Finally, because intellectually speaking, the journey is quite lonely, since most of the time it is only you and your research given the fact that you are the only person constantly reading and working on it almost 24/7. Nevertheless, in spite of this loneliness, it does not mean that I have not been surrounded and supported by several invaluable people. Therefore, having reached this point in the long and laborious PhD journey, I would like to drop some lines to express my sincere gratitude to them.

In the first place, as a man of faith (even though, as per Mt 17:20, I wished that my faith could be as big as a mustard seed), I thank the Lord for being with me at all times. I express my deepest gratitude to my parents (Martha & Augusto) for teaching me the value of education, hard work and integrity. I thank my brother Nilton and all my family members for the amazing support, respect and understanding of my choices. Within that, I dedicate special thanks to my beloved wife Giulia who has always been part of my journey, even before she came on board. I also thank my dear friend and intellectual mentor Dr Claudia Acevedo (Universidade de São Paulo) who believed in my potential and always encouraged me to go further in the academic life. I am also grateful to Dr Traute Meyer who accepted my proposal to join the PhD programme at the University of Southampton back in 2014. I also would like to express my sincere gratitude to the dozens of peers and established scholars, with whom I had the privilege to interact with, and that have made constructive remarks and comments about my research in the numerous conferences I have presented my study across the UK and internationally. Your remarks have greatly contributed to sharpen my reflections and improve my study. I certainly cannot miss the opportunity to thank Dr Derek McGehee, Dr Susan Halford and Dr Hettie Malcomson for their invaluable remarks, challenging questionings and recommendations during my two Annual Reviews and the Upgrade Examination. In addition, I want to leave a word of gratitude to Dr Jane Falkingham, who made a decisive difference towards helping me to overcome a sensitive moment in my journey. I am also very grateful for the friendship and support of several of my PhD peers at the University of Southampton, including Ning Wang, Walton P. Coutinho, Yahya Aydin, Rachel Ayrton, Kathryn Wicks, Sana Rashid, Manzoor Hussain, and Margarida Cheung Vieira. In addition, I am also grateful to those from other institutions, such as, Rima Saini (City University London), Carol Ann-Dixon (University of Sheffield), Jusciele de Oliveira (Universidade do Algarve), Ceiça Ferreira

I have a dream that my four little children will, one day,

live in a nation where they will not be judged by the colour

of their skin, but the content of their character.

I have a dream today!

Dr Martin Luther King, Jr

And when a child is born

into this world

it has no concept

of the tone the skin is living in.

Youssou N'Dour & Neneh Cherry

List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

#	Abbreviation	Meaning
1	BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
2	CEO	Chief Executive Officer
3	ERGO	Ethics and Researche Governance Online
4	ESRC	Economic and Social Research Council
5	FIFA	Fédération Internationale de Football Association
6	IBGE	Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatísticas
7	LOL	Laugh out Loud
8	NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
9	Nvivo	Qualitative data analysis computer software package produced by QSR International
10	PDF	Portable Document Format
11	SAFERNET	A Brazilian non-governmental organization that combats Internet crime
12	SENAC	Serviço Nacional do Comércio
13	SEPPIR	Secretaria de Políticas de Promoção de Igualdade Racial
14	Skype	A telecommunications application software product that specializes in providing video chat and voice calls between computers, tablets, mobile devices
15	SNS	Social Network Sites
17	TV	Television
18	UK	United Kingdom
19	UN	United Nations
20	UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
21	URL	Uniform Resource Locator
22	US	United States [of America]

Chapter 1:   Introduction

This chapter aims at introducing the reader to the research topic and contextualise the research problem before presenting the research questions. It **starts** with a conversation explaining that Brazilian contemporary society and racial relations have been shaped by colonial legacies. In addition, it also explains the relevance to study humour as a means to understand racial relations. The **second** section brings to the surface a brief account of Black Brazilians regarding some of the racial inequalities faced by this racial group and a sample of symbolic milestones achieved by them over the recent past. The subsequent **third** section explains why Facebook is relevant to investigate the phenomenon of racial discrimination in the context of social media Brazil. The **fourth** section highlights the gap in the literature followed by the research questions. Towards the end, the **fifth** section brings an overview of the research design and, finally, the **sixth** section gives an idea of how the study as a whole has been organised.

1.1   It is not that funny

Brazil was a colony of Portugal from 1500 to 1822 and, in addition, it had one of the world's enduring slavery regime from 1530 to 1888 (Moura, 2004). This regime was responsible for the forced migration of over four million African people into the country (see Appendix B and Appendix G). Even though these events lay in a distant past, there is an interesting argument made by the historian Stuart B. Schwartz, who says that "it [is] impossible to pen a page of Brazilian history without the question of slavery forcing its way into the discussion" (Hébrard, 2013, p. 49). This quote is relevant not only to justify opening the paragraph with the account of these two milestones in Brazil's history. It also means to say that several aspects of Brazil's contemporary racial relations have been shaped by ideological legacies inherited from colonial society. Therefore, it is important to revisit that past to understand how race and ethnicity have been constructed and articulated in Brazil. Within this context, several previous studies reveal that Black Brazilian people are still subject of different forms of discrimination, prejudice and negative stereotypes (e.g. Fernandes, 1965; Fonseca, 1994; Guimarães, 2003; 2004; Dahia, 2008; Fonseca, 2012).

Thus, the present study explores the embedded meaning of the construction and dissemination of colonial-like racialized discourses against Black Brazilians on social media. Such discourses can be conveyed either explicitly and/or concealed in disparagement humour. In addition, why it is not funny? First, because concealing racist ideologies in humorous discourses grant them an 'only joking' shield (i.e. they should not be taken too seriously since they are made 'for entertainment purpose only') and simultaneously make them socially acceptable in most ordinary daily circumstances, whilst also ridiculing 'the other' for the amusement of few. Second, because "the meanings embedded in humour are often elusive, hard to grasp, fugitive" (Goldstein,

2003, p. 3), what means to say that the underlying meanings attached to many jokes are shaped and influenced by the social context where they are recited and circulate. Third, it is not that funny because racist humour "has the role to re-establishing Black people in 'their place' [of inferiority], producing a collective fantasy that brings back the original [unequal] balance between Blacks and whites" (Dahia, 2008, p. 712). Finally, because "the analysis of humour as a form of discourse provides insight into the reproduction of dominant ideologies" (Sue and Golash-Boza, 2013, p. 1585), what means to say that jokes can contribute to reinforcing the dominance of a racial group while they reduce the value of 'the others'. This brings us back to the Brazilian social context where white supremacy ideologies, in contrast to the inferiority of other social groups (Blacks and miscegenated people), fostered during colonial period contributed in shaping contemporary racial relations in the country. Thus, the present study aims at unveiling what is embedded in derogatory jokes and their respective associated thread of comments about Black people disseminated on social media in Brazil.

1.2   Black Brazilians: a brief overview

According to available census data (IBGE, 2010 and Appendix A), Black Brazilians[1] comprise 50.94 percent of the country's population and, historically, it has been the social group most subject to social inequalities (Charão, 2011). Studies reveal that: a) they have reduced access to higher education; b) they live in precarious housing conditions; d) they are more subject to be victimised by violent crimes; e) they experience higher youth mortality rate than whites; and f) they usually have fewer opportunities in the job market and consequently fewer chances for upward social mobility (Hasenbalg, 1979; Henriques, 2001; Jaccoud *et al.*, 2008; Nascimento and Alves, 2011). However, on the other hand, there are also studies revealing that, in spite of the enduring racial inequalities, within the past four decades, this social group has experienced a series of social improvements and important symbolic achievements. Within that, it is possible to observe that Black young people (aged between eighteen and twenty-four years old) attending university education is still lower than their white counterparts, but even so, between 2001 and 2011 the overall proportion increased from 10.2 percent to 35.8 percent (IBGE, 2012). In addition, despite controversy and lack of consensus amongst scholars and opinion makers, affirmative action initiatives aimed at fostering the increase of Black people attending higher education started in 2001. Initially, it was restricted to a small group of federal universities, and currently, a large number of the public institutions across Brazil have some type of programme already in place (Moehlecke, 2002; Martins *et al.*, 2004; Daflon *et al.*, 2013).

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[1] Briefly, Brazil's racial categorization is composed of five groups (in alphabetical order): 1) black; 2) brown; 3) indigenous; 4) yellow; and 5) white. In section 2.1 this topic is addressed in greater detail.

Another relevant sample of symbolic milestone that took place within the past decades includes the enactment of the Federal Law number 7,716 in 1989 establishing racism as a punishable crime (Sarney and Brossard, 1989). Years later, there was also the establishment of the 'Secretariat of the Promotion of Racial Equality Policies' (also known by its acronym SEPPIR) in March 2003, whose aim is to tackle racial inequalities fostering the implementation of several social policies and educational initiatives nationwide (Campos, 2003). In addition, after a decade-long of parliamentary debates and negotiations, it was enacted the Federal Law number 12,288 in July 2010 known as 'Statute of Racial Equality'. This law not only formally fosters racial equality but also provides the legal support for social policies designed by the national and state-level racial equality bodies (Savarese, 2010; Silva, 2010; Estarque, 2015; Tokarnia, 2015). Example of such policies include: a) mandatory teaching of African history in public schools; b) freedom to profess any religion of African origin; c) fostering equal opportunities in the job market; and d) promoting greater participation of Black people in movies and TV programmes.

These sample of achievements constitute relevant symbolic milestones to Brazil's Black community first because, according to some authors (Henriques, 2001; Salvato *et al.*, 2010), greater access to higher education represents an important factor on a person's life course. The authors explain that it can contribute to increasing a person's future professional prospects, the opportunities to engage in more qualified and better-paid jobs and, consequently, having better chances for upward social mobility. Second, because higher education also contributes to challenging a traditional triad commonly attributed to Black people in Brazil that considers that their upward social mobility possibilities are restricted to three types of careers: 1) football player; 2) samba singer/dancer; and 3) low-skilled, low-paid jobs (Dzidzienyo, 1971; Giacomini, 2006; Mikulak, 2011). Finally, the sample of symbolic milestones just mentioned was not easily granted to Brazilian Black community. They are mostly derived from demands voiced by the organised Black movement over the years (Domingues, 2007).

In sum, in spite of the enduring racial and social inequalities, a considerable proportion of Brazil's Black population has experienced important symbolic achievements and social improvements over the past decades. Nevertheless, as the present study explores, such achievements have been not only ignored and/or undermined by the dominant social group. Their value has been reduced and also challenged, either explicitly and/or concealed in disparagement humour disseminated on social media platforms. Furthermore, I argue that racism as an ideology represents the core element triggering this phenomenon (see details in section 2.2).

1.3   Why use Facebook to investigate social media?

Concerning the Brazilian scenario, it is possible to observe that Facebook[2] has become very popular since it became widely available in the country in 2011. Currently, it engages 122 million active users what, proportionally speaking, represents 58.3 percent of the country's population (Kemp, 2017). Still, according to the same author, this figure positions Brazil as the world's third largest market for Facebook behind the US with 214 million active users (66 percent of the population) and India with 191 million active users (14.3 percent of the population). Moreover, another interesting figure regarding the use of Facebook by Brazilians is the fact that, on average, they spend three hours and 43 minutes per day, behind only to the Philippines with four hours and seventeen minutes per day (Kemp, 2017). Thus, these figures contribute to revealing that the basis of active users of this social media platform[3] in Brazil has a considerable size and that people spend a great deal of time connected to it. This scenario leads us to reflect that large social media platforms such as Facebook have become an increasingly ubiquitous presence in people's lives across the globe and an important tool mediating people's daily interaction (Wilson *et al.*, 2012; boyd, 2015; Kosinski *et al.*, 2015). Furthermore, the emergence of a social media platform with this reach and exponential growth-rate makes us think about "the ways in which race and ethnicity connect to, are affected by and are enacted" on such arena (boyd and Ellison, 2007, p. 222-223).

Evolving from this point, it is possible to observe that, within the Brazilian social context, Facebook has become a relevant arena where different types of racialized discourses, hate speech and verbal abuses have been disseminated at a growing rate. This argument is supported by a study conducted by SAFERNET (2015) in Brazil revealing that reported cases of racism on Facebook soared from 2,038 cases in 2011 to 11,090 cases in 2014. In addition to these figures, it is also possible to observe that, in the recent past, several cases of racism on Facebook in Brazil have reached the headlines of mainstream newspapers and magazines, both nationwide and internationally (e.g. Sodre and Bastos, 2013; Araujo, 2015; BBC, 2015; Charlton, 2015). This fact contributes to bring to the surface the increasing frequency of the phenomenon and the growing concerns with its social impacts upon the people subjected to online racist discourses. The sociologist Laudone (2010, p. 4) also expresses her concern with the dissemination of racialized discourses on social media platforms arguing that, within the US social context, "Facebook, in particular, has become a vehicle through which racist messages and meanings are conveyed". Moreover, the sociologist Daniels (2009, p. 21) advocates that "words can wound" and

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[2] The number of active users of Facebook (established in 2004) across the globe is very dynamic and it changes on a daily basis, however, the most recent figures available reveal that there are 1.8 billion active users worldwide (Kemp, 2017).

[3] It is pertinent to explain that in the literature, there are authors (e.g. boyd, 2007) who use the terminology SNS or Social Network Sites. However, in the current study, it has been decided to adopt 'social media platform' because it has been observed that it is the most widely used in social sciences (including, for example, the journal *Social Media + Society*) and easily understood by non-academic audience.

discriminatory discourses circulating in an online environment can "cause real harm in real life". Finally, within this context, it is possible to observe that Vera and Feagin (2007, p. 69) bring an important argument saying, "Generally, more than one person is harmed by racist actions, even if one person is the initial target. As a rule, the latter's family and community are not isolated from the occurrence and are harmed as well." This argumentation is relevant because it suggests that since Facebook connects people to a large network of contacts, reproducing racist discourses online can potentially affect not only the single person but also several others.

1.4   The gap in the literature and the research questions

In complement to the background context introduced in the previous three sections, it is also important to highlight the existence of a gap in the literature. Within Brazilian social science literature, there are some important and pioneering studies addressing the issue of disparagement humour towards Black people. Such studies have been conducted by the sociologists Fonseca (1994; 2012) and Dahia (2008; 2010) that have focused predominantly on the historical background and the interpretation of the racist jokes. In the international literature, there are a few more such as, for instance, Billig (2001; 2005); Weaver (2010; 2011a; 2011b) and Sue and Golash-Boza (2013). Nevertheless, there is still a gap regarding studies exploring social media as a contemporary arena for the spontaneous manifestation and circulation of this type of content. In fact, a global bibliographical review conducted by Wilson *et al.* (2012) reveal that Facebook represents a new arena for social researchers worldwide given that the technology is still relatively new. Furthermore, it is also possible to observe that most studies exploring Facebook as a vehicle used for disseminating hate speech "are based on samples of US university students, often with a limited number of respondents chosen by convenience" (Caers *et al.*, 2013, p. 995). Consequently, the present study also aims at adding a contribution towards the filling of the identified gap in the literature.

Thus, given the previous introductory discussions, it has been raised the following set of research questions:

1. What triggers the manifestation of racial bigotry on social media in Brazil?

2. What discourses are embedded in racially oriented derogatory jokes and associated comments posted on social media?

3. How the counter-racist narratives are constructed, and what they try to convey?

1.5 Summary of the research design

Following previous studies similarly addressing the subject matter of racist discourses concealed in disparagement humour (Billig, 2001; Weaver, 2010; 2011a; Pérez, 2013; Sue and Golash-Boza, 2013; Weaver, 2013), it has also been chosen to adopt the method of critical discourse analysis in the present study. For this purpose, it has been adopted a dual complementary approach regarding data collection:

1) Identify public Facebook pages displaying derogatory content against Black Brazilians and counter-racist content empowering Black people. The public Facebook pages have been identified with the support of a set of 131 keywords in Portuguese related to racist expressions (see Appendix D);

2) The analysis of the data obtained on Facebook is supplemented with a series of eight in-depth interviews with different social actors comprised of senior policymakers, leaders of non-governmental organisations and individual social activists.

The data collected with these two approaches have been analysed under critical discourse analysis. It is considered that the proposed approach is pertinent and appropriate for the scope of the research questions raised because it allows unveiling the embedded racial discourses concealed in disparagement humour and associated comments displayed on public Facebook pages in Brazil. Additionally, it brings to light the views, perceptions and lived experiences of online racist discourses by different social actors as well as the existing counter-racist narratives.

1.6 The organisation of the study

The study is organised into eight chapters. In **Chapter 1**, the general objective is to introduce the reader to the research topic with relevant background information to contextualise the research problem and leading towards the gap in the literature and the research questions. **Chapter 2** covers the fundamental theoretical framework that supports the data analysis developed in Chapters 5 to 7. It covers Brazil's racial relations under a historical and sociological perspective and linking the most relevant milestones that have contributed to shaping the contemporary racial relations in Brazilian society. **Chapter 3** has the aim to contextualise the Brazilian disparagement humour, which has also been influenced and shaped by legacies inherited from colonial society, as discussed in Chapter 2. Moreover, Chapter 3 also discuss the role played by Facebook in this context and a summary of Brazil's anti-racism legal landscape. **Chapter 4** addresses the methodology employed in the study, as well as the data collection process, the main challenges faced during the fieldwork, the pertinent ethical considerations and the author's positionality reflections. **Chapter 5** is the first data analysis chapter (out of three) and the focus is to discuss the implications of technology in shaping contemporary racial relations in Brazil differently from what is observed in ordinary social

interactions. The subsequent **Chapter 6** aims at developing the qualitative critical discourse analysis of the most salient derogatory discourses emerged from the data. **Chapter 7** brings the critical discourse analysis of the most relevant counter-racist narratives constructed on Facebook and, finally, **Chapter 8** presents the main findings emerged from the study, the main arguments developed, and the limitations of the study alongside suggestions for future research.

Chapter 2:   Blackness in Brazil: past legacies still reflected today

This chapter represents the research's theoretical framework and it is divided into six intertwined sections, **starting** with an important discussion around the array of terminologies commonly employed to identify Black people in Brazil, and the supporting arguments in favour to adopt predominantly *Negro* in this research. The **second** section discusses some key concepts concerning race and racism, since they permeate the context of this study, and are intertwined with the analysis of the phenomenon of racist discourses in Brazil. The **third** section aims at addressing the fundamental elements of Brazilian colonial society given the fact that it contributes to understanding many aspects of current social dynamics. Evolving from the grounds set by this debate, it enables me to analyse the evolution of racial relations in Brazil as presented in the **fourth** section. The subsequent **fifth** section analyses the racial hierarchy dynamic in Brazil that, similarly to the previous one, it is also linked with ideologies and beliefs established in colonial society. Finally, the **sixth** section addresses the intersection of gender, the dominant politics of beauty in Brazil and the construction of national identity. Furthermore, it also explores the empowering approaches adopted by Black women to challenging the prevailing beauty standard and promoting their national belonging.

2.1   Black, *Negro*, Afro-Descendant or Afro-Brazilian?

Opening the chapter with this debate may raise some questionings of its suitability, but there is a justifiable reason for that. It is clear that the topic is not an isolated entity and many of the aspects involved in the debate permeate other relevant concepts and ideas discussed in subsequent sections of the chapter. Nevertheless, I have chosen to open the chapter with this debate in particular because it is imperative to make it clear from the very beginning the position adopted in this study to use predominantly the terminology *Negro*[4] instead of Black and the arguments supporting this choice. It is also relevant to explain that there is a vast literature discussing the origins and conceptualisation of racial terminology (e.g. van den Berghe, 1967; Bulmer and Solomos, 1999; Back and Solomos, 2000; Bulmer and Solomos, 2004). Not all of them are convergent and neither is the ambition of the present study to propose one. Nevertheless, it has been chosen to adopt the connotation of race that considers it as "a human group that defines itself and/or is defined by other groups as different from other groups by virtue of innate and immutable physical characteristics". Besides that, "these physical characteristics are in turn believed to be

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[4] Given the fact that the spelling both in English and in Portuguese is the same, it has been chosen to adopt italic in order to indicate the use in Portuguese whenever appropriate.

intrinsically related to moral, intellectual, and other non-physical attributes or abilities." (van den Berghe, 1967, p. 9).

Thus, to provide the reader with some contextual data, I outline a brief overview of Brazil's current race categorization. Since 1991 the official racial categories used by the government statistics bureau IBGE in Brazil are, in alphabetical order[5]: a) *amarelo*; b) *branco*; c) *indígena*; d) *pardo*; and e) *preto* (Osorio, 2003). However, it is important to explain that within the Brazilian social context, the *Negro* population is comprised of Black plus Brown persons altogether. This is relevant because, within Brazilian social science literature, all studies addressing *Negro* population encompass the combination of both racial groups (i.e. *pretos + pardos*). Consequently, the *Negro* racial group represents 50.94 percent of the country's population (Henriques, 2001; IBGE, 2010; Appendix A). Nevertheless, whilst in English-speaking countries (e.g. the UK and the US) the use of the terminology negro sounds archaic and Black is the terminology commonly employed, in the Brazilian social context it is exactly the opposite. In Portuguese, Black is equivalent to *preto*, and several authors consider this terminology pejorative and negative. In contrast, different scholars and the leaders of *Negro* movement consider that *Negro* conveys attributes that are more positive than *preto*. On this regard, Skidmore (1992, p. 3) explains that "the increasingly common term used in Brazil (in the mass media, for example) for non-white is *Negro*, but the English equivalent is archaic for an English-speaking audience".

In the US social context, for instance, it can be seen that Bennett Jr. (1967) introduces a comprehensive account of the debates around the terminologies Black, negro, Afro-Descendant, Afro-American and Colored People (sic) from the 18th century onwards. Rather than advocating in favour of any specific terminology, Bennett Jr. (1967) discloses the points of view of several prominent American figures over time either defending the use of negro (W.E.B. du Bois, Dr Jeanne Spurlock, Blanche Kelso Bruce and Marcus Mosiah Garvey, Jr.), Black (Ossie Davies and Malcolm X), colored Americans (Samuel Cornish) or Afro-American (Richard Benjamin Moore, Keith E. Baird and Dick Edwards). This account is relevant and pertinent within the scope of this research because it contributes to putting the subject matter in a broader historical perspective and also reveals that different prominent figures had divergent choices for the terminology, and the debates may have also influenced the conversation across different countries including Brazil (Nascimento, 1980). In addition, it can also be observed that 'The New York Times' newspaper announced, in an editorial on 7th March 1930, that from that moment onwards it would adopt the terminology Negro with a capital letter. It stated, "The New York Times now joins many of the leading Southern newspapers as well as most of the Northern" in such movement. Moreover, the attitude "it is not merely a typographical change; it is an act in recognition of racial self-respect for those who have been for generations in 'the lower case'" (Times, 1930, front page). More recently,

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[5] They mean: a) yellow; b) white; c) indigenous; d) brown; and e) black.

Fairchild (1985) also investigated the appropriateness of the terminologies Black, negro or Afro-American in the US social context, and based on interviews with 119 white university students, the author advocates that among the three options, "only African-American seems appropriate" (Fairchild, 1985, p. 54). The author understands that African-American conveys more positive stereotypes among white people than Black or negro.

With regard to the Brazilian social context, the debates have been equally complex; they have also been conducted since the end of the 18th century and similar to the US there is no consensus around a single terminology (Domingues, 2007; Pinto and Ferreira, 2014). However, whilst in the US social context the terminology Nigger is derogatory and negro is archaic, within the Brazilian social context *Preto* (or Black in English) causes discomfort to many people and it has been advocated as inappropriate identifier by several authors (e.g. Moura, 1988; Sansone, 1996; Guimarães, 2003; Rosemberg *et al.*, 2003; Munanga, 2005). To start with, *Preto* has been commonly employed in a number of derogatory jokes for dozens of years in order to portray people in conditions of inferiority (see examples available in Appendix C). In the second place, the sociologist Guimarães (2003) conducted a comprehensive study addressing racial insults in Brazil revealing that oftentimes *Preto* is employed as a mean to make the insults even more offensive and rude such as, for example, *Preto sujo* (dirty Black), *Preto maloqueiro* (Black shantytown dweller), *Preto vagabundo* (Black tramp), among many others. In the third place, according to an independent study conducted in a primary school in Rio de Janeiro called 'What's the fun?' a biology teacher interviewed 440 students aiming at disclosing derogatory terms known and/or used by the pupils[6]. He managed to identify over 360 negative and stereotyped idioms and expressions that associate *Preto* with negative and/or undesirable situations, aspects or characteristics including *a coisa está preta*[7], *serviço de preto*[8], *coisa de preto*[9], *só podia ser preto*[10], *preto de alma branca*[11], among many others. (Thorne, 2005; Dazell and Victor, 2007; Vieira, 2013; Oliveira, 2014; Souza, 2014). Finally, in fourth place, the anthropologist Sansone (2003, p. 47) advocates that "the term *preto* is almost equivalent to bad, uneducated, tacky, and is used to describe whatever is visibly poor and without decorum". The anthropologist Munanga (1986, p. 15) argues that "in the

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[6] The study is not publicly available. Consequently, I had to cite other sources who have addressed the study.

[7] *Lumber*: meaning trouble, burdensome difficulties (Thorne, 2005, p. 324). This idiom conveys the idea that the situation is very complicated, difficult to be sorted out and it seems that there is no way out.

[8] *Bog-up | Cowboy job*: a mess, a badly improvised job, badly finished workmanship (Thorne, 2005, p. 52; 106). The embedded message in this idiom is that someone has done a very poor service, what is expected from black people but not from whites.

[9] *Tack*: anything that demonstrates a quality of vulgarity, bad taste or kitsch (Dazell and Victor, 2007, p. 637). This is an expression of disdain that conveys the idea that a task, attitude or taste is characteristic of black people but not worth for non-blacks.

[10] *Goof*: to blunder, make a mistake, fail (Thorne, 2005, p. 193). It means that if something has gone wrong it is due to the person's skin colour. In other words, that blacks are prone to fail at some point.

[11] *Black with a white soul*: this is an old and well-known expression meant to be a compliment implying that a person may be black on the outside, but inside he/she has got a soul as good as a white person.

symbology of colours of European civilizations, the colour black represents moral and physical stain, death and corruption, whilst white represents life and purity". Guimarães (2003) and Goldstein (2003) reinforce this point of view saying that in Brazil the word *preto* is clearly associated with a number of negative ideas such as dirty, evil, sinister, cursed, slavery, ugliness and so forth.

Similar to the US where different racial identifiers have been adopted over time, the same happened in Brazil. The historian Domingues (2007) investigated the evolution of the *Negro* movement in Brazil from 1889 through 2000 addressing its key milestones and main characteristics. His study revealed that from 1889 to 1967, the *Negro* movement adopted the terminologies *Homem de Cor* (Coloured Men), *Negro* and *Preto*, but from 1978 onwards, it has embraced the terminologies *Negro*, *Afro-Descendente* and *Afro-Brasileiro* (see the full timeline in Appendix B). According to Domingues (2007), the adoption of the triad *Negro*, *Afro-Descendente* and *Afro-Brasileiro* is explained by a shift within the *Negro* movement towards greater appreciation of the terminology *Negro*, and an effort to establish a stronger bond with the African ancestry and roots (what explains the prefix *Afro*). Nascimento (1980) adds that such debates represent a struggle for unity within the *Negro* movement and greater appreciation of African heritage. Furthermore, this shift contributed to give origin to an important achievement for the *Negro* movement concerning the official establishment in 2003 of the *Dia da Consciência Negra*[12] celebrated on each 20 November. This date carries a strong symbolic meaning to the *Negro* movement because it refers to the death of *Zumbi dos Palmares* on 20 November 1695, who was one of the most prominent leaders of the successful community of runaway slaves known as *Quilombo dos Palmares*. The claim made by the leaders of the *Negro* movement is that this date is more meaningful than the 13th of May, which marks the emancipation of slavery in 1888. Namely, the emancipation freed the slaves but without any type of supporting social policy to settle them in society as free people, contrasting with state policies that fostered white European immigration (Bairros, 2000; Fox, 2010; Chiles, 2013; Ibrahim, 2013).

In conclusion, the identifier *Negro*, in fact, may be considered inappropriate in English-speaking countries. Nevertheless, within the Brazilian social context, *Preto* (equivalent to Black in English) conveys a greater number of negative and derogatory symbolic associations with it in comparison to *Negro*. Thus, that is the main reason for the predominant adoption of *Negro* rather than Black in the present study. It is also important to add that it is not being advocated here that the chosen terminology represent the ultimate truth whilst the remaining ones would be wrong, especially given the fact that all of them are applied in different everyday circumstances in Brazil. Instead of that, it has been chosen a clear position in the study and exposed the arguments justifying the choice.

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[12] *Negro's* Consciousness Day

2.2 Race and racism: a brief discussion

In the introductory chapter (section 1.2), I explain that over the past decades Brazil's Black population has experienced several important symbolic achievements; however, data reveal that such achievements have been undermined and discredited by the dominant group. This broad scenario permeates the research questions raised in this study and also leads us towards another one: What is the ideological trigger of this phenomenon? In response to that, my argument is that the ideology of racism represents a core element in this process.

There is a vast literature addressing the concept of race and racism (e.g. van den Berghe, 1967; Anthias and Yuval-Davis, 1993; Bulmer and Solomos, 1999; Fields and Fields, 2012; Wimmer, 2015), however, I consider that three studies, in particular, bring clear and complementary conceptualisations regarding race. In the first place, Fields and Fields (2012, p. 16) argue that the term race stands for "the conception or the doctrine that nature produced humankind in distinct groups, each defined by inborn traits that its members share and that differentiate them from the members of other distinct groups of the same kind but of unequal rank". As for Wimmer (2015, p. 2202), race means "a form of classification centred on the idea that there are communities of descent marked by bodily difference". Finally, Anthias and Yuval-Davis (1993) develop their definition of race based on the dynamic of belonging and a duality of inclusion-exclusion. According to the authors, "race is one way by which the boundary is to be constructed between those who can and those who cannot belong to a particular construction of collectivity or population" (Anthias and Yuval-Davis, 1993, p. 1).

As it can be observed, these studies explore two common elements regarding race: a) difference among people, and b) group classification. In fact, these two elements are important not only in the theoretical definition of race as a social construct, but also first in the understanding of racial hierarchy (as it will be discussed in section 2.5), and second to racism as an ideology. In other words, racism is fostered by intricate systems of social differentiation among people and group classification according to rakings. Their combination attribute differentiated social positions (hierarchies) to people according to the racial group they belong. In complement to this argument, Gilroy (1998) explains that symbols of racial difference become apparent to people's senses and, consequently, leading towards differentiated perceptions concerning racial groups (i.e. positive or negative). Evolving from this point, Fields and Fields (2012, p. 17) argue that rather than a state-of-mind, "racism is first and foremost a social practice, which means that it is an action and a rationale for action, or both at once". However, the important question that must be raised is, what triggers racism? In essence, the answer to this relevant question is the belief in the superiority of one racial group in relation to others. Nevertheless, looking at this topic through the critical lenses of Fanon (1986), it is possible to examine the issue from a different perspective. The author analyses both sides of the equation ('superior' and 'inferior') arguing, "the Negro enslaved by his inferiority, the

white man enslaved by his superiority alike behave in accordance with a neurotic orientation" (Fanon, 1986, p. 42). Moreover, the author adds, the acceptance of one's inferiority leads him/her to aspire to win admittance into the white world, what it is also known as internalised racism. Namely, on one hand, racism oppresses the 'dominated' group enforcing upon them the values and beliefs of the 'dominant' group. On the other hand, as the 'dominated' group embraces and internalises such values and beliefs, it indirectly validates the practice and consequently reinforces the 'dominant' group's privileged position.

What concerns racism as an ideology, its roots are found in the so-called theories of scientific racism developed and fostered in the early years of the nineteenth-century-Europe (Mikulak, 2011; Fields and Fields, 2012; Santos and Barbosa e Silva, 2018), and that has also influenced several prominent Brazilian authors of that time, as it will be addressed in greater detail in section 2.4. Briefly, the main postulate of such ideologies was the idea of racial superiority of white Europeans in relation to other racial groups, especially Black African peoples. As with regards the operation of racism in contemporary societies, Wimmer (2015, p. 2189) explains that systemic racism includes a diverse assortment of racist practices. They include, for example, "the unjustly gain of economic and political power of whites; the continuing resource inequalities; the rationalizing white-racist frame; and the major institutions created to preserve white advantage and power". Furthermore, in spite of the deconstruction of the postulates of the scientific racism from the mid-1950s onwards (Mikulak, 2011; Santos and Barbosa e Silva, 2018), the ideology is still vivid in the collective mind-set in Brazil. In fact, according to Santos and Barbosa e Silva (2018, p. 266), since the early nineteenth century, "racism has included a discourse of power, through which an asymmetrical relationship is established between racial groups" in Brazilian society.

Consequently, resuming the initial question raised in this section, racism as an ideology plays an important role in the context of undermining the social improvements achieved by Black Brazilians, since it is rooted in the strong belief in the duality superiority-inferiority, the establishment of ranks (or racial hierarchies) and boundaries of belonging or 'colour lines' as advocated by Du Bois (1903).

2.3   Brazilian society in colonial period

According to several historians (e.g. Bethel, 1984; Schwartz, 1985; Andrews, 1997), colonialism in Brazil comprised the period 1530-1822 (see Appendix B), and even though the country was 'discovered' in 1500, only three decades later Portugal effectively started to occupy the territory (Hébrard, 2013). Evolving from that, historians argue that the slave trade of African people to Brazil encompassed around 4.7 million persons between 1560 to 1850 (see Appendix G), considering only the ones that actually disembarked alive in the land after the 35+ days of sea journey under inhuman conditions (Duchet *et al.*, 1979; Database, 2009; Hébrard, 2013; Araújo,

2016). Within this context, an important question that arises consists in how Brazilian society was structured during that historical period. Moreover, how did the racial relations operate during that time? It is also clear that the country's current social structure and racial relations have evolved and improved considerably since then. Nevertheless, I argue that there is a strong legacy inherited from that historical period on the formation of the Brazilian society over time, and the review of their fundamental pillars and characteristic elements can contribute to shedding some light towards the understanding of current racial relations and racial hierarchy dynamic. In addition, the relevance of this review is reinforced in the first place by the argument of Stuart B. Schwartz, who says that "it [is] impossible to pen a page of Brazilian history without the question of slavery forcing its way into the discussion" (Hébrard, 2013, p. 49). In the second place, Johnson (2004) advocates that the roots of current social hierarchies in Brazil are found in colonial context.

2.3.1   Main features of the social structure

Based in extensive search in several editions of the 'Slavery & Abolition Journal Annual Bibliographical Supplement' (e.g. Thurston, 2013; 2014; 2015) it is possible to identify that seminal accounts and reports of relevant aspects of Brazilian social organisation during colonial period were made mainly by foreign visitors. A sample of such works include, for example, 'Voyage to Guinea, Brazil and the West Indies' (Atkins, 1735); 'Travels in Brazil' (Koster, 1816); 'Travels in Brazil, in the years 1817-1820' (von Spix *et al.*, 1824); 'Life in Brazil, or a journal of a visit to the land of cocoa and the palm' (Ewbank, 1856); and 'A Journey in Brazil' (Agassiz, 1868). In addition to those studies, a sample of other authors who have investigated this historical period includes Willems (1970), Conrad (1983), Bethel (1984), Schwartz (1974; 1985), Andrews (1997), Metcalf (2005) and Hébrard (2013). Nevertheless, the imperative question that arises out of this review is what relevant aspects all these studies reveal about the social organisation in Brazil during colonial period.

The review of these studies allows us to identify three important characteristics of the prevailing social organisation: 1) the Portuguese settlers were predominantly young single male people who established the fundamental roots of a patriarchal society where they had symbolic and ideological power over women, children and the slaves; 2) the labour force was comprised predominantly of Black slaves who were also mostly male persons. Although they were socially downgraded by the slave owners, they also developed intricate horizontal racial hierarchy among themselves; and 3) the social stratification system naturally favoured the white ruling landowners/slave owners, but even so there were some limited opportunities for upward social mobility mostly for freed mulatto people, but not towards the upper positions. Therefore, having introduced this broad picture, the subsequent three sections discuss these characteristics in greater depth.

2.3.2 A patriarchal society

With regard to the first Portuguese settlers, it is interesting to observe that authors describe them as a cohort of young male persons that were considered 'second class' citizens in their homeland and, to a certain extent, unwanted there. Moreover, they are characterised in the literature as ambitious enough to leave their families behind to explore the newly discovered land with the expectation to make fortune and/or become nobles. Since Portugal had a very small population in comparison to the huge land discovered, they could not spare their best men (and neither did such persons wish so) to the endeavour of colonising the new territory (Koster, 1816; Bethel, 1984). In fact, Koster (1816, p. 384) described these people as "adventurers [who] left their own country to settle in the New World, who were literarily adventurers; for they had not any settled plans of life, and they were without families". Bethel (1984, p. 16) explains that rather than a voluntary emigration, these people were, in fact, proactively sought after by the Portuguese authorities. Consequently, they oftentimes were "degraded, or exiles, who could be anyone from a political offender to a common criminal. With a few exceptions, they were on the whole undesirable [in Portugal]." This cohort of settlers established the roots of a patriarchal society where they had not only control of the power mechanisms in place, but also strong authority over women, the existing indigenous community, and the African slaves. Supporting evidence of this reflection is found in Tavolaro (2008, p. 112) who argues that, within that social setting, the white settlers "reigned unchallenged above everyone and everything, as the very core of the power structure whence all relevant decisions emanated".

Evolving from this picture, once settled in the new territory, occupying a variety of leadership positions and with a multitude of African slaves at their service, it is interesting to observe, for example, their approach towards work. According to observations made by Ewbank (1856), the Portuguese settlers advocated that they had not been born to labour but, in fact, to lead. Hence, when inquired why they did not learn a trade and live more independently, the questioning could be interpreted as outrageous and, in reply, they would say: "Work! Work! Screamed one; we have blacks to do that" (Ewbank, 1856, p. 184). Based on this account, the derived question could be, why the Portuguese settlers had the perception that work was meant for Blacks rather than for whites. In the first place, it is necessary to put into context that colonial society was essentially rural, and consequently, most of the jobs available were of manual nature rather than intellectual or more sophisticated and, therefore, performing such type of activities could be associated with belonging to the lower social classes and being subject to somebody else's command. In the second place, the white Portuguese settlers aspired for upper social class positions and their associated privileges, or in other words, to become nobles. Within that, "nobility was, in a sense, defined by what a person did not do. Working with one's own hands, shopkeeping, artisan crafting, and other 'mean' occupations were the domain of the commoners. Nobles were expected to live without recourse of such activities" (Schwartz, 1985, p. 247).

Convergent with this argumentation, several foreign artists depicting scenes of Brazilian colonial society in painting, lithography and drawings, have portrayed everyday situations where slaves carry the slave masters, and/or members of their immediate family, and/or their belongings (hat, umbrella, coat, pets, luggage, etc.). Moreover, according to Santos (2002) and Santos (2009a), even the excrements generated by the white households had to be transported by the slaves (usually on buckets or bowls on top of their heads) early in the morning to be thrown in the nearest rivers. A sample of these iconic everyday images[13] include: a) the painting *Um mascate e seu escravo*[14] painted by Henry Chamberlain in 1822 (Chamberlain, 1822a; Conrad, 1983, p. 119; Chamberlain, 2017); b) the painting *Uma família brasileira*[15] also painted by Henry Chamberlain in 1822 (Chamberlain, 1822b; Pinacoteca, 2007a; Chamberlain, 2017); c) the painting *Un employé du gouvern servant de chez lui avec familie*[16] painted by Jean Baptiste Debret (Debret, 1839; Pinacoteca, 2007b); and d) the painting *Retour, a la ville, d'un propriétaire de chakra*[17] also by Jean Baptiste Debret (Debret, 1839; Pinacoteca, 2007b).

Therefore, what relevant aspects are being revealed in these studies and pictorial imagery? They bring to the surface that in the patriarchal colonial society, the white Portuguese settlers aspired to achieve nobility, probably to overshadow their not so noble outcast past life in Portugal, but mainly to enjoy the associated privileges. In addition, their aspirational nobility needed also to be performed in public spaces (e.g. going to shops, walking with the family and being carried in sedan chairs by slaves). Submitting their slaves to visible circumstances of servitude contributed to legitimise and reinforce their condition of superiority and command before the eyes of the wider colonial society and not only within the domains of their private life. It is also emblematic to notice their distinction between what occupation was worthy of a noble, or upper class persons, and what was worthy only to the commoners in general and the slaves in particular. This dynamic also reveals the dominant understanding that leadership positions were meant for white male people, whilst white women should take care of the house and children, and the slaves should perform menial occupations of servitude. Over time, this ideology or perception has undergone significant transformations in Brazilian society, but even nowadays, there is evidence suggesting that traces of this dynamic are still in place (see section 2.4.3). In complement to this reflection, Schwartz (2010) argues that this patriarchal model centred in personal authority, alongside social hierarchies based on race, have set the parameters of Brazilian life over time.

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[13] See the reproduction of the mentioned works in Appendix H

[14] A peddler and his slave

[15] A Brazilian family

[16] A government employee walking with his family

[17] The return of a slave owner

2.3.3   A horizontal racial hierarchy

The first *Negro* people in Brazil were shipped by Portugal after capturing them in the African continent (mainly from the West Coast). Over time, many *Negro* people were already born in the colony, but the influx of Africans remained practically uninterrupted for almost three centuries (from 1560 to 1850 as shown in Appendix G). However, a peculiar characteristic of this social group lays in the fact that, contrary to what may look like at first sight, it was not a homogenous group even though they were sharing the same experience of exploitation. In the first place, the people were captured in different regions in Africa and mixed up to avoid solidarity and uprisings (Eltis, 2007). In addition, given the fact that the labour-intensive work in the plantations demanded strong physical capabilities, the Portuguese imported a greater number of male African people than females (Klein, 1986; Hawthorne, 2010). Another evidence to corroborate this argument is brought by Willems (1970) and Santos (2004) who explain that the price paid for male people in Africa was higher than that of females and children, what suggests their higher commercial value. In the second place, over time the Blacks also developed differentiation among themselves or a type of an embryonic caste system. Consequently, the Brazilian-born Blacks were called *crioulo* (creole) to differentiate themselves from the Africans given that they had lighter skin tone in comparison to the newcomers (Bethel, 1984; Schwartz, 1985). This approach was so peculiar that the *crioulos* have even created a subdivision to classify the Africans. Those newly arrived from Africa were called *boçal*[18] and the ones who were already acculturated in the colony were called *ladino* (von Spix *et al.*, 1824; Bethel, 1984; Moura, 2004; Hébrard, 2013).

As many of the young Portuguese settlers "were unaccompanied by females on their arrival in that country, they married, or irregularly connected themselves with Indian women, and subsequently with those of Africa" (Koster, 1816, p. 385). The offspring of those relationships were called *mameluco*[19] in the case of a miscegenation between white and Indian, and mulatto with regard to white and African (Koster, 1816; Agassiz, 1868; Metcalf, 2005). Nevertheless, what is most revealing in this story is, in the first place, that *mamelucos* were granted an almost white-like social status, even though many indigenous people had also been treated as slaves for a period. According to Metcalf (2005, p. 95), the Portuguese "commonly considered *mamelucos* to be 'white', which may reflect the early meaning of '*mameluk*' as a Caucasian slave". In the second place, Bethel (1984, p. 84) reveals, "Brazilian-born Blacks (*crioulos*) and mulattos were preferred as house slaves and mulattos were often chosen for artisan training" what, in that context, were considered improved duties in comparison to the work in the plantations.

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[18] It is also interesting to observe how spoken language evolves over time, because nowadays this terminology has become a rude slang applied to treat someone as stupid or ignorant, irrespectively of the race and does not carry any link with this original usage.

[19] In fact, Koster (1816) uses *mam**a**luco*, but the meaning is exactly the same and over time *mam**e**luco* has become the predominant spelling in Portuguese up to the present time.

Therefore, what does this picture reveal? First, it can be observed that the occupational distribution among the racial groups reveals a type of task-based racial hierarchy operating in that social setting. Within that, the Portuguese considered the *mamelucos* almost white; the mulattos were granted reasonable occupations either in the white men's Big House[20] or in other activities that required some skills such as in the sugar mills. Brazilian-born Blacks (*crioulos*) were given equivalent opportunities, and the majority of the Africans (*boçal* and *ladino*) were considered "slaves of sickle and hoe", what implies that they were considered useful solely for rustic manual and unskilled duties that required nothing but physical strength (Bethel, 1984, p. 84). Evolving from this point, Bethel (1984, p. 85) also claims that "these hierarchies of colour and culture were, of course, created by the slave-owners, and it is difficult to know how far they were accepted by the slaves themselves". In addition, Schwartz (1985) says that, overall, the occupations of *crioulos* and Africans were quite similar and the first group had just a slight competitive advantage of being preferred by the slave-owners to become house slaves and allowed to work in the Big House. The author adds that whilst "mulattos and, to a lesser extent, *crioulos* were favoured as house slaves, artisans and sugar specialists, […] Africans, on the other hand, were strangers, pagans, thought to be untrustworthy or dangerous" (Schwartz, 1985, p. 330). Moreover, "Africans were portrayed as inherently brutish, stupid, uncivilized, barbarians" (Andrews, 1997, p. 9). Thereafter, this set of negative perceptions directly associated with blackness; contribute to our understanding of the inception of many derogating stereotypes still currently circulating in Brazilian society. In contrast, "whiteness was equated with intelligence, rationality, civilization, virtue" (Andrews, 1997, p. 9), and such positive perceptions have perpetuated over time in Brazilian society and in the collective mind-set.

To a certain extent I consider that the argument advocated by Bethel (1984) is consistent concerning the development of the hierarchies based on colour and the occupations by the slave owners, especially given the fact that they had the power to assign whatever occupation or duty they wished to the slaves since they were their property. Nevertheless, based on the literature, I argue that the slaves themselves also played an active relevant role in the reinforcement and operation of such system. At that time the society was essentially rural, the working conditions in the plantations and sugar mills were highly precarious and harsh, and therefore, any opportunity to perform a slightly fewer degrading or excruciating task could be considered as an advantage. According to Schwartz (1985, p. 132), foreigner observers who visited Brazil during that period oftentimes reported the brutality the slaves were subject to in the plantations and sugar mills, and that "Brazilian slaves were poorly fed, housed and clothed". Moreover, Conrad (1983, p. 58)

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[20] It stands for the residence of the landowner/slave master and also the social space and symbol of the white settler's power. Inside it lived all the members of the immediate family of the slave owner and he was also the supreme authority in that setting. It oftentimes had a separate place in the back where the household slaves in charge to provide the family with basic service such as cooking and cleaning were allowed to sleep overnight (Moura, 2004).

reinforces this argument of brutality explaining that at that time the prevailing idea was that only "three P's were required for [managing the] slaves, that were: *pão*, *páo*[21] and *pano* (bread, a stick for punishment, and a piece of cloth)".

In contrast to this picture, the slaves who were allowed to work in the Big House (called 'house slaves' or 'household slaves' by different authors, and oftentimes Brazilian-born Blacks) were granted slightly better working conditions than the slaves of sickle and hoe (predominantly *boçal* and *ladino* Africans). Supporting evidence is presented by Koster (1816, p. 422-423) who reports that "the cloathing (sic) and food which is afforded to them (the household slaves) is generally better" than to the other slaves who work solely in the plantations. However, I must clearly stress that those slightly 'better' working conditions are not to be interpreted here as a synonym of humane treatment (especially with regard to the female house slaves that oftentimes were sexually abused, as revealed by several authors). The consideration and reflection made here are that, those different conditions may have contributed or played a relevant role towards the fostering of hierarchies amongst the Blacks themselves.

In conclusion, this dynamic brings to the surface the reflection that racial hierarchy in colonial Brazil operated not only vertically downwards (white settlers towards Blacks), but also horizontally (i.e. amongst the Blacks). On this context, Cardoso (2011) argues that the social relations built amongst slaves were not hierarchical in terms of social position, but rather on the basis of differentiated everyday living conditions. In fact, since the slaves were considered and treated as merchandise by their masters and the wider society; rather than persons or citizens, it makes sense that in-group social hierarchy per se was not that feasible or common practice. Thus, hierarchy derived from their different occupations, duties and place of belonging (e.g. in the Big House, the plantations or in the *senzala*[22]) could contribute to the development of the reported division among *crioulo*, *boçal* and *ladino* even though, in essence, they were all slaves before the eyes of the patriarchal society ruled by white settlers.

2.3.4   Social stratification and limited social mobility opportunities

Another key point is to understand the broader perspective of the prevailing social stratification and the existing possibilities for upward social mobility for Black people. Willems (1970) advocates that there were signs suggesting the existence of a type of heterogeneous middle-class in colonial society. It was composed not only of whites (even though they were the majority) but also of freed mulatto slaves. In addition, a French cotton buyer reported in 1816 his view of the

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[21] It has been reproduced the original spelling adopted by Conrad (1983, p. 58), but the current accurate one in Portuguese is *pau*.

[22] That stands for the accommodation for the slaves. It was usually located in the back of the farm property and far from the Big House. It had no comfort at all, no artificial lighting, no windows and very poor ventilation (if any) and the slaves were left to sleep straight on the floor (Moura, 2004).

broad social stratification in rural Pernambuco. According to his account, the society was composed of three classes of people: 1) the owners of sugar mills (*senhores de engenho*) or great landowners; 2) the *lavradores*, a type of tenant farmer; and 3) the *moradores*, squatters or small cultivators. Moreover, the same Frenchman stressed that he "was not speaking of the slaves, who are nothing but cattle" (Conrad, 1983, p. 63). His particular perception of slaves comparable to 'cattle' illustrates the prevailing ideas of that time considering this social group not as people but as mere commodities devoid of humanity.

Nevertheless, the social stratification in colonial period was all but that simple and, even though as a general rule, the slaves were positioned at the lowest social strata possible (or not even that if we consider the standpoint of the Frenchmen), there was some degree of upward social mobility possibilities for Black people. Bethel (1984, p. 87) argues, "During the course of the seventeenth-century manumission[23] slowly began to produce a class of freedmen, slaves who filled a series of low and intermediary roles in Brazilian economic life". Taking into consideration that to some mulattoes and *crioulos* were given the opportunity to learn or develop some skills in the Big House and the sugar mill, Bethel's argument seems consistent. Similarly, Schwartz (1985, p. 157) advocates that "a mulatto or *crioulo* slave with a skilled *engenho* occupation or managerial experience could not only hope for eventual freedom but could also be relatively sure of successful employment thereafter".

However, I consider that it is imperative to consider these arguments carefully because they can potentially blur the perception that, in the first place, those upward social mobility experienced by former slaves were not evenly distributed among *crioulo*, *boçal* and *ladino* but very much concentrated on light-skinned people (mulattoes in particular). Evidence of this is found in the differentiated occupations performed by them, as revealed by Bethel (1984) and Schwartz (1985). In the second place, that they did not necessarily represent a flawless rule and finally, oftentimes the intersection between place of birth (Brazil or Africa) and skin tone (the lighter the better) "influenced the assignment of tasks within the sugar mill slave force" (Schwartz, 1985, p. 330). Moreover, in a previous study investigating the manumission of slaves in the state of Bahia, Schwartz (1974) explains that manumission did not necessarily mean the immediate end of a condition of servitude. Schwartz (1974) and Truz (2013) reveal several cases and situations where the former masters demanded that the freedmen/women continued working free of charge for them for an unspecified period of time and/or passed on his/her skill to another slave before fully enjoying his/her freedom. Other supporting evidence is brought by Andrews (1997, p. 8) who explains that even after gaining freedom, "Africans and African-Brazilians [did not] enjoy social or

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[23] According to Schwartz (1974, p. 604-605) manumission means "a juridical action in which property rights were surrendered and in which the former slave assumed a new legal personality and new legal responsibilities". In addition, Moura (2004, p. 24) explains that it means "an act by which the slave achieved his/her freedom, becoming a freedman/woman".

legal equality with whites. The imperial legislation, reinforced by local ordinances, divided colonial society into a racial hierarchy in which the full rights of freedom were reserved for whites." Conrad (1983, p. 201) advocates that "as long as slavery existed in Brazil, it should be remembered, the word 'African' was practically synonymous with 'slave', and a dark skin was always a formidable impediment to economic advancement".

Based on the studies reviewed (Schwartz, 1974; Bethel, 1984; Schwartz, 1985), it is possible to infer, in the first place, that there were some opportunities for upward social mobility for Black people, even though it does not mean to say that they were widely available and exempt from several barriers and challenges. A corroborating example to this reflection is brought by Moura (2004, p. 242) who, similarly to Andrews (1997), explains that even as freedmen/women "they did not enjoy a series of rights like citizens without slavery past" including, for instance, the right to vote. In the second place, that the social stratification was not as rigid as the French cotton buyer had suggested. In fact, Johnson (2004, p. 62) advocates that in Brazil "caste systems were loose enough to provide mobility between the groups directly above and below one, but functioned to keep most dark-skinned Africans from entering middling or elite society". It can be observed then, that the picture revealed by these studies suggests the intersection of racial hierarchy and social stratification in colonial society where a person's position in the racial hierarchy scale could have a strong influence towards his/her social class positioning and hence the social mobility possibilities or their restrictions and limitations.

Another relevant aspect to take into consideration in this intricate web of influencing factors consists in different castes of people based not only on his/her skin tone but also on his/her civilian condition. During colonial period, Black people, in particular, could be classified not only as *crioulo*, *boçal* or *ladino*, but also as freedman/woman[24], manumitted, or slave (Schwartz, 1974; Johnson, 2004; Machado, 2006). The intersection and overlap of all those elements with a person's racial hierarchy based on skin colour contributed towards the complexity of the dynamic of social stratification. Therefore, it can be inferred that racial labels and categories did have a considerable importance and role in that social context in creating distinctions among the social groups, and defining who was at the top, at the centre or at the margin. Consequently, one question that can be raised is: how non-white people managed to navigate in that social setting. Conrad (1983) explains that there is evidence documented by the British traveller Koster (1816) indicating that non-white people (and mulattoes more often) tried to dodge the barriers imposed by the legislation passing as white hiding any trace of African origin in their documents.

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[24] Many authors use freedman/woman interchangeably with manumitted (in Portuguese: *escravo liberto* and *escravo alforriado*, respectively) since both terminologies convey basically the same idea of a person free from slavery, whilst other authors treat them as different categories even though it is not completely clear what significant distinctions would exist between them. Therefore, in order to cover both terminologies that are found in the vast literature about this subject matter, it has been chosen to keep them separated.

Nevertheless, the review of other studies such as Schwartz (1985) and Castro (1998) unveils that passing as white was not the only strategy employed by them. According to both authors, there is evidence revealing that a considerable number of former slaves had also purchased slaves themselves, and even situations of captive slaves who had other slaves at their service. Within that, in contrast to the majority of the slaves who worked solely in the plantations and sugar mills, some of those working in the urban areas "also had opportunities to earn cash wages and accumulate savings" (Andrews, 1997, p. 5). Consequently, taking into consideration that "ownership of slaves may be assumed to be a yardstick of the relative socio-economic position of the proprietor" (Willems, 1970, p. 37-38), that contributes to understanding their inner motivation to purchase slaves and ascend socially. Eventually, the ascension was not completely economically, given that their savings were modest, but at least symbolically, in an attempt not be perceived as a slave anymore by the society. This argument is supported by convergent idea developed by Castro (1998) who says that slaves were an affordable merchandise and their possession by former dark-skinned slaves had the purpose not only to demonstrate their new social condition but mainly to deny the previous one. In complement to this reflection, Klein (1969, p. 42) says that "as for the social condition of the free coloured class, it appears that well before the end of slavery they had achieved an important style of life intermediate between the white master and coloured slave classes".

Still, with regard to this group of freedmen/women prior the emancipation of slavery in 1888, an intriguing question that arises is; who were they after all? According to Klein (1969), they were predominantly the offspring of white fathers and slave mothers, and consequently, the class of freed Black people was dominated by mulattoes whilst African-born Blacks were fewer represented in this group. Therefore, it is possible to infer in conclusion that, within that colonial social context, white people occupied predominantly the middle and upper social positions. The mulattoes, especially the manumitted group, enjoyed a slightly fewer negatively stigmatised position in the racial hierarchy and, as a rule, they had a slightly bigger chance to ascend socially to intermediate positions. In addition, those with some minimal level of savings ventured to pass as white purchasing slaves or concealing their African ancestry. Finally, the remaining group of Blacks (*crioulos* and Africans alike) were positioned at the lowest social strata possible and, on top of that, they were attributed with several negative and derogating perceptions and depreciated symbolic markers associated with slavery, servitude and backwardness.

2.4   The key phases of racial relations in Brazil

Evolving from the debate set in previous section 2.3, I argue that a clearer and well-structured understanding of racial relations in Brazil demands a review of what I call its three key historical phases. However, even though distinctive markers separate them, they are intertwined and over time, they have developed important roles in shaping Brazil's current racial relation

landscape. **The first phase** comprises the early years after the emancipation of slaves in 1888 and the Proclamation of Republic in 1889. At that time, given the fact that non-white people outnumbered whites, the prevailing belief was that *mestizaje* represented a social problem that needed to be tackled. Whitening (or positive eugenics) was the strategy adopted through official public policy sponsoring white European immigration, believing that their mixing with the miscegenated Brazilians would lead towards a white-only population within three generations. **The second phase** comes with the publication of Gilberto Freyre's book 'The Masters and the Slaves' in 1933 that, contrary to the predominant voices of the previous phase, praised miscegenation as the country's distinctive positive feature rather than its *Achilles' Heel*. The study contributed decisively to the rise of the 'racial democracy' concept that is still manifested in today's racial relations. Finally, **the third phase** was inaugurated with the studies of the sociologist Florestan Fernandes in 1965 challenging the arguments of a unique racial harmony, as well as the studies that came afterwards revealing that, rather than a 'racial democracy', Brazilian racism is skilfully denied, disguised, and concealed in several attitudes through a range of mechanisms. Additionally, the studies of this phase also reveal a tension regarding the improved social roles and symbolic social places occupied by *Negro* people in contrast with those expected and/or 'reserved' for them by the dominant elite.

2.4.1   Fostering whitening soon after the emancipation of slaves

According to available census data (see Appendix A), by the time the Proclamation of Republic took place in 1889 the country's population was composed of 43.9 percent *branco*, 14.63 percent *preto* and 41.4 percent *pardo* people. In other words, non-white people outnumbered white people considerably (56.03 percent vs 43.97 percent). The government and the dominant elites of the newly established republic viewed this picture as an undesirable situation and considered it as form of social problem that needed to be tackled (Mikulak, 2011; Pinto and Ferreira, 2014). Another supporting element to illustrate this picture lays in the fact that the majority of the freedmen/women were mulattoes (Klein, 1969). Therefore, it means that for the ruling elite this group could represent a threat to their leadership, taking into consideration that they had upward social mobility aspirations themselves, and some of them occupied intermediary social class positions (Bethel, 1984). The new republican regime aimed to shape the country's national identity as a modern and developed nation (mirrored in Western European societies), and therefore race discussions played an important role in this process (Andrews, 1991; Schwarcz, 1994; Guimarães, 2004). The dominant Western racial beliefs at that time were based on the 'theories of human biology'. Such theories argued that 'scientific' evidence supported the claim that *Negro* and indigenous peoples were inferior in comparison to whites in many aspects (e.g. intelligence, behaviour, social interaction, moral traits, and beauty). Moreover, they also advocated that miscegenated people were degenerated (Skidmore, 1993; Schwarcz, 1994; Wade, 2010b).

The most influencing voices advocating these ideas were the Swedish Carl von Linné (1707-1778), the German Johann Friedrich Blumenbach (1752-1840) and the French Arthur de Gobineau (1816-1882), and their ideas also echoed in Brazil (Magnoli, 2009). The echoes are found in the studies of influential authors, such as Lacerda (1911), Kehl (1920), Melo (1922) and Rodrigues (1932). The dominant argument advocated in colonial society claimed that African people were "strangers, pagans, thought to be untrustworthy or dangerous" (Schwartz, 1985, p. 330). Moreover, "Africans were portrayed as inherently brutish, stupid, uncivilized, barbarians" (Andrews, 1997, p. 9). In contrast, "whiteness was equated with intelligence, rationality, civilization, virtue" (Andrews, 1997, p. 9). Consequently, given the fact that non-whites were the largest social group and there was an institutional aim to turn the country into one of the world's greatest civilised centres such as the US and Europe, it led the government to pursue a specific strategy that encouraged the immigration of white European people (mainly from Germany, Italy, Portugal and Spain). The goal was that "mixture would supposedly bring about the elimination of blacks and indigenous people and the creation of a mixed society that was at the distinctly whiter end of the spectrum" (Wade, 2010b, p. 31).

Within this context, there is an emblematic letter written by Arthur de Gobineau in 1869 (then serving as a French Minister to Brazil) depicting his view of Brazil's social problems. According to Skidmore (1993, p. 30), Arthur de Gobineau wrote that Brazilians were "a population totally mulatto, vitiated in its blood and spirit, and fearfully ugly. Not a single Brazilian has pure blood because of the pattern of marriages among whites, Indians and Negroes are so widespread that the nuances of color are infinite, causing a degeneration of the most depressing type". In addition, Arthur de Gobineau suggested that the best solution for this social problem was for Brazil to "fortify itself through joining with the higher value of European race" (Skidmore, 1993, p. 30). Thus, the group of influential Brazilian authors (Lacerda, 1911; Kehl, 1920; Melo, 1922; Rodrigues, 1932) shared three convergent arguments: 1) miscegenation was equivalent to moral degeneration; 2) it represented simply an intermediary step towards the complete whitening of Brazilian population; and 3) in a matter of few decades there would not be *pretos* and *pardos* anymore in the country. At the 'First Universal Race Congress' in London in 1911, Lacerda (1911) advocated that in no more than 100 years or three generations, the whitening process would be completed and Brazil would become a whites-only nation. Similarly, Melo (1922) wrote an influential article arguing that it would not take too long for the disappearance of mulatto people as a 'natural' whitening consequence of miscegenation.

In addition, Rodrigues (1932) published the book 'The Africans in Brazil' expressing his ideas about the inferiority of Brazilian *Negro* people, converging with claims previously made by Arthur de Gobineau. Amongst the beliefs advocated in the study, the author says that "the Negro's organic constitution, shaped by the physical and moral habitat where he has been raised, does not equip him to adapt to the civilization of superior races that derive from diverse physical and

cultural environment" (Rodrigues, 1932, p. 289). Moreover, the author also raises concerns regarding the capacity of the country in achieving higher levels of social development due to its *Negro* population. The author says that "what matters most to Brazil is to determine to what extent its inferiority is resulting from the Negroes' civilisation difficulties or if it can be compensated by the natural miscegenation process" (Rodrigues, 1932, p. 291). The pharmacist Kehl (1931) was an open and strong advocate of eugenic practices to tackle the miscegenation and the social 'problems' associated with it, publishing several articles conveying his ideas and even establishing in 1918 Latin America's first eugenic association, the 'São Paulo Eugenic Society'[25]. One of the strongest ideas advocated by him consisted in the mass sterilisation of mestizo and *Negro* people as a mean to avoid mixed offspring and reach the complete whitening of the society in a matter of a few decades (Kehl, 1920).

In summary, it can be inferred that the period is marked with a perception that *mestizaje* (represented by the greater proportion of non-whites in the population, being many of them former mulatto and *crioulo* slaves) was an obstacle towards achieving the desired level of social development and a modern national identity that was supposed to be all white. The dominant theories of human biology contributed to fostering the idea of the inferiority and social/moral degeneration of non-whites and, ultimately, that miscegenation was simply an intermediary step towards the 'inevitable and natural' complete whitening of the population within a few decades. Convergent with this argumentation, there is a famous painting of Brazilian art made by the Spanish artist Modesto Brocos in 1895 called *A Redenção de Cam* (see Figure 1).

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[25] Strangely enough, there is a considerable literature (journal articles, magazine articles, book chapters, monographies, etc.) addressing the eugenic movement in Brazil, but none of them mentions for how long the society was active. The only objective identified clue is given by the Society's official *Boletim de Eugenia* published from January 1929 until December 1931 (available at:
http://old.ppi.uem.br/gephe/index.php/arquivos-digitalizados/14-sample-data-articles/84-boletim-de-eugenia
– Accessed on 04/04/2017), but it is unknown if the society was still active after this last date or not.

Figure 1: *A Redenção de Cam* (Ham's redemption)

Source: Itaú (2015)

The painting has even been used by Lacerda (1911) to illustrate his arguments in the 'First Universal Race Congress' in London in 1911 because it skilfully summarizes the whitening concept. The painting portrays a rural family composed of a Black elderly woman, that has been interpreted by different authors (Bilac, 1895; Bosi, 1992; Silva, 2011; Itaú, 2015) as the mother of the mulatto woman holding a white newborn baby on her lap, and the white father (interpreted by the authors as a European immigrant) looking proudly at the baby. Still according to these authors,

what is quite symbolic in the painting is the gesture of the old woman raising her hands towards the sky in prayer position giving thanks for the birth of the white grandson that would be free from the negative stigmas associated with blackness and slavery. Twine (1998, p. 108-109) argues that "this orientation toward whitening ones' children reproduces a symbolic order that links whiteness to material privilege while linking blackness to impoverishment and inferiority"

2.4.2   The rise of 'racial democracy'

The group of influential Brazilian authors of the previous period (Lacerda, 1911; Kehl, 1920; Melo, 1922; Rodrigues, 1932) advocated the biological inferiority and degeneration of non-whites, and that the gradual whitening of the population would eradicate this social problem. However, not many years later, the publication of 'The Masters and the Slaves'[26] in 1933 by Freyre (1987) would promote a considerable shift in the understanding of Brazil's racial relations. Different from his predecessors, Freyre (1987) considered that miscegenation was, in fact, Brazil's main positive defining feature and not its weakness or a social problem as Rodrigues (1932) used to argue so vehemently. Even though there is some historical evidence indicating that two other authors (Castro, 1889; and Moraes, 1924) had explored the idea of 'racial democracy' before Freyre, over time he became widely known as the scholar responsible for its development. Most probably, this may have happened due to the influence and high impact reached by his work quite immediately after publication[27].

Nevertheless, a question that naturally arises is; what is 'racial democracy' about? There is a vast literature addressing this subject matter over the years both in Brazil and internationally and, on this regard, Owensby (2005, p. 324) says that 'racial democracy' is "one of the most exhaustively studied issues in modern Brazilian scholarship". However, among the numerous studies, there are three in particular that I consider bringing clear, relatively convergent, and straightforward interpretation. Dzidzienyo (1971, p. 5), a professor of Afro-American and Brazilian studies, argues that 'racial democracy' represents the idea of a place "where people of different races live together in harmony and where opportunities are open to all irrespective of racial background". The historian Andrews (1996, p. 483) says that it refers to a context "in which blacks, mulattoes, and whites live under conditions of juridical and, to a large degree, social equality".

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[26] I consider pertinent to explain that the original title in Portuguese *Casa Grande & Senzala* carries a strong symbolic meaning of oppositional dualities concealed in these places. This is said because, as seen on Footnotes 20 and 22, *Casa Grande* (Big House) represents a metaphor of a place of privileges, power and freedom in direct oppositional contrast to the backwardness and servitude represented by the *Senzala* (Slave House).

[27] The review of several leading newspapers published during that time allows us to identify dozens of strong positive comments made by prominent figures, opinion makers and scholars about the book such as, for example: "A book that has already been released as a masterpiece" (Roquete Pinto); "Vigorous work of science and art" (Agripino Grieco); "Genesis of current Brazil" (Azevedo Amaral); "The Bible of Brazilian sociologists" (Ovidio da Cunha); "A watershed in Brazil's history" (Murilo Marroquim), among many others.

Finally, the sociologist Joseph (2013, p. 1524-1525) explains that in Brazil's 'racial democracy' "racial classification was fluid, interracial relationships were socially accepted and racism was considered non-existent relative to the US".

Therefore, as the definitions suggest, denial of the existence of racism is at the core of 'racial democracy' belief. In complement to that, there are two relevant historical events corroborating this argument. The distinguished Brazilian policymaker Rui Barbosa (1849-1923) issued an executive order on 14 December 1890 demanding that all documents and records related to slavery ownership available in the archives of his Finance Ministry should be burned (Twine, 1998; Jacomino, 2010). In the executive order, Rui Barbosa justifies the decision arguing that it had been taken "in honour of our fraternity and solidarity duties with the big number of citizens who, through the abolition of enslavement, had just joined the Brazilian communion" (Lacombe, 1986, p. 338). I argue that this claim was already an indirect discourse praising the country's harmonious racial relation soon after the abolition. Moreover, it also conveys a perception that the freed slaves were full citizens such as the white people but does not acknowledge the lack of social policies to support their integration in the emerging class society (Dzidzienyo, 1971; Barros *et al.*, 2000). In fact, slavery was (and remains) an inconvenient event in Brazil's history. It is inconvenient because it represents an undesirable hallmark in the country's history that upsets the dominant elite proud of their whitening modernisation ideals and that, for a long time has attempted to neglect it. Supporting evidence of this argument can be found in the lyrics of the 'Hymn to the Proclamation of Republic' that brings the following verses: "We do not even believe that slaves once / There have been in such a noble country… / Today the flash of dawn / Find brothers, not hostile tyrants. / We are all the same!" (Albuquerque and Miguez, 1890). The hymn (sung to date in primary and secondary schools across the country and official festivities) represents an interesting piece of evidence of the prevailing ideologies of that time. It was composed and registered only two years after the emancipation of slaves and it already conveyed a discourse denying the slave heritage. Moreover, it also claims an egalitarian discourse ('we are all the same') converging with the so-called 'Brazilian communion' advocated by Rui Barbosa in the same year 1890, and within the context of the shaping of a 'modern' Brazil.

Thus, it is possible to observe that Freyre (1987) depicted colonial society built on top of a harmonic social relation between master and slaves (Vargas, 2004). In colonial society, the majority of darker-skinned slaves were considered mere slaves of sickle and hoe, what implies that they were useful solely for unskilled and harsh duties in the plantations and sugar mills. In contrast, some lighter-skinned slaves were allowed to work indoors (i.e. within the Big House), what was considered a privileged condition and a benevolent concession (Bethel, 1984). Therefore, this picture has contributed for Freyre (1987) develop the argument that Brazilian slaves were treated 'better and kinder' than in other countries with slavery heritage, such as South Africa and the US (Twine, 1998; Winant, 1999; Wade, 2010b). Moreover, according to van den Berghe (1967, p. 59)

Freyre also "minimised the amount of racial conflict in Brazil by ascribing tensions to class factors". In his quest to answer what it is to be Brazilian, Freyre argued that "Black African cultures and peoples played a major part in the development of a new type of civilisation, which is neither European nor African, but distinctively Brazilian" (van den Berghe, 1967, p. 59). Its main characteristic, van den Berghe (1967, p. 59) continues, can be described as "a new type of civilization whose novelty derives as much from racial intermingling as from intermixing cultures", and believed that "the black African has been integrated not only biologically, but also sociologically" (Freyre, 1977, p. 13-15).

The development of different Freyre's studies over time (e.g. , 1945; 1977; 1987; and 2009) as well as that of the social psychologist Ramos (e.g. , 1940; 1942; and 1946), who was another strong advocate of 'racial democracy', led to a widespread belief, in Brazil and internationally, in the existence of a unique racial harmony. Moreover, they also led towards a misleading understanding that "there is no racism but only a benign, relatively insignificant form of prejudice" in Brazil that did not represent obstacles for Blacks' social advancements (Nascimento, 1980, p. 200). In fact, the belief in a 'softer kind of racism' was to be explored as a powerful and convenient instrument by politicians in different moments in Brazil's history, but especially during what is known as the 'Vargas's Era'[28] and during the military regime some decades later (from 1964 to 1985, as indicated in Appendix B). The core discourse behind the 'softer and kinder' racism was that *Negro* people in Brazil did not face the same segregation practices found in other countries with a slavery past and that, consequently, they did not face obstacles towards their social integration and upward social mobility possibilities (Skidmore, 1993; Owensby, 2005; Pacheco, 2011). However, it can be observed that the political use of 'racial democracy' discourse is not restricted solely to a distant past. Not many years ago the federal government sponsored a set of public policies and debates aimed at fostering greater racial equality that was officially named 'Building Racial Democracy' (Cardoso, 1998), what suggests that the idea is still vivid in the minds of current policymakers.

It is also relevant to bring to the surface that the concept of 'racial democracy' replacing the previous belief in a 'natural' and 'irreversible' inferiority of non-white people also benefited from the international context of that time. Soon after the end of World War II in 1945, there were increasing international debates challenging the 'scientific' arguments of the inferiority of non-white peoples. Evidence of this can be found in an article supported by UNESCO published in 1950 and undersigned by eighteen international scholars, including one Brazilian (the sociologist Luis Aguiar Costa Pinto), called 'The fallacies of racism exposed' (Beaglehole *et al.*, 1950). In the article, the authors develop arguments refuting the veracity of the previous 'scientific' beliefs. In

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[28] This refers to the period 1930 to 1945 when president Getúlio Dornelles Vargas ruled Brazil for fifteen consecutive years (Available at: http://www.biblioteca.presidencia.gov.br/presidencia/presidencia/ex-presidentes/getulio-vargas – Accessed 09/04/2017)

the subsequent years, UNESCO supported the publication of several similar articles and statements reinforcing the challenge to 'scientific' ideas about race and inferiority of non-white people (e.g. Klineberg, 1954; Rose, 1958; Debetz, 1965; Koffler, 1968; Glezerman, 1973). Consequently, this international context contributed to putting an end to the official eugenic discourses that miscegenation would whiten Brazil within three generations. Moreover, Andrews (1996, p. 487) argues that at the end of the 1920s and early 1930s the government's programme of subsidies towards European immigration had come to an end, and "the effort to transform Brazil into a white, European society in the tropics had failed" because the country was not becoming whiter, as it was expected and previously advocated.

However, the most interesting aspect at this particular turning point is the fact that while the international debates influenced the end of the official eugenic policy and discourse, it did not eliminate the widespread belief in Brazilian society that whitening could bring both tangible and intangible symbolic benefits to the offspring. Over the years, the belief that miscegenation would give birth to lighter-skinned children and consequently grant them better life prospects, as depicted in the painting *A Redenção de Cam* (see Figure 1), has become an integral part of Brazil's racial relation (Twine, 1998; Winant, 1999; Goldstein, 2003; Sansone, 2003; Wade, 2010b). Nevertheless, there are not too many studies addressing specifically this particular transition (from scientific to ideological whitening), except Skidmore (1993) who has explored the whitening ideology after 'scientific' racism. The author argues that even after the 'scientific' arguments had collapsed, the dominant elite "maintained its explicit faith in the whitening process" (Skidmore, 1993, p. 207). They shifted their discourse towards the argument that, in fact, whitening was "a process of 'ethnic integration' which was (as has been said since the 1890's) miraculously resolving Brazil's racial problems. As the hope for whitening remained constant, confidence in its inevitability grew" (Skidmore, 1993, p. 207-208).

Furthermore, while white European immigrants benefited from social policies that supported their settlement and consequent upward social mobility in Brazil, the newly emancipated *Negro* people were predominantly experiencing unemployment and depriving living conditions in the emerging *favelas*[29] (Maringoni, 2011). The outcome of this contrasting picture may have also contributed to reinforcing the general perception that whiteness was associated with better life prospects while blackness meant backwardness (Silva, 2000). Even part of the *Negro* community also embraced this belief. Andrews (1991, p. 136) argues that "aspiring to join the mainstream of Brazilian society, and seeing whitening as the most likely way to achieve that goal, some members of the Afro-Brazilian middle class endorsed the whitening thesis". In fact, Andrews (1991, p. 136) goes on to suggest that some prominent Black figures used to verbalise that "let us not seek to perpetuate our race, but, yes, to infiltrate ourselves into the bosom of the privileged race, the white

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[29] *Favela* is a Portuguese word meaning slum, or a low-income community deprived in urban areas.

race, because, we repeat, we are not Africans but rather purely Brazilian". Over the years, the whitening ideology has been maintained, reinforced and disseminated through a range of tools of power manifestation. They include means of mass communication (notably television and advertising), cultural products (movies, sitcoms and soap operas), literature and textbooks. Overall, they convey the idea of a prevailing social group capable of representing all people in the social setting and consequently that the others should aspire to look like or get as close as possible to it (Moura, 1988; Araújo, 1999a; Munanga, 1999).

This reflection leads us to an interesting point. If within the Brazilian social context since colonial period, whitening has been fostered as the summit of social evolution and blackness represents the opposite idea, what would be the 'escape route' left for the *Negro* community then? To tackle this issue, the dominant elite developed the discourse that "Brazilians of color (sic) could escape degeneracy by whitening through social ascension" (Dávila, 2003, p. 7). In other words, it conveys the belief that 'money whitens', meaning that upward social mobility would shield *Negro* people from racism. According to its advocates, "once a person of dark colour acquires money, he can literally buy himself out of the Black category and into the white category, because along with money comes all the social benefits which are commonly associated with whiteness and success in Brazil" (Dzidzienyo, 1971, p. 8). Returning to colonial society, it is possible to identify that, actually, the belief that social ascension could somehow protect the person from discrimination or negative stereotyping was already present. Take for instance the attitude of former dark-skinned slaves purchasing slaves themselves to deny their previous condition before the scrutiny of the society and establishing a distinction between them and the slaves that represented the most deprived social class position (Klein, 1969; Castro, 1998). However, even ascending socially, the person's whitening "it is not completely fulfilled [because] he/she can achieve a white's social status, but not all the associated benefits are granted to the *Negro*. There are restrictions" (Silva, 2000, p. 105). This argument implies that the 'whitening' through upward social mobility is not complete because before the eyes of society, the person remains *Negro* and the common negative associated attributes remain unchanged.

As the belief in the 'racial democracy' ideology flourished through the 1930s and 1940s both in Brazil and internationally, in 1950 UNESCO commissioned a research team led by the American anthropologist Charles Wagley to carry out a one-year ethnographic study of Brazil's racial relations (Métraux, 1951; 1952; Twine, 1998; Wade, 2010b). In search of means to avoid a repetition of the horrors of Nazism (or negative eugenics) and trying to combat racist practices worldwide, UNESCO had decided to turn its eyes towards Brazil's world famous 'racial democracy'. The aim was to clearly understand how it operated and possibly emulate it in other parts of the world (Andrews, 1996; Maio, 1997). The study revealed that, contrary to what Brazil claimed, there were, in fact, some racial-relations issues in the country, but the scholars attributed them to be of social class origin rather than racial-based due to the huge gap between rich

(predominantly white) and poor (predominantly black) as argued by Maio (1997) and Silva (2000). Nevertheless, on the second edition of the original report, released eleven years later, there is a clear support of racial democracy arguing, "Racial origin has not become a serious point of conflict in Brazilian society. Brazilians can still call their society a racial democracy. […] Brazil remains a lesson in racial democracy for the rest of the world" (Wagley, 1963, p. 2).

Therefore, what can be inferred is that whilst the belief in the 'racial democracy' replaced the official eugenic policies, it did not change society's view regarding the symbolic benefits granted by whitening, most probably because such ideology was (and still is) widely disseminated in Brazil. Supporting argument for this reflection is found in the study 'Becoming *Negro*' where Souza (1990) argues that Brazilian racism hides its true face either behind blatant obstacles to the advancement of *Negro* people, or oftentimes behind subtle barriers such as the whitening ideology. Souza (1990) goes on explaining that in Brazil the colour continuum (i.e. the myriad of racial terminologies), alongside the 'racial democracy' and the whitening ideology have been the determinant elements shaping *Negro's* upward social mobility prospects. Actually, over the years, Brazilian society managed to assimilate both ideologies and they play a fundamental role in shaping current racial relations. On the one hand, 'racial democracy' fosters the idea of a society with almost non-existent racism, a land that offers egalitarian opportunities for upward social mobility to all regardless of racial background, and a place of harmonious racial relations in contrast to many other nations (especially the US). Historically, the majority of racial relations studies compare Brazil vs US rather than with other Latin American countries. On the other hand, the whitening ideology disseminates, praises and reinforces whiteness as the aspirational social condition to the non-whites and the summit of social evolution and beauty. In other words, I argue that Brazil's racial relations are shaped by an intricate 'hide and show' game that uses 'racial democracy' to politely disguise, conceal and subtly legitimise racism whilst praising whitening as its only proud visible face. Rather than opposing forces within this intricate game, they are in fact complementary.

2.4.3   Contemporary racial relations

In the study called 'The Negro in Brazilian Society', Fernandes (1965, p. 312) argues that the myth of 'racial democracy' "contributed to disseminate and generalise a false understanding of Brazil's racial reality", blurring the perception around the core of the racial problems and avoiding tackling them. Bailey (2004, p. 729) argues, "[myths] can have a powerful impact on people because they communicate and reinforce a particular worldview" whilst discrediting opposing ideas. Souza (1990, p. 25) asserts, "The myth is not an ordinary discourse. It is a discourse aimed at disguising reality; deny history and making it all acceptable". Thus, Fernandes (1965) suggests that five main ethnocentric convictions have been developed in Brazil derived from the belief in the 'racial democracy': 1) *Negro* people do not have any issues or concerns in Brazil; 2) given the

Brazilian temper, there are no racial distinction among us; 3) the opportunities for upward social mobility and symbolic power are evenly distributed; 4) the *Negro* is satisfied with his social condition; and 5) there is not, there was never and there will never be other issues of social justice with regard to *Negro*. Moreover, Fernandes (1965, p. 346) also reveals that "it was possible to observe a wicked dilemma repeatedly faced both by the emancipated and born-free *Negros*. Integrating into social life meant, for the *Negro* and mulatto alike, to passively accept the rules of the game, established by and for the white". Souza (1990) argues that the acceptance to these 'rules of the game' involves the internalisation by the *Negro* people of the negative social representations associated with blackness and the belief that denying his/her own blackness would qualify him/her to pass as white.

The studies conducted by Fernandes (1965; 1972) and his disciples Cardoso and Ianni (1960); Cardoso (1962); and Ianni (1962) revealed that Brazil did not experience a 'racial democracy' as previously advocated by Freyre (1977; 1987), Ramos (1942; 1946) and other followers. In fact, the emancipation of slaves, devoid of any supporting social policy, had created unequal and challenging conditions for the integration of *Negro* people in the emerging class society. Consequently, the majority of them were, in fact, at the margin of society with regard to access to education and professional qualification, housing conditions, employment prospects and opportunities for upward social mobility (Skidmore, 1993; Wade, 2010b). In contrast to this picture, the white European immigrants arriving in the country soon after the emancipation benefited from subsidies to settle in Brazilian society, what illustrates the different treatment provided for the two groups. Similarly, Butler (1998, p. 46) says, "The economic handicap borne by Afro-Brazilians and the distinct advantages enjoyed by immigrants and Brazilian whites were reinforced by prevalent cultural ideologies". In fact, Butler (1998) is suggesting that the unequal treatment the *Negro* people received, alongside the dominant whitening ideology, played a strong role in the marginalisation process of this social group over time. Ultimately, "together, these economic and cultural obstacles made bridging the gap of inequality in the twentieth century a Herculean task" (Butler, 1998, p. 46).

Nevertheless, more important than challenging and contesting 'racial democracy' per se, the studies and reflections that emerged during this phase bring to the surface the core issue of Brazil's racial relation: the social place of *Negro* people in Brazilian class society. It can be observed that, as the country's economic and social conditions have improved over time, there has been a constant tension between the emerging improved social roles and symbolic places occupied by a growing number of *Negro* people and the ones that historically have been attributed and/or 'reserved' for them by the dominant elite. Gonzalez and Hasenbalg (1982) argue that there is a prevalent and deep-rooted idea in Brazil that associates skin colour and social class position, which invariably considers *Negro* people positioned at the lowest social strata whilst whites are located in the highest positions. Souza (1990, p. 20) argues that in Brazilian society, "racial categorization

enables allocating people in different positions within the social class structure in accordance with their proximity [or distance] to the standard dominant white racial group". Returning to patriarchal colonial society, it is possible to observe the existence of a discourse advocating that white settlers were born to lead whereas unskilled occupations were meant for Blacks. Based on that, it can be asked: has the essence of this discourse been wiped out of Brazilian society, or has it been transformed and assumed renewed packaging?

It is clear that Brazilian society has improved considerably over time in comparison to colonial rural society and, consequently, the current types of occupations people engage with are different. Nevertheless, it can be inferred that the core colonial idea in regard to work has remained unchanged. The perception that has been fostered over time is that the most prestigious and leading occupations in society are expected to be performed by white people, whereas the non-whites might perform mostly menial and subservient roles. Dzidzienyo (1971) argues that *Negro* people in Brazil are oftentimes at the marginal positions in society and underrepresented in many decision-making positions such as in policymaking, business and public administration. The author also adds that "the only areas where the *Negro* plays a significant, rather than menial role, are in football and entertainment" (Dzidzienyo, 1971, p. 6). Different recent studies reveal that, to date, this picture as not changed significantly in Brazil (Lopes, 2003; Andrade, 2008; Vasques, 2014; Johnson, 2018). In addition, Silva (2000, p. 105) reveals that breaking the barriers towards achieving more prestigious leading occupations in Brazilian society is challenging for *Negro* people. That is argued because "the person who ascends socially is considered the exception and not the rule", what does not contributes towards the valorisation of *Negro* as a group.

In conclusion, whilst *Negro* people struggle to achieve upward social mobility, there are opposing forces that prevent, postpone or challenge collective successes. According to Wade (2010b, p. 70), studies conducted by Cardoso and Ianni (1960) and Cardoso (2003) reveal that "white Brazilians adopted 'an ideology of compromise', allowing social mobility for some blacks and repressing the majority." Single and isolated success stories, even though they are not exempt from challenges, they are praised by the dominant elite as evidence of 'racial democracy', egalitarian opportunities to all and meritocracy. In other words, the *Negro* person who works hard enough will achieve success on their own merits regardless of racial background and achieve upward social mobility (Silva, 2000). Consequently, praising single success stories contributes to reinforcing the argument of almost non-existing racial barriers and also "do not threaten to upset the fixed nature of existing unequal relationships" (Dzidzienyo, 1971, p. 6).

2.5　　Racial hierarchy in Brazil

Looking back for a moment on the several studies reviewed in section 2.4 it is possible to observe that the racial hierarchy discourse is permeated throughout the three phases and, consequently, both topics (racial relations & racial hierarchy) are intertwined. The official social policy fostering European immigration soon after the emancipation of slaves, for example, aimed at creating "a mixed society that was at the distinctively whiter end of the spectrum" (Wade, 2010b, p. 31) represents a clear indication of this link. In addition, the ingrained collective belief in the whitening ideology contributes to reproducing "a symbolic order that links whiteness to material privilege while linking blackness to impoverishment and inferiority" (Twine, 1998, p. 108-109). Therefore, this section aims at discussing the main aspects regarding the development and operation of Brazil's racial hierarchy system characterised by strong contrasting oppositional poles (Black & White). Moreover, it is also addressed their expected differentiated social places and roles, and an intricate (practically fluid) intermediary array of racial self-identifiers which enable people to swing back and forth between the two poles in accordance with the circumstance and context.

2.5.1　　The opposing poles of the racial hierarchy system

Evolving from the ideas and concepts discussed in the previous section, it is possible to observe that the first phase of Brazil's racial relations has been responsible for the establishment of the country's fundamental pillars of a racial hierarchy system. The review of the studies clearly exposes what Crenshaw (2000, p. 551) calls "historical oppositional dualities", or the contrasting positive-negative poles of the racial scale associated, respectively, with whiteness and blackness. Over time in Brazil, white racial group has been associated with modernity, development, better educational level, reference for beauty standard and aspirational progress. In contrast, *Negro* has been carrying all the negative burden of 358 years of slavery, backwardness and underdevelopment, whilst mulatto has represented an idea of an intermediary step towards whiteness given that this racial group aspires 'progress' (Silva, 2000; Mikulak, 2011). To a certain extent, this picture unveils how Brazilian society sees skin colour and develops its understanding of social distance among racial groups. This particular 'way of seeing' skin colour in Brazil is also linked to what Nascimento (1980), Nogueira (2007) and other authors call 'mark prejudice' in contrast to 'origin prejudice'. It means that externally visible features (or phenotypes) such as, for example, complexion, hair style, nose shape, lips size, buttocks, etc. represent a person's 'mark' and based on them he/she is racially categorised positively or negatively by the dominant group (Nogueira, 2007). On the other hand, 'origin prejudice' takes into consideration solely the person's ancestry to categorise him/her. The best example of this being the so-called 'one-drop-rule' applied in the US social context (Nascimento, 1980; Nogueira, 2007).

Taking into consideration that prior to the emancipation of slaves in Brazil *Negro* people were seen as devoid of humanity (Camargo, 1988; Fonseca, 1994; 2012), soon afterwards emergent ideologies of racial differences repositioned them into 'their original place' of inferiority. It can be considered that this stage comprises the root of the oppositional dualities between Black & White racial categories. In addition, the unequal treatment given by the government to the newly emancipated *Negro* people, in contrast with the supporting social policies offered to the white European immigrants, represented an institutional legitimization of differences between the social groups (Butler, 1998). Over time, the repetition and/or amplification of "such mechanisms of production of racial inequalities have been fostered in such a way that they have granted to the white people the privilege to predominantly occupy the highest social class positions" (Schucman, 2012, p. 14). On the other hand, the remaining depreciated social places have been left to the others and, not only that but also the burden of associated negative attributes (Dzidzienyo, 1971).

Guimarães (1995, p. 31) argues, "Social hierarchies appeal to a natural order that is meant to justify and legitimise itself". In other words, social hierarchy systems (social class, status, gender and racial) are built on top of simultaneous dualities of inclusion and exclusion. On the one hand, they naturalise a set of attributes as the most valued ones within a given social setting whilst the lack of such attributes represent the oppositional depreciated pole (Guimarães, 1995). In fact, it can be observed that Telles (2003) argues that this intricate duality of inclusion and exclusion coexisting in the same social setting represents one of the main features of Brazilian racism.

Simultaneously, given that the studies reveal that the oppositional dualities oftentimes cast predominantly negative 'marks' upon *Negro* people, it can also be asked how the opposite pole experience its relational privileges within this racial hierarchy system. Schucman (2012) observes that white people occupy what she calls 'power positions' that bestow material and symbolic advantages to them and they are taken for granted or natural by these people. Moreover, Bento (2014) advocates that there are three intertwined elements in Brazilian whiteness: 1) silence, meaning the absence of debates around this topic, since it is taken for granted and naturalised; 2) neglect or the omission of its effects towards the non-whites; and 3) distortion, meaning the disproportional representations of white people as the only visible face in Brazil. Altogether, she adds, they play the role to safeguard the white's privileged social positioning.

The reviewed studies suggest that the racial hierarchy system in Brazil has intermingling aspects of both the whitening ideology and 'racial democracy'. The oppositional dualities between the Black & White poles are clearly supported and maintained by strong and deep-seated beliefs of symbolic privileges and better life prospects attached to whiteness (e.g. see Figure 1), whilst attributing oppositional negative features to blackness. Simultaneously, 'racial democracy' contributes to the naturalisation of expected and/or 'reserved' social roles to people within the racial scale in accordance to his/her visible 'marks' (or phenotypes) and their proximity or distance in relation to the white standard. Finally, the mechanisms, or the internal logic, of the racial

hierarchy system is capable of even transcending social class hierarchies and manifest itself in conditions of social destitution. Additional evidence of this dynamic can be found, for example, in the study conducted by Goldstein (2003) revealing that even among people living in *favelas* in Rio de Janeiro, many of them believe that a light skin colour can work for their benefit in comparison to darker skin people. They believe that having lighter skin will provide them with "a better chance of succeeding in life, including greater job opportunities and even greater possibilities for leaving the poorest shantytowns and moving into neighbourhoods that qualify as poor but respectable" (Goldstein, 2003, p. 108).

2.5.2   The fluid intermediary racial identifiers

As in many other countries, racial classification in Brazil is self-declared by the person, and over time, this aspect has contributed to people making up an immense array of creative racial identifiers. Moura (1988) has gathered 135 racial identifiers used by mixed race people to classify themselves on censuses over the years. He argues that the subtle symbolic meaning behind this immense variety of terminologies is the fact that people are expressing their inner desire to keep a distance from one depreciated pole of the racial hierarchy scale (black) and get closer to the opposite one (white). In other words, it illustrates the denial of one's under-valued ethnic identity in favour of another one that he/she believes will bring him/her more symbolic benefits, protect him/her from negative stigmatisations and stereotyped portrayals, provide intangible privileges or a better symbolic social positioning. Similarly, Sansone (1996) conducted a study in two working-class cities in the Northern state of Bahia with the objective to identify and understand people's self-images with regard to racial identifiers and the development of their racial identity. Sansone (1996) discovered that the interviewees had employed 36 different racial identifiers to classify themselves. He argues that this myriad of terminologies reflect that "*pardos*, *escuros* and *morenos* aspire upward social mobility whilst *pretos* seem to accept their restricted upward social mobility possibilities" and would be more resigned with their condition (Sansone, 1996, p. 178).

A unique aspect of racial classification and discourse in Brazil, that is usually not addressed by many authors, relates to the fluid racial identifier *moreno*. This particular racial identifier has acquired a considerable degree of overlapping and fluidity that enables its use in a multitude of circumstances making it difficult to be accurately interpreted without other supporting elements or without a broader context. Rosa (2014) reveals that there are what he calls 'contingency factors' influencing people's perception of race in Brazil and hence impacting the adoption of different racial identifiers. Along these factors, Rosa (2014, p. 252-253) cites time, affective bonds, income level or social class position, age and place. The author exemplifies the mentioned factors explaining, for instance, that strong affective bonds may lead to the adoption of *moreno* rather than *preto* whilst weaker bonds people may use *escuro* or *escurinho*, also to avoid *preto* or *Negro*. He goes on and says that people in higher social class positions are considered either white or *moreno*

in contrast with people at lower social strata that are prone to be called *pretinho* or *Negro* (Rosa, 2014). Telles (2006) is one of the few authors who has addressed the fluidity of the category *moreno* issue within the Brazilian social context and he developed an interesting graphical representation.
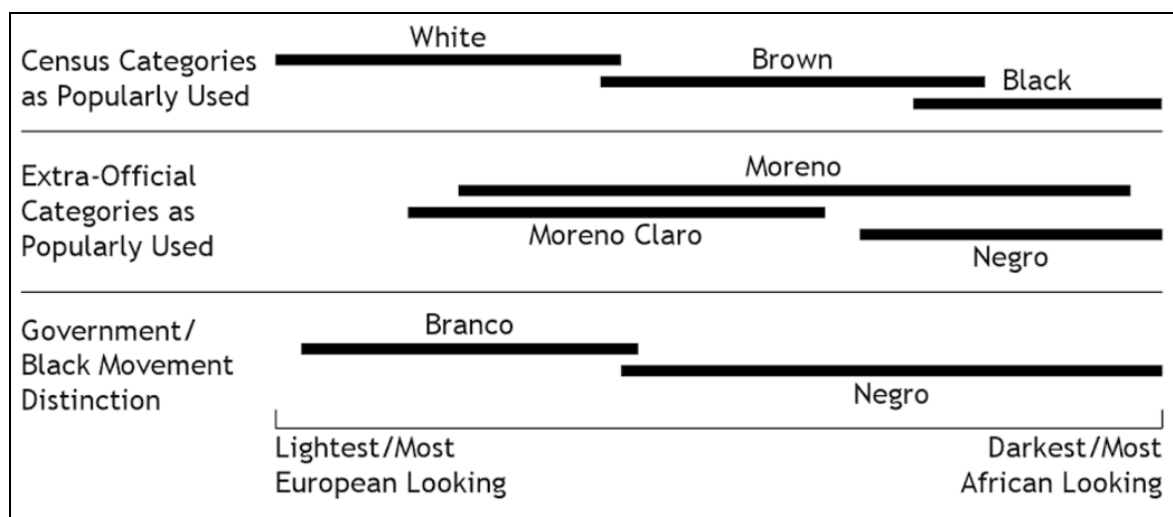
Figure 2: Use of Brazilian racial categories along the colour continuum
Source: reproduced from Telles (2006, p. 87)

As it can be observed in Figure 2, the *moreno* racial identifier is indeed quite fluid, overlaps across three official racial categories (white, brown and black) and on top of that even admit some type of subdivision (*moreno claro*). In addition, Mikulak (2011, p. 83) says that "moreno is a 'neutral' term that refers to almost any combination of phenotypical features or a continuum of skin colour with physical features that do not represent African phenotypes". Complementing the model developed by Edward Telles, it is possible to identify that, in practice, *moreno* is capable of accommodating, even more, sub-divisions such as[30]: a) *moreno claro*; b) *moreno escuro*; c) *moreninho*; d) *moreno cor de jambo*, among others (Moura, 1988; Maier, 2006). Nevertheless, more importantly, is the fact that this fluid extra-official racial category enables people to navigate smoothly along the colour continuum according to the circumstance, the context and the convenience (i.e. it is not fixed, but rather highly contextualised). In fact, it can be considered that *moreno* represents a particular element of Brazil's racial hierarchy system alongside the frequent use of diminutives, and in many circumstances, they equip people to talk about race without sounding racists. Examples of this reflection include common expressions in Brazil such as: a) but you are not that black; b) you are not one of those black guys. You are *moreno(a)*; c) wow, what a

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[30] They mean: a) light-skinned *moreno*; b) dark-skinned *moreno*; c) little *moreno*; d) jambo *moreno*, in reference to the colour of a fruit called jambo.

gorgeous *morena*. You must know how to *samba* very well; d) you are not black, but sunburnt; e) you have got an exotic beauty; e) you are *moreninho(a)*, not black; f) I would rather call you *moreno(a)*, because black could be disrespectful; amongst several others (Isis, 2015). These expressions are meant to be received as a compliment but, in fact, they conceal the belief that being called *moreno* is better than *Negro*, *preto* or *pardo* because it implies that the recipient is being positioned closer to the white end of the racial scale, rather than the other end.

Additionally, over the years, this racial identifier has contributed to the development of misconceptions that acknowledging a person's blackness could be offensive and should be avoided. The sociologist Osorio (2003, p. 17) argues that "the use of the word *moreno* as a euphemism for avoid referring to someone *negro*, *preto* or *pardo*, is the perfect expression of social etiquette of racial relations". He adds, "This attitude is a type of polite concession in order not to depreciate the person". In fact, this attitude can be understood as a subtle manoeuvre to cover up the unsaid and unwritten racial boundaries (Schucman, 2010), or what Ferreira (2002) considers to be the expression of the silent racism in Brazil. Therefore, in Brazil's racial hierarchy system the top positions belong to whites, the bottom to blacks and in-between them it is filled with a multitude of racial identifiers that ultimately people make use of them in order to get closer to the top positions and as far away as possible from the bottom (d'Adesky, 1997; 2001).

In conclusion, it is also important to say that the racial hierarchy phenomenon matters because it can be a determinant element towards triggering and perpetuating racism in a given social setting (as discussed in section 2.2). On this regard, in the US social context, for example, Dawson (2000, p. 344) explains that racial hierarchy shapes "Americans' attitudes and [public] policy preferences" targeted towards ethnic minorities. Whilst oftentimes white Americans tend to develop a particular antipathy towards policies targeted towards Asians and Latinos, they are even more negatively perceived when targeted towards Blacks (Dawson, 2000). This dynamic suggests that, within that social context, Blacks are positioned below Asians and Latinos. Still according to the author, "the degree to which each racial and ethnic group has been incorporated within American society predicts the level of support for racially oriented public policies" (Dawson, 2000, p. 345). Consequently, based on the studies reviewed in this section, it can be inferred that the racial hierarchy dynamic contributes not only towards the triggering of racism but also its perpetuation and reinforcement in the collective mind-set. I argue that this system of classification according to social attributes (ranging from positive to negative and a complex grey area in-between) associated with one's racial group, shapes social relations and influence the life prospects of *Negro* people in Brazil.

2.5.3   Intersectionality hierarchies of race, gender and class

The analysis of Brazilian racial hierarchy system also leads us towards another salient aspect of racial relations in the country: the intersecting hierarchies of race, gender and social class.

According to several authors of intersectionality studies (e.g. Brah and Phoenix, 2004; Harnois and Ifatunji, 2011; Anthias, 2012; Crenshaw, 2012), the concept suggests that different dimensions of inequalities can overlap and bring challenging circumstances to certain social groups. On this regard, Crenshaw (2012) argues that traditional perspectives of social inequalities consider that gender discrimination applies to women in general indistinctively of race, racial discrimination is circumscribed to a single racial group, and social discrimination to poor people. In other words, this approach fragments people into specific and disconnected boxes, whilst intersectionality proposes that, in reality, such boxes are not isolated stand-alone entities. In fact, they are rather dynamic and constantly overlapping (Crenshaw, 2012; Purkayastha, 2012). Based on that, intersectionality authors also suggest that men and women can experience situations of racism specifically related to their gender, what evidence that the impacts of racism are not evenly distributed between the two genders in different social contexts. Therefore, the interplay of these three dimensions can have varied impact upon male or female *Negro* people.

Furthermore, it is also important to highlight that not only the impact may be different between the two genders, but also within the gender itself, revealing the relational facet of intersectionality. On this regard, Harnois and Ifatunji (2011, p. 1010) argue that "in a society organised by intersecting of race and gender, it is not possible to capture the full range of Black women's mistreatment without comparing their experiences to those of racially privileged women". Even though this argumentation is based on the US social context, it is possible to find some degree of convergence or similarity with the Brazilian social context. Strong evidence to support this claim is found, for example, on studies conducted by Olinto and Olinto (2000) and Marcondes *et al.* (2013) addressing the living conditions of *Negro* women in Brazil. The authors reveal several relational disadvantages experienced by *Negro* women in comparison to white women. They include, for instance, lower salaries, reduced access to higher education, reduced access to the judiciary system, greater exposition to violence, and worst treatment in the public health care system.

What concerns health care treatment, there are studies revealing that whilst 5.1 percent of white women in normal labour procedure do not receive anaesthesia, the figure reaches 11.1 percent for *Negro* women (Marinho *et al.*, 2011). In fact, these figures reflect an ingrained colonial belief that *Negro* women feel less pain than their white counterparts and, consequently, they would not need as much anaesthesia in several medical procedures (Castro, 2016; Júnia, 2016). As with exposure to violence, recent figures reveal that whilst the mortality rate of white women dropped by 7.4 percent between 2005 and 2015, for *Negro* women the rate increased by twenty-two percent in the same period, and the rate is above the overall national average (Cerqueira *et al.*, 2017). Consequently, what other relevant aspects do these pictures reveal about racial relations in Brazil? In the first place, they contribute to the evidence that *Negro* women encompass a vulnerable social group in Brazil exposed to several relational inequalities. Second, the overlapping of dimensions

such as gender, race, and social class compose a picture that turns their living conditions considerably challenging in comparison to men and even within their our gender. Finally, they also reveal the predominance of a strong macho culture in Brazil, giving that men (mostly white people) occupy the majority of the instances of symbolic power in the social structure, imposing their views upon the others. In addition, it is possible to observe that racialized *Negro* women are oftentimes victimised by their own male partners in over 30 percent of the reported cases of domestic violence (Cerqueira *et al.*, 2017).

It is also relevant to mention that, even though the intersectionality analysis in the present study is centred on three dimensions (gender, race, and social class), it does not mean that, in reality, they are the only ones at play. In fact, Anthias (2012, p. 4) says that "the focus on gender, ethnicity/race and class, does not imply that sexuality, age, disability, faith and so on" cannot be added to the debate. Based on that, a broader analysis of intersectionality within Brazilian social context could also ponder, for example, the person's place of origin. This is said because studies reveal that *Negro* women from the North-eastern region of Brazil experience several circumstances of racism in the Southern and South-eastern regions amplified by their place of origin (e.g. Carneiro, 2003; Miranda, 2016). This happens because the North-eastern region has constantly been associated with poverty, underdevelopment, precarious housing conditions and lower levels of formal education. In contrast, the Southern and South-eastern regions are associated with modernity, European immigration, development, wealth, and several other positive attributes. In addition, the engagement with African-derived religions such as *Candomblé*[31] and *Umbanda*[32] can also lead towards diverse forms of bigotry, mockery and racial discrimination, because they are commonly associated with a myriad of negative attributes such as primitive, backward, evil and witchcraft (Selka, 2007; Silva, 2014). Therefore, these two additional dimensions contribute to suggest the complexity and range of challenges *Negro* women can potentially be exposed to when all of them intersect.

Thus, resuming the focus on the three predominant dimensions of intersectionality, there are some important reflections to be made concerning social class. On this regard, Williamson (2015) argues that certain things within Brazilian racial relations cannot be separated. This argument means that the intertwined dimensions of being *Negro*, woman, and belonging to underprivileged social classes are strongly bonded together, and they overlap in such a way that makes their lived experiences of racism particularly challenging. In the study, it is evident that the author stresses

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[31] The name stands for 'Dance in honour of the Gods". The religion, inspired by traditions brought by enslaved Africans, has also incorporated some aspects of the Catholic faith over time. Music and choreographed dances are important elements of their ceremonies. Source: http://www.bbc.co.uk/religion/religions/candomble/ataglance/glance.shtml (Accessed on 24/11/2017) and Bastide, R. (1958) *Le candomblé de Bahia*. Mounton: Paris. 260 pages

[32] In addition to the African traditions, this religion incorporates indigenous influences, Catholicism and Spiritism. Source: http://www.religionfacts.com/umbanda (Accessed on 24/11/2017)

lower social class positioning as an important variable in the intersectionality equation. Likewise, other authors such as Marcondes *et al.* (2013), Hirata (2014) and White (2014) follow suit when analysing intersectionality within Brazilian social context. Nevertheless, despite the intrinsic connection pointed out by the authors, I argue that there is a subtle but relevant gap in this analysis. Their approach can lead towards an understanding that gendered discrimination in Brazil is restricted solely to people belonging to the lower social strata. It is clear that the underprivileged social class position adds a considerable challenge for the person, but it does not mean that people positioned in upper social class are not exposed to circumstances of racism.

In fact, the proponents of 'racial democracy in Brazil in the early years of the twentieth century used to argue that, rather than a racial problem, there was only a social class problem in the country. In other words, tackling the big social gap would be enough to end Brazil's enduring inequalities. Consequently, following this line of reasoning, successful upward social mobility of *Negro* people would potentially remove them from the racist realm. Nevertheless, there are studies revealing that successful upward social mobility of both male and female *Negro* people do not exempt them from experiencing circumstances of racism in Brazil (Dávila, 2003; Figueiredo, 2004). The lived experiences of racism for both groups may differ concerning the social settings, the circumstances they are manifested, other people's attitudes towards them, the vocabulary employed and the level of subtleness in the attitudes. However, according to the sociologist Emerson Rocha, "contrary to what many believe, racism in Brazil does not vanish once you become wealthier" (Colonna, 2016, p. 2). In addition, this evidence also contributes to challenging the belief that 'money whitens' *Negro* people and grant them better life prospects free of racism. Therefore, in conclusion, the racial relations in Brazil embody an intersection picture where *Negro* women represent the most vulnerable racial group. They are subject to a variety of dimensions of exclusions and discrimination that can be amplified by the country's predominant macho culture. Moreover, even within their own gender, *Negro* women experience a series of relational disadvantages in comparison to their white counterparts. Finally, even though *Negro* women belonging to underprivileged social classes may experience situations of racism that are more challenging; successful upward social mobility does not guarantee that such experiences will cease. The latter group may have greater access to institutional mechanisms to have their voice heard, but that does not mean that they are free of being racialized just like *Negro* women belonging to lower social strata.

2.6   Brazilian national identity and the gendered politics of beauty

This section explores the intersection of gender, the dominant discourses and standard of female beauty in Brazil over time, and their role in the construction process of Brazilian national identity. This debate is relevant within the scope of the present study because the fostering of certain beauty standards plays a fundamental role towards the naturalisation of gender, belonging

and racial hierarchies (Maia, 2012). Furthermore, the section also addresses the empowering approaches adopted by *Negro* Brazilian women aimed at challenging, simultaneously, the prevailing beauty standard and the national identity process characterised as exclusionary and permeated by whitening ideologies.

2.6.1   The construction of Brazilian national identity

The fundamental pillars in the establishment of the dominant hierarchies of female beauty in Brazil are found in colonial period. The dominant racial ideologies at that time, advocated by influential authors, not only praised whiteness but also associated blackness and mestizaje with lack of beauty and a high degree of moral degeneration (Edmonds, 2007; Braga, 2013). In the literature, there are several accounts of negative depictions of the appearance of both *Negro* and mestizo people. In the 18th century, the Frenchman Arthur de Gobineau wrote that in Brazil he was "dealing with a totally mulatto population, corrupt of flesh, and frightfully ugly" (Gordon, 2016, p. 120). Similarly, von Spix *et al.* (1824, p. 324) claimed that the hair style of African people "formed a prodigious and very ugly kind of peruke". In contrast, when it comes to describing white women, authors of that period made use of kinder words to highlighting their main characteristics. On this regard, it can be noticed that Koster (1816, p. 24) says that the complexion of white women "were not darker than that of the Portuguese in general, their eyes and hair were black, and their features on the whole were good, their figure were small, but well-shaped". Over time in Brazil, this type of contrasting depiction has been reinforced and disseminated, for example, in textbooks, in several successful fictional novels[33] and on the media (Russell-Wood, 1977; Araújo, 2000; Campos, 2007).

By the end of the 19th century and beginning of the twentieth century, "Brazil's political rhetoric about development and progress promoted the need to construct a new identity for Brazil's racially mixed population" (Mikulak, 2011, p. 71). Within this context, Besse (2005, p. 96) advocates that beauty contests in the 1920s played the important role of projecting "an idealised image of an inclusive, democratic culture, thus obscuring the reality of racial, class and gender exclusions and promoting identification with the nation-state". The author also adds that, in the collective mind-set, the beauty contests contributed to conveying the image of what it meant to be Brazilian and, at the same time, a modern country, in convergence with the aspirations of the dominant ruling elite. Furthermore, the beauty contests also served the purpose to projecting Brazil's image internationally, meaning that it aimed that its visible face would "demonstrate the 'progress' of Brazil and its capacity for achieving the highest level of civilization" (Besse, 2005, p.

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[33] Two important novels conveying this contrasting representation include *O Cortiço* (The Slum) published in 1890 by Aluisio de Azevedo, that is considered one of the classical novels in Brazilian Literature, and mandatory reading in the admission exams for some of the most prestigious and competitive universities in the country. The second example is *Gabriela, cravo e canela* (Gabriela, clove and cinnamon) published in 1958 by Jorge Amado and translated to over 40 languages.

98). In fact, the whitening ideology was openly advocated by the organisers of the beauty contests. The evidence is the statement made in a prominent newspaper of that time arguing, "The beauty contest is no longer a mere exercise of vanity or an ordinary entertainment for shallow magazines readers, but it has achieved a meaning of eugenic value certifying the physical attributes of a race" (Semana, 1921, p. 12). Even though the beauty contests were meant to be (or at least advertised as such) representative of Brazilian racial diversity and embrace "the great variety of regional types" (Semana, 1921, p. 12), white women were always the runner-up and winners chosen by the white male jury (Besse, 2005). In addition, in another international beauty contest that took place in Rio de Janeiro in 1930[34], also calls our attention the official statement made by the organisers after the winner had been announced (a nineteen-years-old Brazilian white woman named Yolanda Pereira). It was argued, "She was Brazilian in her most high personification. Her complexion is, as every woman should look like to be called Brazilian. She is the symbol of our race" (Lever, 1930, p. 3; Souza, 1930, front cover).

I consider that the intersection of these elements (gender, race, and national identity) is revealing about the dominant thinking that shaped the construction of Brazilianness. That is because it reveals an intricate and subtle game of inclusion and exclusion, given that it is possible to notice a clear adoption of white beauty as the ultimate representation of national identity while excluding the other racial groups but without even mentioning them. Positioning the events in historical perspective, it is relevant to observe that in the 1920s; only around 40 years have passed after the slavery abolition, which had lasted for more than three centuries. Nevertheless, it was already in place a prevailing discourse aimed at erasing this inconvenient historical event from the collective mind-set. In addition, this social context also formed the grounds for the development of 'racial democracy' as advocated by Castro (1889) and Moraes (1924), but that gained its definitive impulse some years later after Gilberto Freyre published *Casa Grande & Senzala* in 1933. Therefore, it can be inferred that, for the ruling elite, female beauty should be the most appropriate representation of Brazilianness both at home and internationally. However, since the aspirational progress and modernity was strongly influenced by eugenic ideologies, only white women would be the legitimate symbol of the national identity in the making. As for the remaining racial groups, they were left with the possibility of emulating the dominant beauty standard, but not effectively being levelled with it. In summary, it can be observed that the politics of female beauty is an important element within the dynamic of Brazilian racism and it is intertwined with several other dimensions such as racial hierarchy, 'racial democracy' and whitening ideology. That is said because, the discourse supporting the construction of Brazilian national identity developed the

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[34] The organisers of this beauty contest claimed that the winner would be crowned Miss Universe. However, this title has never been officially recognised by the Miss Universe Organization, given that the first award was granted only in 1952 (source: https://www.missuniverse.com/past-winners, accessed on 19/09/2017). In addition, there are accounts that, in fact, the contest was organised as a type of revenge to the contest held in Galveston (US) in 1929 where the Brazilian representative Olga Bergamini de Sá was not shortlisted amongst the top ten (source: "Brazil: Revenge", Time Magazine, edition 22/09/1930).

'genuine national type' centred solely on whitening ideologies whilst, simultaneously, excluding those who were divergent or deviant in relation to the established standard.

2.6.2 Prevailing aesthetics of Brazilian visible face

According to Tate (2009, p. 17), well-known expressions such as "beauty comes from within", "beauty is only skin deep", and " beauty is in the eyes of the beholder" are part of everyday culture in many Western societies. In essence, they try to convey the idea that people should not be too concerned with external appearance because such concerns would be shallow (only skin deep) or relational rather than absolute (it is in the eye of the beholder). Nevertheless, within Brazilian social context, it can be observed that concerns with physical appearance not only are part of people's everyday life experiences (Goldenberg, 2006; Gordon, 2013), but also that there is a well-known and clear dominant beauty standard comprised of the following characteristics: white complexion, straight blonde hair, slim body, and blue eyes (Lage *et al.*, 2016). This dominant beauty standard has been widely disseminated, fostered and reinforced through several cultural mechanisms over time, in such a way that it has become internalised as a natural and irrefutable beauty pattern in the collective mind-set including among *Negro* and mixed-race women (Souza, 1990; Caldwell, 2003; Mikulak, 2011).

This claim is supported by several previous studies. Araújo (2008, p. 981) for example, advocates that in soap operas (the most successful and widely watched TV entertainment show for many decades in Brazil), there is a clear preference by the producers "casting white actors to represent Brazilian beauty or the typical ordinary Brazilian people – what is the result of an aesthetic model derived from the whitening ideology". An emblematic illustrative example of this dominant whitening aesthetics and the sexualisation of the *Negro* female body is found in the 2004 soap opera *Da cor do Pecado* (Shades of Sin). At that time, it was praised as an important milestone in Brazilian TV because it was the first time a *Negro* female actor was performing a leading role in a prime-time production[35]. However, the title in Portuguese already conveys a subtle stereotyped image of *Negro* women because, in Brazilian social context, the expression *da cor do pecado* is intrinsically connected with the idea of the sin of the flesh, meaning that a person has fallen into temptation due to someone else's gorgeous and irresistible skin colour and sexy body (Barbosa, 2004). In addition, the *Negro* female character in the plot only achieves upward social mobility by marrying an affluent second generation white Italian man, subtly reinforcing the intersection of the whitening ideology, a Eurocentric beauty standard and his more privileged social class position.

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[35] Only to give to the reader a relevant background perspective, television was inaugurated in September 1950 in Brazil and the first soap opera was aired in December 1951 (Araújo, 2000) and, therefore, it took five decades for a *Negro* female actress perform a leading role. In the 1950s and 1960s, white actors employing the blackface makeup technique, performed any prominent Black character.

Still within the domains of successful and influential TV entertainment programmes, for 30+ years *Xuxa*[36] was the ultimate paradigm of the 'genuine' Brazilian female beauty. Goldstein (2003, p. 122) argues that "*Xuxa*, one of Brazil's television icons and a symbol of beauty, who has blonde hair and blue eyes" has represented the aspirational beauty model for young girls across different generations. Twine (1998, p. 56) argues, "*Xuxa* exemplifies an aesthetic hierarchy that privileges and valorises whiteness, that is naturalised in Brazil". Wade (2009, p. 186) says that her "Aryan blonde look and her manipulation of her sexual image converted her into a Marilyn Monroe-style sex symbol who, through her pervasive media promotion, both reflected and strongly reinforced the value attached to whiteness". Therefore, what these authors are revealing is that fostering the image of this particular white woman as the ultimate beauty standard for 30+ years, contributed to reinforcing the very same whitening ideologies fostered since the 1920s in the beauty contests.

In contrast, a recent TV sitcom that was supposed to convey an empowering representation of *Negro* women failed to do so. Rather than highlighting, for example, successful upward social mobility of *Negro* women, engagement with qualified professions, occupying varied powerful symbolic positions, it reinforced negative stigmas. The sitcom explored the over-sexualisation of the *Negro* female body, displayed limited upward social mobility possibilities, and engagement solely with low-qualified subservient occupations. According to Souza (2015) and Soares (2016a), the core idea of the director and team of screenwriters was to create a parody of the successful US sitcom 'Sex & the City'. However, the title in Portuguese *Sexo & as Negas*[37] was heavily criticised by many prominent *Negro* women due to the negative connotations it conveyed (similarly to the issue raised with *Da cor do pecado*). Moreover, the four main *Negro* female characters lived in a Rio de Janeiro's *favela* (rather than in an equivalent glamourous place such as the New York depicted in 'Sex & the City'), and their sensual bodies were over explored and treated as their only resource for social navigation (Soares, 2016a).

Other relevant contrasting examples worth mentioning encompass, in the first place, the former Carnival Queen Nayara Justino (a *Negro* female model). She had been elected by popular voting in 2013 to perform the role of representative of 2014 Carnival Season. However, soon after the end of the 2014 festivities, the TV network in charge of this beauty contest dismissed her for

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[36] Xuxa is the alias of the former catwalk model Maria da Graça Meneghel, that from 1983 to 2015 ran several daily youth variety shows broadcasted by the leading TV Globo Network (source: www.xuxa.com.br, Accessed on 16/06/2017). An interesting element in her career is the fact that she became, in fact, famous, after engaging in an interracial relationship with the former *Negro* footballer Pelé in the 1980s.

[37] The nearest translation would be 'Sex and The Black Women' given that *Nega* is a nickname for female Blacks. Due to the heavily negative reactions triggered by the sitcom, it lasted only thirteen episodes (from 16 September to 16 December 2014) and the producers decided to terminate it (Souza, 2015; Soares, 2016a).

being too Black[38]. For the celebrations of the following year, the TV network chose, without popular voting, a lighter-skinned model as the new Carnival Queen (Anthony, 2016; Lankaster-Owen *et al.*, 2016). In an official statement, the TV network has denied that any type of racist approach influenced its decision. The second recent example encompasses the newly elected Miss Brazil 2017, Monalysa Alcântara. Since 1954, when the beauty contest started to run yearly, she has become only the third *Negro* woman to be crowned Miss Brazil. However, what calls the attention is the strong negative reactions concerning her achievement, challenging not only her beauty, but also her lack of legitimacy as a 'genuine' representative of Brazilianness in the international arena. There has been dozens of aggressive comments circulating across different social media platforms in Brazil. However, two of the most widely shared expressed the following ideas (Goes, 2017; Terto, 2017; Veja, 2017):

> How dreadful. This Miss looks like an ordinary housekeeper. She does not belong there. I am sorry. (J.P., female, 2017)

> I wish she dies before the Miss Universe contest so that her opponent in the final can take over the crown. [39] (J.Q., male, 2017)

Additional examples of the fostering and reinforcement of whiteness as the dominant synonym of Brazilian beauty and its 'modern' visible face can be found in the country's most important fashion show known as 'São Paulo Fashion Week'[40]. Its ethnic diversity is very limited and *Negro* female models are rarely found (Duffy, 2008; Martins, 2013; Nunes, 2013). Furthermore, the most successful Brazilian female supermodel, Gisele Bündchen, who has become a role-model for many young girls in Brazil over the years, not only is white, blue-eyed and slim (similarly to *Xuxa*), but also bears a family name that suggests German ancestry. Maia (2012) argues that, indirectly, this supermodel contributes to reinforcing in people's mind the whitening ideology and the aspirational Eurocentric beauty standard fostered for many years. Within that, there is an interesting recent event involving Gisele Bündchen that converges with the prevalent ideas around the role played by beauty contests of the 1920s and the construction of Brazilian national identity. During the opening ceremony of Rio de Janeiro's 2016 Summer Olympic Games, she was chosen by the organisers to perform a catwalk in *Maracanã* stadium representing Brazil to

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[38] The role is called 'Mulata Globeleza' (i.e. *Globo TV Beauty Mulata*), and since 1993 there has been five women performing the role (Source: http://ego.globo.com/carnaval/2015/noticia/2015/01/de-valeria-valenssa-nayara-justino-relembre-mulatas-globeleza.html - Accessed on 26/09/2017).

[39] The other opponent that finished in second place was a twenty-five-years-old white woman from the Southern region of Brazil. Coincidently, the region is well-known as the homeland of European immigrants (especially German, Italian and Polish) from the early years of the twentieth century and strongly associated with symbolic whiteness, modernity and progress in contrast with the North-Eastern region where the winner comes from.

[40] This clothing trade show is considered the largest in Latin America and the fifth in the world behind New York, London, Paris and Milan (Nunes, 2013).

the international audience (Brown, 2016; Heldman, 2016; Rocha, 2017). That is, just like the white young women of the beauty contests of the past were the genuine and legitimate visible face of Brazilianness before the eyes of its own citizens and the world, the same belief is still naturally manifested in contemporary Brazilian society.

However, this overall picture also raises an intriguing question. If whitening has been praised and continuously reinforced as synonym of Brazilian beauty and national identity, whilst blackness its direct contrasting opposition, what happened to the distinctive and celebrated unique Brazilian mestizaje emerged out of Gilberto Freyre's *Casa Grande & Senzala* that supported the 'racial democracy' discourse? It can be observed that the female beauty associated with mestizaje in Brazil has not been praised or valued in equivalent level of importance to white beauty. Actually, the mestizo beauty has been developed predominantly associated with sensual attributes and over exposition of their body. On this regard, it is interesting to observe that in the beginning of the twentieth century coexisted a dualistic discourse praising Brazilian beauty and national identity internationally, however, with distinct objectives. The white female beauty had the aim to promoting the Brazilian 'progress' and 'modernity' to the world. On the other hand, there was also an institutional effort to 'selling' Brazil as an attractive touristic destination (Caetano, 2004; Gomes, 2010). Nevertheless, for this purpose, the core message was that Brazil would be a type of tropical paradise and, within this context, the sensual mulatto women played a central role in this discourse conveying an image of sexual permissiveness (Gomes, 2010). In fact, this picture converges with the previously discussed historical contrasting depictions of white Brazilian women (predominantly associated with positive attributes) and *Negro* + mixed-race women (respectively, subservient and sexual objects). Moreover, another influential factor exploring the *mulata* sensuality was the establishment of a variety show in the late 1960s in Rio de Janeiro known as *As Mulatas do Sargentelli*[41] (Araújo, 1999b; Gomes, 2010; Lima and Lessa, 2017). This particular show, targeted primarily to foreign tourists, became very successful. It has run for almost two decades, including some tours abroad. In addition, there were dozens of similar shows that emerged across Brazil inspired by the success achieved by the original one. The smiling *mulata* dancers wore always very small bikinis revealing most of their well-shaped bodies (however, there was no nudity and neither any sexual activities in such shows but samba dance), mesmerising the predominantly foreign male audience.

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[41] The Sargentielli's Mulatas. Its creator, Osvaldo Sargentelli (1924-2002), was a samba singer, radio broadcaster, TV host, businessman and self-declared '*mulatólogo*' (or a *mulata* expert). It was not possible to find the accurate dates the show has run, but there are evidences that it may have lasted from 1969 until the mid-1980s (Araújo, 1999; Lima and Lessa, 2017). However, after he passed away, the show was taken over by his niece Sandra Sargentelli and it is still active nowadays (source: http://www.sargentelli.com.br – Accessed on 21/06/2017)

In addition, some years later, the show has even inspired the establishment of a '*mulata* training[42]' in a well-known career college in Rio de Janeiro (Giacomini, 2006; Gomes, 2010). However, the offering of this training can be considered an intriguing paradox because if *mulata* is essentially an intermediary racial identifier similar to *moreno* and many others (see section 2.5), how is it possible that it became 'a profession' that could be systematically taught in a school? Giacomini (2006, p. 88) interviewed many of the women who attended the training and among the most revealing testimonies provided by the participants, the author found that, for them, "*mulata* meant to know how to dance samba, *mulata* is related to your skin tone, and that *mulata* is something that it is in your blood-stream (it is innate)". In addition, the women also said, "*mulata* must have a gorgeous well-shaped body, attractive and firm buttocks, and thin waist". Therefore, as it can be observed, the participants have reported a series of attributes predominantly of physical and sensual nature to describe what *mulata* meant for them. The relevance of these accounts is that they contribute to revealing the naturalised dominant ideas in Brazil associating mixed-race women (*mulata*, *morena*, and all the myriad of intermediary racial terminologies) with sensuality, desire and lust. Thus, over time, this type of ideology depicting *mulata* as a sexual object, has been embedded, disseminated, and reinforced, for example, in several TV programmes such as *Da cor do Pecado*, *Sexo & as Negas*, and in influential fictional novels that became classical in the country's literature such as *O Cortiço* and *Gabriela, Cravo e Canela*.

2.6.3   Coping strategies of *Negro* women

For many years, Afro hairstyle has been disqualified in Brazil (i.e. associated with a myriad of negative attributes as discussed in Section 2.3.3) and, because of this process, several women did not easily accept(ed) their natural curled hair. Instead of that, they want(ed) to turn it straight and loose for a two-fold purpose: escaping the negative attributes commonly associated with curly Afro hair and, at the same time, getting closer or fitting within the dominant beauty standard (Souza, 1990; Caldwell, 2003). Namely, in Brazilian social context, not only skin colour and other physical features, such as lips and nose, can determine a person's position in the racial hierarchy, but also the hairstyle because it is an evident visible racial marker. Therefore, as an easily recognisable visible marker capable of assigning positive or negative belongings, it is possible to observe that male and female people adopt different coping strategies to navigating in the colour continuum. Non-white women try to straightening their hair to fitting as close as possible within the dominant beauty standard. As with non-white men, the anthropologist Cesar Sabino argues that "many of them (especially prominent football players) shave their hair bald in an attempt to remove any visible trace of blackness, and becoming part of the dominant group" (Mendonça, 2009, p. 114).

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[42] This training was offered by SENAC in Rio de Janeiro during the end of the 1980s and beginning of the 1990s (Giacomini, 2006) and, as far as it was possible to investigate, it seems that it is no longer being offered.

Within that, it is interesting to observe that, to a certain extent, this move resonates with the strategy adopted by several mulatto freedmen in colonial period in Brazil that, to avoiding looking like the enslaved Africans before the scrutiny of society, they used to hide any trace of African origin in their documents (Conrad, 1983).

The prevailing Brazilian beauty standard imposes some intriguing challenges both for *Negro* and mixed-race women. In the first place, the visible face of Brazilian national identity has been built on top of whitening ideologies that include those who fit within the limited boundaries of the dominant characteristics, while subtly excluding the others. This process is what Ferreira (2002) calls Brazilian silent racism, meaning that it is manifested in ways not easily noticed, given that many of its aspects are naturalised within the collective mind-set. In addition, it can be observed that aesthetics norms represent another considerable challenge for non-white women split into two categories. By one hand, "features such as skin colour, hair texture, and the shape and size of the nose and lips belong to the category of beauty". On the other hand, aspects such as "breasts, hips and buttocks are assigned to the sexual category" (Caldwell, 2003, p. 21). This dual categorization suggests that, in Brazil, the first category is positively depicted with regard to white women, while for their *Negro* counterparts; the same features are negatively portrayed. On this regard, Christo (2009) and Braga (2011) explain that, historically, Brazilian iconography used to depict *Negro* women in exaggerated proportions of certain aspects of their bodies (nose, lips and the buttocks) emphasising their ugliness in oppositional contrast to white female. As with the second category of sexual nature, over time it has been associated with mixed-race women, giving room to another type of national identity that praises the sensual permissiveness of a tropical carnival-like paradise.

As previously discussed, mixed-race and *Negro* female beauty has been constantly disqualified in comparison to the dominant white Eurocentric beauty standard in Brazil. However, despite this picture, there has also been several efforts and initiatives aimed at challenging this situation and empowering *Negro* women. It can be observed, for instance, that prominent *Negro* female social activists, leaders of NGOs (Non-Governmental Organisations) and opinion makers have taken ownership and assigned renewed meanings to the racial terminology *Negro* (Oliveira, 2016; Tiraboschi *et al.*, 2016). This move is important because it suggests that they are assuming a clear political positioning in regard to their ethnic identity, converging with the argument advocated by Souza (1990, p. 17) who says that "one of the ways of exercising autonomy is having a discourse about oneself". In addition, another important symbolic demonstration of the way *Negro* women in Brazil have taken ownership of dominant perceptions of Black beauty, and transformed into an empowering tool, is through their hair style. Johnson and Bankhead (2014, p. 86) argue that "for Black women and girls, identity is inextricably linked to their relationship to and presentation of their hair", what contributes to bringing to the surface the importance of hair style not only as an element conveying femininity but also a vehicle for expressing identity and belonging.

In conclusion, it can be considered that for *Negro* women, hairstyle has emerged as an important empowering element to escaping this challenging and complex intertwined web of variables. Assuming their natural Afro hairstyle, in addition to attributing renewed meanings to *Negro* as a racial terminology, represent not only the assurance and self-recognition of the value of their own beauty. It conveys their conscious political gesture and positioning. Gordon (2013, p. 212-213) shares convergent point of view advocating that "hair texture is regarded as one of the most important, visible signs of the socialaesthetic (sic) power of a woman and is related to culturally meaningful symbols of femininity". Consequently, it can be inferred that this political positioning contributes in challenging not only the prevalent female beauty standard in Brazil permeated by whitening ideologies, but it also proposes a different national identity. It brings forward an Afro-Brazilian identity that rescues, or brings back to the surface, the ancient legacies of the African roots in the shaping of Brazilian society, however renewed and resignified.

Chapter 3:   Disparagement humour on Facebook

Five important elements contribute to our understanding of the phenomenon of online racism in Brazil. **First**, over the years the Brazilian disparagement laughter has been reproducing and reinforcing an oppositional duality between *Negro* and White people. Whilst the first is oftentimes ridiculed and considered as a source of mockery, the latter is praised as smart and flawless. Moreover, the constant use of diminutives to express affection and short social distance allow the jokers to navigate as smooth as possible; claiming that their humour is harmless and exempt from prejudice. **Second**, the proponents of racist ideologies have turned Facebook into a fertile ground for the dissemination of their values and beliefs and, in addition, to connect with like-minded people. Within that, the **third** relevant element comprises the users' belief that online anonymity grants them an implied permission to unleash different sorts of bigotry and without being held accountable for their attitudes.

Evolving from this point, analysing the growing emergence of online racism in Brazil, naturally triggers questions about the country's legal anti-racism framework. What can be observed is that the deep-seated belief in the whitening ideology and 'racial democracy' has contributed to postponing the implementation of policies over several decades. In addition, despite the recognised value of such policies, they provide legal loopholes that the proponents of racist ideologies take advantage. **Finally**, given that Facebook has become the prevailing arena for construction and dissemination of online racism in Brazil, how does the corporation deal with it? What is their approach to this growing phenomenon? The studies reviewed unveil that the corporation has been employing both human and technological resources to remove inappropriate content (i.e. that violates its Community Standards). However, there are two important problems. First, there are several voices revealing that the corporation's response time to remove inappropriate content is slow. Consequently, racist content circulates freely in the platform and reach a wide audience. Second, given that their resources (personnel + algorithms) are unable to track all the content posted, the responsibility is transferred to the users' shoulders in identifying them and flagging as inappropriate to Facebook.

3.1   Disparagement humour: key concepts and debates

According to Janes and Olson (2000, p. 474), "disparagement humour is any [form of] humour that derogates or provides negative information about someone or something", and Ford and Ferguson (2004, p. 79) argue that "disparagement humour is humour that denigrates, belittles, or maligns a person or social group". Therefore, this type of humour conveys messages that disqualify and/or depreciate a particular social group. Thus, the construction and dissemination of disparagement humour discourses encompasses three social agents: 1) the joker who constructs

and/or disseminates the derogatory messages claiming that they are for amusement purpose only, what would indirectly grant him/her an implicit permission to mock; 2) the subject or recipient of the joke who is left with the options of either conform with the discourse as something natural and acceptable or challenge and deconstruct it, however with the risk of being discredited or considered as taking things too seriously when he/she should not; and 3) the audience, that can be one or more person witnessing the mockery and exposed to that message.

On what concerns the role played by the joker, the literature highlights that oftentimes this social agent claims that his/her humour is harmless, not purposely offensive and with the sole intention to entertain an audience. On this regard, Sue and Golash-Boza (2013, p. 1586) explain that "in some societies, there is strong pressure for individuals to conform to jokes; individuals who negatively react to humour insults are told they 'can't take a joke'". Moreover, Billig (2001, p. 269) says that "when jokers are challenged, they have the capacity to retreat into the defensive excuse 'I was only joking'", and Howitt and Owusu-Bempah (2005, p. 46) argue that "the phrase 'only joking' presumes that words can be used without serious intent and that they are not intended to cause offense". Nevertheless, "humour is far from trivial" (Lockyer and Pickering, 2008, p. 2) and from the perspective of the subject/recipient of disparagement humour, it may not be as harmless or amusing as it is claimed by the jokers. In fact, this 'it is only a joke' excuse to justify their attitude, also plays the role to silence and discredit the subjects of mockery whenever he/she manifest disagreement with it. Furthermore, the persistence of disparagement humour discourses towards social groups can disseminate and foster the acceptability or naturalisation of negative ethnic stereotypes by the audience (Billig, 2001) as well as subtly and skilfully display an unbalanced system of power relations influenced by racist beliefs (Sue and Golash-Boza, 2013).

An important sociological study on humour was conducted by Stephenson (1951) where the author developed an examination of the conflict and control functions of humour in the American society. Stephenson (1951, p. 569) focused his analysis primarily in jokes addressing differences in social status and claimed; "such jokes function as control mechanisms expressing the common value system" shared by one social group with regard to others. What is also significant in this study is the contrasting stereotypes embedded in the jokes analysed, given that the author argues that characteristics perceived as negative or undesirable such as laziness and stubbornness are attributed, respectively, to Black and Irish, but not to the white American working man even though they would share the same social status. Another relevant study addressing the subject matter of humour but in a broader sense was conducted by Chapman and Foot (1977) who have gathered 92 studies delivered at the 'International Conference on Humour & Laughter' held in Cardiff, Wales in 1976. This comprehensive study covers ten thematic areas such as for example: a) the nature of humour, laughter and comedy; b) cross-cultural humour; c) approaches to the study of humour; d) ethnic humour; e) humour and communication, among others. Additionally, another relevant and innovative study aimed at bringing to the surface a broader perspective for the study of

derogatory jokes was developed by the sociologist Davies (1990) who conducted a comparative analysis of ethnic humour across 35 nations. The focus of the study was to investigate how different nations characterise ethnic groups (mainly immigrants, but not exclusively) on what concerns their attributed lack of cleverness and, in contrast, which peoples are characterised as canny. Interesting to highlight in this particular comparative analysis is the fact that the jokes convey a concealed message of contrasting privileged or unprivileged social positioning and sense of belonging similarly to the ideas advocated by Stephenson (1951). Evidence of that perception is found in the argumentation that "the jokes thus indicate who is at the centre of a culture and who is at the edge" (Davies, 1990, p. 322), what also converges with the dynamic found in Brazil's racial hierarchy dynamic as discussed in section 2.5.

Whilst the construction and dissemination of disparagement humour towards ethnic minority groups it is not a new phenomenon as evidenced in the literature, it can be identified that in the recent past, these discourses have been increasingly conveyed in online environment where they have found fertile ground to be spread and transmitted to a variety of audiences. On this regard, Weaver (2011a, p. 417) argues; "racist humour on the internet is not hard to find". Boxman-Shabtai and Shifman (2015, p. 521) advocate; "one of the most salient arena for the contemporary diffusion of ethnic humour is the internet". In a later study Weaver (2013, p. 484) reinforces his previous argumentation saying; "the internet has developed as an unfettered site for the expression of racism, and the global reach of the internet allows for the spread and connection of racist ideologies". It is also relevant to highlight that, the shift from face-to-face to online dissemination of disparagement humour has allowed social science researchers to have access to content for the development of critical analysis that otherwise would be more difficult to obtain. Namely, given the oftentimes aggressive and rude nature of the language and vocabulary employed, people would not disclose them in a controlled setting or interview for example (Billig, 2001; Weaver, 2011a). This trend of online dissemination of disparagement humour towards ethnic minority groups has been analysed under different perspectives such as messages conveyed by private e-mail (Boxman-Shabtai and Shifman, 2015), specialized websites or blogs displaying derogatory jokes (Billig, 2001; Kuipers, 2002; Weaver, 2010; 2011a; 2013) and on social media platforms such as Facebook (Laudone, 2010; Arango, 2013) and Orkut (Andrade, 2012).

The review of these studies reveal that even though they are focused on different online platforms, they share two common characteristics. In the first place, the evidence that the racist discourse found online replicates the dualistic ideology found offline comprised of social inclusion of the dominant group in contrast to the marginalization or exclusion of 'the other'. However, it is oftentimes manifested more incisively and aggressively on what concerns the vocabulary used to convey the messages. The second common characteristic, which, in fact, is intertwined with the previous one, is the gap that none of the studies reviewed addresses the joker's belief in a protection granted by his/her alleged anonymity. This aspect, in particular, is relevant because

"studies have shown that people tend to disclose more information online than offline because they feel relatively secure and protected by the anonymity" (Denissen *et al.*, 2010, p. 572). Consequently, this sense of protection and anonymity combined with a so-called implicit permission to mock, as argued by Palmer (2005), may contribute to explain or understand the harsher racist behaviour people express online. It means that they may feel themselves safe and out of reach of the authorities to openly convey their ideologies and fearless of being caught or identified. Therefore, if in ordinary face-to-face daily interactions, the joker may refrain from the impulse to convey openly racist discourses due to social convention constraints; in the virtual environment, he/she may feel more comfortable to subverting this boundary.

3.1.1 What makes derogatory jokes 'funny'?

Within the context of the present study, an important question that must be brought to the surface is what makes derogatory jokes 'funny'. My argument is that repetition and the social context where they are enacted are the core elements to answer this questioning. First, it is relevant to understand that according to Freud (1963), an important author in the study of humour, jokes have the pleasurable effect of providing people with liberating moments of relieve (i.e. without restraints enforced by the unconscious mind). Second, for Bergson (1914), a pioneer author in the study of humour, laughter arises predominantly from behavioural contrast. The author considers that given human's natural trend to behave spontaneously, involuntary or unexpected moments of rigid behaviour would trigger laugh. Still according to this author, "rigidity is comic, and laughter is its corrective" (Bergson, 1914, p. 9a). Different from these authors, Douglas (1968) defends another point of view. Rather than assuming the possibility to identify a structure of ideas characteristic of humour, the author argues that "joke form rarely lies in the utterance alone, but it can be identified in the social situation" (Douglas, 1968, p. 363).

However, in spite of Douglas' criticisms to Bergson and Freud and the fact that none of the three authors answers directly what makes jokes funny, there are important clues in both Bergson's and Freud's studies that help us to address the question. Freud (1963), for instance, argues that jokes' pleasurable effects derive from aspects such as repetition and familiarity with the picture depicted in jokes. As for Bergson (1914, p. 5b), "laughter must answer certain requirements of life in common. It must have a social signification". Moreover, Douglas (1968) provides supporting clues in this direction highlighting the importance of the social context to give meaning to jokes.

Consequently, I argue that the mechanism of repetition is one of the core elements in making derogatory jokes 'funny' because it contributes towards the naturalisation, reinforcement and acceptance of the ridicule portrayal of 'the other'. Furthermore, the social context where the derogatory jokes are enacted and disseminated is equally important in this dynamic; because it provides meaning and relevance to jokes that are easily recognised and decoded by people in that social setting (i.e. they become familiar, as argued by Freud). In fact, this argument coalesces with

the idea advocated by Stephenson (1951) in the sense that jokes convey certain dominant system of shared values. In other words, the jokers (and consequently, also their audience) find their derogatory humour 'funny' first because they are built on top of shared beliefs of contrasting dualities, such as superior-inferior, core-marginal, normal-deviant, modern-backwards, beautiful-ugly, and so forth. Second, because the repetition contributes to turning them into normal and acceptable verbal expressions and, finally, the social context where they are enacted and disseminated provide meaning to them.

3.2   The Brazilian disparagement humour

The sociologist Fonseca (1994) is a pioneer in the study of disparagement humour towards *Negro* people in the Brazilian social context. Fonseca argues that this social group may have started to become the subject of mockery soon after the emancipation of slaves. Based on a study of the sociologist Teófilo Queiroz Jr., Fonseca (1994, p. 56) advocates that "jokes centred on *Negro* people were something practically non-existent in the slave society due to the fact that they were considered merchandise, devoid of participation and competitiveness in society's power spheres". In fact, it can be observed that this argument is relevant and convergent with evidence previously discussed in Chapter 2. In the first place, it has been discussed that there were voices advocating that "the slaves [were] nothing but cattle" (Conrad, 1983, p. 63), and "what is a slave but an empty shell, utterly devoid of speech?" (Camargo, 1988, p. 36). In the second place, Levine (1973, p. 186) reports that newspapers in the late 19th century and early years of the twentieth century "indiscriminately published articles disparaging to Blacks highlighting their 'inferiority', and some, moreover, were blatant racist". Finally, as mere slaves, *Negro* people were not seen to represent a disturbing element in the social structure. However, once they became freedmen/women, the balance was affected and so "the jokes have served the purpose to reposition the *Negro* people in 'their place', to produce a tacit collective fantasy that restores societal order and the appropriate places for *Negros* and Whites [in the Brazilian society]" (Dahia, 2008, p. 712).

Indeed, an important Brazilian cultural trait exists that influences everyday social interactions and intertwines with the informal nature of humorous discourses. To this end, the book 'Roots of Brazil', originally published in 1936 by the historian Holanda (2012b), develops a comprehensive critical analysis of the Portuguese colonialist model and its influence in shaping post-colonial Brazilian society. The book's key argument lies in what the author coins *the cordial man* in order to depict what he considers national characteristic. Initially, this concept caused some misunderstanding because the word *cordial* conventionally means 'friendly', 'courteous' or 'amicable'. Nevertheless, Rocha (2004) and Pilagallo (2010) explain that Holanda (2012b) actually uses the word *cordial* due to its etymological Latin root *cor, cordis* meaning 'heart', 'emotional'. In the process, Holanda (2012b) develops an incisive social critique of what he identifies as a prevailing idiosyncrasy of Brazilians: to negotiate life situations emotionally rather than rationally.

Moreover, Holanda (2012b) argues that as a result of the patriarchal cultural habits inherited from Portuguese colonialism, 'the cordial man' does not usually distinguish clearly between private and public interests, rather, they constantly overlap. In other words, instead of scrupulously following a give set of formal rules in order to achieve a certain goal, 'the cordial man' greatly relies on his/her personal connections or social status. Therefore, such connections represent the emotions (*cor, cordis*), and adherence to a set of formal rules would be the reason or its counterpoint.

Inspired by the notion of 'the cordial man', years later the Brazilian anthropologist DaMatta (1986) introduced the closely related concept of *jeitinho* (or tap-dance[43]). The key ideas behind this form of social navigation are first that people somehow find a way to overcome a situation that had initially seemed devoid of possible solutions. Certainly, it is related to the significance of inventiveness, flexibility and improvisation. Second, *jeitiinho* is also related to a personal approach to everyday social interactions, shortening formal distances or hierarchies in order to achieve a goal or to obtain some degree of personal advantage (DaMatta, 1986; Rega, 2000). A common verbal manifestation of this phenomenon in everyday social interaction is the frequent use of the diminutive form (adding the suffix *inho* to many verbs, nouns and names) in order to convey affection or emotion according to the concept of *the cordial man*. For example, following this logic, *jeito* becomes *jeitinho*, *Negro* becomes *Neguinho*, *Moreno* becomes *Moreninho*, and an obese person instead of *gordo* becomes *gordinho* or *fortinho*. The anthropologist Goldstein (2003, p. 292) has also identified this characteristic in her anthropological study in a deprived community in Rio de Janeiro, explaining that rather than referring to someone as *Preto* or *Negro*, for instance, the use of the diminutive form (*Pretinho* or *Neguinho*) would "lessen the impact" of the racial terminology.

Consequently, the concepts of 'the cordial man' and *jeitinho* are influential in the process of creating depreciative discourses embedded in disparagement humour; moreover, they provide a convenient social navigation strategy for jokers. In addition, these concepts are constantly at play or used by the jokers in order to freely disseminate their disparagement humour with the convenient (and 'friendly') excuse that they merely represent harmless jests (an innocent play, or *brincadeirinha* in Portuguese). They also equip people to navigate smoothly the Brazilian social context, skilfully conveying discriminatory discourses in jests claiming that they represent expressions of affection.

As such, a successful Brazilian TV comedy programme that conveyed a stereotypical representation of *Negro* people was *Os Trapalhões* (The Clumsy)[44], which was aired from 1966 to

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[43] *Tap-dance*: a clever evasion, devious manoeuvre, or improvising in a difficult situation (Thorne, 2005, p. 435).

[44] Author's translation, since there is not an official English name for this comedy show. To a certain extent, the style of the jests resembles the successful US TV comedy show *The Three Stooges*.

1997. One of its four comic characters was a *Negro* man called *Mussum*, who always spoke incorrectly, was portrayed as uneducated, lazy, untidy, alcoholic and samba singer. In contrast, the white leader of the group (named *Didi Mocó*) was always the smartest of the four; indeed, whenever he committed a mistake he would tap-dance it and use it to mock the other three members of the group (Travaglia, 1989; D'Oliveira and Vergueiro, 2011). To a certain extent, this *Negro* comic character *Mussum* strongly resembles *Memín Pinguín* in Mexican comics and the Peruvian *Negro Mama* who is "from humble origins; his lack of social and intellectual acumen is highlighted for the purpose of humour" (Sue and Golash-Boza, 2013, p. 1583). This particular form of TV comedy programme is symbolic in the context of disparagement humour towards *Negro* people in Brazil. This is evident first in its longevity: according to D'Oliveira and Vergueiro (2011), it was one of the world's longest-running TV comedy show. Second, due to its influence on the subsequent generations of Brazilian humourists, reinforcing their continued tendency to employ such portrayals of *Negro* people. Finally, due to the way its depiction of *Negro* people have helped naturalize such representations in the collective mind-set, especially children. In a recent interview, on being questioned about the sorts of jokes he used to make towards *Mussum*[45], the leader of this group of humourists (Renato Aragão, who played the character *Didi Mocó*) explained:

> At that time, we did that as a playful joke. It was a kind of circus jest between *Mussum* and me. It was like if we were two children fooling around. There was no intention to offend anyone. At that time, those categories such as the ugly, *Negro* and homosexual, they did not get offended [by the jokes] because they knew they were harmless. (Jorge, 2015, p. 12).

Nevertheless, the sociologists Carla Cristina Garcia and Dagoberto José da Fonseca and the anthropologist Luiz Mott have claimed that both *Negro* and gay people were offended by the jokes conveyed in *Os Trapalhões*, but since they did not have a voice, they were unable to stop such jokes being openly recited for several years (Czech, 2015). In addition, the discourse of this prominent figure in the country's comedy scene, with a career spanning for over 50 years (Jorge, 2015), has helped to convey the convenient and common claim made by jokers that their humour message is meant only to entertain (Billig, 2001; Howitt and Owusu-Bempah, 2005; Sue and Golash-Boza, 2013). Indeed, the protective shield of 'it is just a joke' adopted by the jokers transfers responsibility to the subject, implying that he/she lacks a sense of humour and is unable to appreciate its supposed absence of offensiveness or depreciative impact (Howitt and Owusu-Bempah, 2005). Hence, both the joker and the audience "implicitly accept the stereotyped assumptions about the nature of the other" (Billig, 2001, p. 277).

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[45] The character was played by Antônio Carlos Bernardes (1941 – 1994) who, in real-life, had also been a successful samba singer (source: http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0615919/bio?ref_=nm_ov_bio_sm – Accessed on 30/09/2017)

3.3   Facebook: the new arena for the enactment of racial discourses

In the early stages of the internet, there were voices advocating that it would be a colour-blind technology and a virtual space that would allow people to escape race, racism, sexism, social class inequalities, xenophobia, and racial inequality (Turkle, 1995; Rheingold, 2000; Lévy, 2001; Poster, 2001; Hansen, 2006). One of these authors advocated that "by suspending the automatic ascription of racial signifiers according to visible traits, online environment can, in a certain sense, be said to subject everyone to what I shall call a 'zero degree' of racial difference" (Hansen, 2006, p. 141). Nevertheless, the sociologist Daniels (2009, p. 17) strongly disagrees with this argumentation and says that this belief is nothing but a "pervasive myth". In a subsequent study, Daniels (2013) complements her disagreement explaining that the colour-blind argument relied on a text-only internet that no longer exist. In fact, what Daniels (2009) advocates is that with the technological evolution the internet has become a fertile ground to the awakening of 'cyber racism', or what she calls, 'white supremacy online'. The main idea behind this concept is that "white supremacy online exploits uniquely web-based mechanisms to undermine civil rights and values of racial equality with overtly racist and anti-Semitic speech" (Daniels, 2009, p. 20).

Convergent with this standpoint, it can be seen that the sociologists Kettrey and Laster (2014) argue that the internet is not a colour-blind territory. They say that the web is a space where both race and racism are markedly significant, and that the findings of their study suggest that, in the US social context, "the web is a white space that grants easier access and greater power to white users than users of colour" (Kettrey and Laster, 2014, p. 257). The authors advocate this idea because their understanding is that white people's greater economic and cultural capital than the Blacks' equip them to have more access to the internet. Consequently, following this rationale, this social group would have increased symbolic power and privileges within online environment, and also disseminating and enforcing their views, values and beliefs about themselves and the 'others'.

In the Brazilian social context, there are data convergent with the picture described by Kettrey and Laster (2014). According to the most recent study addressing digital inequalities in Brazil, white people have twice as much access to the internet than *Negro* people, contributing to their greater symbolical power and privileges concerning the use of this modern technology (Waiselfisz, 2007). This scenario of unequal access to the internet has led to the implementation, by the end of the 1990s and early 2000s, of a series of public policies aiming at fostering greater digital inclusion in Brazil (Helou *et al.*, 2011; Mori, 2011; Camozzato *et al.*, 2015). However, regardless of the relevance of these social policies, it can be observed that a perspective of social class inequalities has driven them, while there has been a lack of debates addressing the unequal access across different racial groups. An evidence of this is the fact that, up to the present moment, the only study that has explored this dimension of digital inequalities was conducted by the sociologist Waiselfisz (2007), whilst more recent studies on the same subject matter such as Neri *et*

al. (2012) and Cabral Filho and Taveira Cabral (2013) do not address this dimension. Moreover, Fernandes *et al.* (2016) also argue that among the public policies in place to tackling digital inequalities in Brazil there are not many tailored to reach specifically underprivileged *Negro* people.

At this point, it is also relevant to explain that the transition from a text-only online experience, as addressed by Daniels (2013), towards a more dynamic and image-based interaction as we know today, is what made possible the emergence of social media platforms such as Facebook in 2004. According to some authors (boyd, 2015; Fleming and Morris, 2015), initially, the internet did not offer too many opportunities or technical capabilities for any type of interaction amongst its users. This configuration has been called text-only internet, web 1.0 or one-to-one communication. However, in the early 2000s emerged the so-called web 2.0 (also called by some authors as many-to-many communication) enabling enhanced communication possibilities, varied forms of interaction among groups and people, collaborations and dynamic networks amongst users (Fuchs, 2008; Castells, 2010b; 2010a). Consequently, Facebook, Instagram, Orkut, Twitter and alike became viable enterprises due to this shift in the broad technological scenario since they rely on massive networking amongst its users. This new technological scenario enable users to construct and disseminate amongst a wide audience not only text, but also images, audio and video content. This relevant account leads us towards an important reflection. How can the social fabric be shaped and/or influenced by the emerging social media platforms?

Within the Brazilian social context, an emblematic contemporary event contributes to shed some light on this questioning. In June 2013 erupted a series of massive street demonstrations in several cities across the country (Bernardini and Gobbi, 2013; Mattos, 2013; Quaresma, 2014; Silva and Silva, 2015). Briefly, the context triggering the protests that mobilized millions of ordinary citizens to the streets were demands for ending corruption scandals, against police brutality, in favour of improved public services and in opposition to the huge expending to host FIFA's World Cup in 2014 and the Summer Olympic Games in 2016 (Mattos, 2013; Watts, 2013). Within this context, there was a vital element enabling the mobilization in ways, in proportion and speed not previously seem in Brazil's political history: Facebook (Mattos, 2013; Quaresma, 2014).

However, at the same time that Facebook enabled people to naturally mobilize among themselves, without the support or leadership of any organised political party, it has also revealed people's need to express that they wanted their voice to be heard beyond the social media realm. On the one hand, the technology empowered people in such a way that, not necessarily, they needed an individual leader telling them what to do or where to go. In fact, they were mostly led by common goals and ideologies, rather than a particular person or organised social group. Indeed, this innovative configuration of social movement was so unique that the government did not know how to relate to them since there was not a central leading figure with whom to talk. The technology has also enabled them to find and establishing connections with a large audience of

like-minded people and, together, they have composed a new type of unity advocating shared ideologies and beliefs. On the other hand, that context also revealed that people were actively 'transporting' their street engagement on Facebook, uploading in real-time, pictures, videos, audios, memes and text messages. This move suggests that the social media platform represented an important arena to legitimise and reverberating their cause. Furthermore, 'transporting' their participation on Facebook also played the important symbolic role of 'recruiting' and engaging additional like-minded people to get out of Facebook and join them on the streets. In other words, online environment contributed towards creating the conditions for offline demonstrations, while the later returned to offline, feeding it back in an almost endless growing looping movement.

An emblematic image illustrating this phenomenon encompasses posters bearing the message "we have come out of Facebook", held by several protesters (Assis, 2013; Silva and Silva, 2015). This singular aspect was captured by the lenses of different photojournalists and captured the attention of the mainstream media outlets across Brazil. On this regard, Silva and Silva (2015) argue that the phenomenon can be characterised as a type of two-way road. Namely, online and offline 'worlds' are constantly intersecting and overlapping, in such a way that the people's voice was amplified and reverberated in both arenas (Facebook and the streets). In other words, one contributed towards the reinforcement of the other. The people mobilised online to go to the streets and speak their mind against the status quo, while their demonstrations also fed Facebook posts in real-time in an attempt to increase the relevance of their demands. In fact, this event contributes to suggest that online and offline 'worlds' are not dissociated from each other, and they compose a complex and dynamic intertwined reality (Daniels, 2013; Silva and Silva, 2015).

Yet, at the same time, that Facebook enabled the mass mobilization and contributed to shaping the new Brazilian political scenario, emerged from the street demonstrations of June 2013, there is another critical analysis to be brought to the surface. The Brazilian sociologist and former president, Fernando Henrique Cardoso, advocates that social media platforms have certainly contributed to creating the mobilizations seen in June 2013. However, the same may not be true in regard to the quality and depth of the debates triggered in online arena (Machado, 2013). Namely, whilst Facebook has been used in Brazil as a powerful mobilising tool connecting people with convergent ideas, expectations and motivations to protest, it has also been used towards gathering people sharing ideologies that are not as edifying or constructive as combating corruption, for example. This argument leads us towards the reflection of the use of social media platforms as a powerful tool for the dissemination of hate speech, colonial-like white supremacy ideologies, misogyny and several other discriminatory beliefs.

Within this background context, there are several studies revealing that social media platforms in general and Facebook in particular, have become a fertile ground for the enactment of hate speech, bigotry and a large array of inappropriate content. A sample of these studies includes, for example, Jane (2017) who explores, within the Australian social context, the dissemination of

strong misogynistic discourses more broadly over the internet, but also across Facebook and Twitter. Arango (2013) develops a critical discourse analysis of racist comments on Facebook and Twitter triggered by a post made by a mainstream magazine bearing an unequal social representation of Black people in Colombia. Laudone (2010) also develops a qualitative study aimed at exploring the extent to which and the ways in which racism, racial meanings and messages are conveyed on Facebook in the US social context. As with regard the Brazilian social context, there is a comprehensive quantitative study addressing different forms of bigotry, including racism, across Facebook, Instagram and Twitter (Pereira *et al.*, 2016). This study monitored social media in Brazil during April, May and June 2016 and managed to capture 32,376 mentions of racial terminologies, being 97.6 percent of them employed negatively to expressing bigotry, prejudice or discrimination towards *Negro* people (Pereira *et al.*, 2016).

What these mentioned studies share in common, is the evidence that Facebook has become an arena for people distilling all sorts of racist discourses targeted towards certain social groups. It has provided them with the capability of not only constructing such discourses but also disseminating them towards a wide audience. In other words, Facebook enables like-minded people to connect among themselves composing a new type of unity that disseminates their shared ideologies, beliefs, and values through the platform. Within this context, Arango (2013, p. 637) argues that "social media platforms not only reproduce but also allow the emergence of new discourses, new ways of expressing discriminatory ideas supported by colonial thinking". In addition, Pereira *et al.* (2016) advocate that social media platforms such as Facebook have enabled the amplification of latent hate speech in Brazilian society. In fact, the authors add, "when people post or share hate speech on social media, they are simply reinforcing and reaffirming an ingrained prejudice towards the target subject" (Pereira *et al.*, 2016, p. 8). This reflection is important because people's attitude online is not completely detached from offline environment so that his/her values and beliefs are also mirrored or replicated on Facebook (Daniels, 2013). Furthermore, Kolko *et al.* (2000, p. 5) advocate that "race matters in cyberspace precisely because all of us who spend time online are already shaped by the ways in which race matter offline, and we cannot help bring our own knowledge, experiences, and values with us when we log on".

3.3.1 Racist ideologies empowered by online anonymity

With over 1.8 billion users worldwide, Facebook is currently the world's prominent social media platform (Kemp, 2017), and for a person to set up an account is very simple, straightforward and free of charge. All that is needed is to be above thirteen years old, providing some basic personal information (e.g. name, date of birth, gender and a valid e-mail address), and creating a password (Caers *et al.*, 2013). However, there are no technical barriers preventing a user to set up an account with an alias or pseudonym rather than his/her real identification in order to remain anonymous in his/her communications (Halfeld, 2013). According to Misoch (2015, p. 536),

anonymity is understood as "a condition where the sender or source of information is absent or not identifiable". Moreover, Kling *et al.* (1999) explain that online anonymity can have some benefits such as: a) it can help the development of investigative journalistic projects; b) it allows whistleblowing without exposing the source; c) it may give support to specific law enforcement operations; d) it can help people in need of specialized private counselling; e) it can provide personal privacy protection; and f) avoiding persecution of all sorts. On the other hand, the harms and cons encompass: a) spamming; b) deception; c) hate mail; d) impersonation and misrepresentation; e) online financial fraud; and f) other illegal activities (Kling *et al.*, 1999). Therefore, what the authors are saying is that online anonymity may have a clear, well-defined and justifiable purpose, but it can also open up an avenue for a myriad of questionable aims.

In fact, the technological evolution of the internet from text-only to a more dynamic and interactive arena (also known as many-to-many communication), has enabled online anonymity being used to masquerade attitudes that not necessarily the person would take in an ordinary offline social setting. On this regard, Hughey and Daniels (2013) present an interesting study addressing online versions of a range of US newspapers[46] in the early 2000s that had started to allow the readers to add comments in some of their news and articles. The strategy behind this move was an attempt to engage the readers with the available content, and to attract new ones that, eventually, could become paid subscribers. However, what the newspapers' editors did not envision, and were not prepared to deal with, was the rise of slurs and racist comments even when the news had no correlation to racial issues (Hughey and Daniels, 2013). In this particular study, the authors say that they "were interested in the racist language only" (Hughey and Daniels, 2013, p. 337), and as a consequence of that it is not possible to understand whether the news has also triggered other type of comments such as misogynist, xenophobic and so on. However, what can be inferred from this study is that, given the fact that online newspapers allowed anonymous comments, many people had conveniently hidden behind this feature to conveying their rude comments fearless of any social convention constraints or being blocked by the newspapers. Still according to Hughey and Daniels (2013), this scenario represented a challenge to the newspapers' editors and left them with three options of course of actions: 1) to simply abandon commenting or to allowing them only on certain articles; 2) no longer allow anonymous comments and require some kind of registration and identity confirmation; and 3) adopt a moderator prior to the publication of the comments.

Consequently, it can be implied that online anonymity can act as a convenient shield 'protecting' (or preventing) the people to be identified right away and allowing them to speak their mind without any type of restraints (Younge, 2012; Pereira *et al.*, 2016). According to Malmqvist (2015, p. 735) this type of behaviour is explained by the social psychologist Philp G. Zimbardo's

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[46] Boston Globe; Buffalo News; Raleigh News & Observer; Reuters; San Diego Union-Tribune; The New York Times; The Wall Street Journal; and USA Today.

'Theory of Deindividuation', that states that "under anonymous conditions, people lose, or give up, their sense of self and their adherence to norms and expectations of others, whereby their behaviour becomes intensely emotional, impulsive, irrational – that is, unrestrained". Nevertheless, the Brazilian public prosecutor Thiago Pierobom says, "People have a false illusion that they can speak whatever they want because there is no legal consequence. It is a wrong assumption because it is perfectly possible to go after them" (Rodrigues, 2015, p. 3). Another public prosecutor, Christiano Jorge Santos, says, "It is important for people to be aware that the internet is not a sea of impunity. Oftentimes people get behind the computer screen, log on with an alias and thinks that he/she cannot be reached, and that is a big mistake because the authorities can reach him/her" (Soares, 2016b, p. 2).

Larsson (2015) explains that Facebook can be characterized in accordance to what he calls four modes of communication: 1) broadcasting, meaning the capability to post messages and content; 2) redistribute, what stands for the attitude of sharing and disseminating content within a network of people; 3) interaction, what means commenting about a given post and expressing opinions; and 4) acknowledge, that in the context of Facebook is better known as 'like' and indicated by a blue thumbs up icon, that is also the official company logo. In January 2016 the corporation expanded its array of interaction possibilities with its content adding five new icons called 'Reaction', allowing people to express 'love', 'sadness', 'astonishment', 'anger' and 'laugh' (Guardian, 2016; Vilicic and Beer, 2016). However, since they are simply variations of the 'like' function, the incorporation of these Reaction icons does not modify the four modes of communication. Given these four characteristics, it can be inferred that when it comes to racist content displayed on Facebook, it goes through the following steps: a) posting (i.e. a person willing to convey such ideas); b) redistribution or sharing of the post by other people with convergent point of view; c) commenting on the post; and d) 'liking' it, that can also be interpreted as a signal of approval or endorsement of the particular content, and it also represents an easy and recognisable engagement rate triggered by the content. In summary, this dynamic of creating (posting), disseminating (sharing), commenting and endorsement ('like') of racist content means that Facebook facilitates the unrestricted circulation of these discourses and also becomes "a sphere that enables new forms of cultural expression and content consumption" (Boxman-Shabtai and Shifman, 2015, p. 523). More importantly, Facebook functionalities have empowered people who share common discriminatory beliefs, disseminating and reinforcing their discourses in ways, speed and reach not previously seen in Brazil and in several other societies.

3.4   Brazilian anti-racism legislative landscape

Reviewing the studies addressing the construction and dissemination of racist discourses in online environment in the previous sections, it triggers some natural questionings: a) what are the legal boundaries in Brazil concerning racial insults; b) how effective are the policies in place aimed

at tackling racist attitudes both online and offline. These are important questions within the context of racism in Brazil because there are data revealing the growing trend of reported cases of online racism (SAFERNET, 2015). Consequently, this picture suggests that there must be some loopholes in the legal framework where the proponents of racist ideologies potentially take advantage.

With regard to the institutional combat to racism in Brazil it can be observed that it is relatively recent and there are four important milestones that support this claim: 1) the enactment of the Law number 7,716 in 1989, establishing the 'crime of racism'; 2) in 2003 the senate approved to update a paragraph in the 1940s' Penal Code including the 'crime of racial injury'; 3) also in 2003 it was established the national 'Secretariat for the Promotion of Racial Equality Policies'; and 4) after over ten years of parliamentary debates, it was enacted the Law number 12,288 known as 'Statute of Racial Equality' (Vargas and Campos, 1940; Sarney and Brossard, 1989; Campos, 2003; Silva, 2010; Gomes and Santos, 2016). By one hand, the establishment of these relevant milestones represents substantial institutional-level improvements towards tackling the enduring racial inequalities in Brazil. However, on the other hand, they also make it clear the long delay for their implementation taking into account the emancipation of slaves in 1888, and not to mention the historical legacy of over 3.5 centuries of enslavement of African people. In fact, these relevant milestones are mostly the result of demands of the *Negro* movement over several decades rather than spontaneous government initiatives (Munanga, 2002; Domingues, 2007; Pestana, 2014; Gomes and Santos, 2016).

Nonetheless, despite their unquestionable value and symbolic relevance, it is also possible to observe that when it comes to the enforcement of these laws they do not seem to be as effective as society expected them to be. Namely, there are voices such as, for example, the anthropologist Kabengele Munanga (Neto and Lettry, 2013), the philosopher Djamila Ribeiro (Ribeiro, 2014; Pacheco *et al.*, 2016) and the historian Janira Sodré Miranda (Coelho, 2015) claiming that racism is almost a perfect crime in Brazil, since the perpetrators are seldom punished and when it happens it is considered to be mild. Briefly, what these scholars advocate is that anti-racism laws are important to combat the discrimination against *Negro* people, but they are not enough given that, oftentimes, there are no punishments to offenders and to a certain extent, there is a natural acceptance concerning the subtle racist discourses in the Brazilian society. The lawyer Indira Quaresma says that society must combat the crime of racism on Facebook and fight against impunity, given that the outcome of many cases is the acquittal of the offender (Leão, 2015). In addition, the sociologist Francinézio Amaral argues that "there is a widespread disbelief with regard to the legal system because, in many cases, the police reports filed by the victims become nothing but statistics" (Moraes, 2015, p. 2).

To a certain extent, it can be considered that, eventually, these criticisms and arguments may reflect more people's perceptions than facts with regard to Brazilian judiciary system. However, based on a recent independent international report called 'Rule of Law Index' (Botero *et al.*, 2016),

it is possible to notice that, objectively speaking, the judicial system in Brazil is, in fact, lagging behind in several aspects. The mentioned report analyses data from 113 countries according to eight factors: 1) constraints on government powers; 2) absence of corruption; 3) open government; 4) fundamental rights; 5) order & security; 6) regulatory enforcement; 7) civil justice; and 8) criminal justice. The country's overall ranking is the 52nd place and concerning these eight factors, the one closely related to the scope of the present study is regarded as the fundamental rights. This factor measures the protection of fundamental human rights, including the elimination of discrimination and racism, and the position Brazil has achieved on this factor is also the 52nd place. This contributes to illustrating the long road ahead towards achieving greater racial equality and enhanced defence of basic rights. In addition, it also contributes to the understanding that, in fact, the negative perceptions raised by the scholars previously mentioned converge with the findings of this independent international report.

Thus, two additional relevant aspects can potentially influence society's perception of the high level of impunity with regard to racist practices and consequent negative views of the legal system. In the first place, people with greater economic capital may benefit from legal loopholes not available to ordinary citizens and, in the second place, that the judicial system is considered to be over-complex and sluggish in its decision process. According to the legal scholar André Luiz Olivier da Silva, "in Brazil, the law is strict and punitive against some people, in particular, the most deprived; whilst for others more influential and affluent it is lenient. It all depends on who the defendant is" (Junges, 2011, p. 3). Convergent with this argument, the former president of Brazil's Supreme Court, Joaquim Barbosa, claims, "people are treated differently according to their social position, skin colour and financial status. These aspects altogether play an enormous role in the judicial system and especially with regard to impunity" (Zampier, 2013, p. 1). In fact, a reflex of this differentiated treatment according to the people' social class positioning or social influence, as advocated by these legal experts, can be seen in many cases of racism on Facebook. Oftentimes when the victim is a prominent public figure, the investigations are restless conducted until the users are identified and brought to justice, whilst for many ordinary voiceless citizens it is not seen the same level of effort and dedication. Araújo (2015a) also makes similar criticism arguing that the police force is effective in identifying offenders of famous actresses, but the ordinary citizens who are offended on a daily basis are left behind.

Finally, concerning the complexity of the anti-racism legislation, there is a dual classification capable to trigger misunderstanding in peoples' interpretation of the rule of law, to contribute to fuel the perception of impunity, and that racism is a perfect crime. According to the 'National Council of Justice', the legal concepts of 'crime of racism' and 'racial injury' are different. The first one (regulated by Law number 7,716/1989) refers to acts addressed towards an unspecified cohort of people, discriminating the whole of a racial group, whilst 'racial injury' (regulated by Law number 2,848, article 140, paragraph 3) consists in offending one's honour by referring to

race, colour, ethnicity, religion, or origin (Santos, 2011; CNJ, 2015). However, the problem is the fact that whilst the 'crime of racism' can lead to up to five years of imprisonment to the offender, 'racial injury' can lead to no more than six months of incarceration or even be replaced by a fine or community service at the judge's own discretion. Given the fact that the majority of the cases of racism on Facebook are interpreted by the authorities as 'racial injury' rather than 'crime of racism', the offenders, when convicted, oftentimes receive mild punishments and that fuels peoples' perception of impunity, inefficiency of the judiciary system and a system that contributes to the perpetuation of unequal privileges.

In complement to that, it is possible to observe that there is a lack of nationwide consolidated data regarding cases of racism effectively brought to court. Nevertheless, there are two set of interesting and revealing data from Brazil's Federal District and from Rio de Janeiro. According to Diniz (2015), during the first semester of 2015, there were 352 reported cases of racism registered in the Federal District judiciary system. Within that, only three were considered, in fact, crime of racism by the judges, whilst the remaining 349 were considered racial injury whose punishment is considered mild. In Rio de Janeiro, from 1988 to 2017 (i.e.: a timeframe of almost 30 years) there were only 244 cases of racism reaching the courts and 40 percent of them were dismissed by the judges in the civil area, whilst in the criminal area, the defendants were acquitted in twenty-four percent of the cases (G1, 2017). Consequently, given this broad picture, Diniz (2015) argues that, in Brazil, racism is a type of crime that conveniently hides behind the 'blankets' of the rule of law.

Therefore, in conclusion to this section and in response to the initial questions raised, it is possible to highlight three main aspects in the Brazilian anti-racism legal framework. First, that the deep-seated denial of existence of racism in the Brazilian society influenced by the whitening ideology and 'racial democracy' (see section 2.4), has contributed towards the postponement of implementation of institutional-level policies. In fact, the studies reveal that they have been implemented only after enduring social pressure led by the *Negro* movement. Second, despite the value and symbolic relevance of such policies, it is evident that due to its dual classification regarding racist attitudes, and consequent distinct levels of punishments, provides legal loopholes that people take advantage. Finally, intertwined with the second aspect, the lack of serious consequences to racist attitudes contributes to fuel civil society's disbelief in the legal framework and, in addition, the perception that such attitudes are exempt of serious legal consequences.

3.4.1   Internet regulations in Brazil

It can be observed that the issue of internet regulation has been a global debate over several years and it encompasses not only divergent views with regard to the level of control or supervision to the content uploaded and conveyed through it but also different approaches across the nations. Within that, the international organisation 'Internet Society' advocates that "the internet is an open platform for innovation and sharing of ideas", and that "it cannot be regulated in a top-down

manner, but its governance should be based on processes that are inclusive and driven by consensus" (Society, 2016, p. 1). Similarly to this idea of fewer government-led regulations, Delacourt (1997, p. 234) also advocated in favour of non-regulation but he recognised that it would be "the ideal alternative, [but] it is no longer realistic in light of the strength of political forces aligned against it". On the opposite pole of the conversation, Hughes (2015, p. 1) argues that "a clear regulatory framework is fundamental for the promotion and protection of rights in the digital context". Thus, according to a study conducted by Ang (1997) analysing the regulatory framework in six countries, there are five types of content regulations usually adopted by countries: 1) the person himself/herself; 2) second part controllers; 3) non-hierarchically organised social forces; 4) hierarchically organised non-governmental organisations; and 5) governments. In addition, Ang (1997, p. 6) also claims that oftentimes "countries with a longer and stronger tradition of free press would tend to use the first three types of regulations", what implies a correlation between the level of freedom experienced by the press and the regulatory framework imposed towards the internet.

Within the Brazilian context, there have been also several debates around this subject matter since 2007 triggered by an influential newspaper article published by the Law scholar Lemos (2007), that ultimately has contributed to parliamentary discussions two years later towards the regulatory framework model to be adopted by the country (O'Maley, 2015; Solagna, 2015). After three years of public consultations, adjustments and parliamentary debates, it was enacted the Law number 12,965 known as *Marco Civil da Internet*[47] (Mari, 2014; Rousseff *et al.*, 2014; Solagna, 2015) what, in accordance to the categories of regulatory framework developed by Ang (1997) positions Brazil in the fifth type (government regulated). Yet, it is possible to notice the existence of a delicate contrasting balance: freedom of expression vs respect to social norms. Namely, oftentimes people who engage in controversial comments online of derogatory nature claim that they have the constitutional right to freedom of expression, and that initiative towards questioning such contents would represent censorship. Nonetheless, the flaw embedded in this argument is that freedom of expression does not exempt people of responsibilities and compliance to social norms, and the same Law number 12,965 makes it clear that the social agents shall be held accountable for their online activities in accordance to the laws in place (Rossini, 2014; Rousseff *et al.*, 2014).

Therefore, whilst freedom of expression both online and offline is considered by some authors (Rossini *et al.*, 2015; Dunham, 2016; Kelly *et al.*, 2016) as a fundamental component of democratic societies, it is also relevant to incorporating in the discussion the fact that oftentimes people who engage in offensive comments online try to shield themselves behind this argument (Younge, 2012). Within this context, according to Daniels (2009, p. 163), in Germany, for example, "freedom of speech is a central tenet of their view of democracy, and their interpretation of this right includes bans on certain forms of white supremacy online". This same author adds that

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[47] Brazilian Civil Rights Framework for the Internet.

this debate is relevant and meaningful to societies because words are embedded with power and they have the capability to engage people either in pleasant or unpleasant thoughts, feelings, ideas and beliefs (Daniels, 2009). Convergent with this idea it can be observed that Castro (2014) also advocates that despite the unquestionable importance of freedom of expression towards the strengthening of Brazilian democracy, it cannot be used as a convenient excuse to equipping people to spread hate, racism and discriminatory offences in online environment or offline. In addition, the Brazilian lawyer Patrícia Peck Pinheiro argues that, as a matter of fact, the dissemination of offensive comments on the internet works against a democratic and fairer society (Gomes, 2015). Consequently, on the one hand, freedom of expression represents an important democratic tool that contribute towards people's empowerment. However, on the other hand, it cannot be disregarded that concerning disrespectful and aggressive comments against other people, it does not exempt them of responsibilities and compliance to social norms, since words can have effects on others (Younge, 2012; Daniels, 2013).

3.5   Understanding Facebook's approach to racist content

In addition to the debates around the anti-racism legal landscape in Brazil and the role of Facebook facilitating the dissemination of bigotry, there is another relevant reflection to be made, and usually not addressed in the literature. It is related to the approach adopted by Facebook, Inc. concerning the dissemination of racist posts on its social media platform. Similar to the questions raised concerning the Brazilian anti-racism landscape, it is also relevant to understand how the corporation deals with racist content circulating on its platform. Consequently, the analysis of this important aspect, in combination with the Brazilian legal framework previously discussed, contributes to have a more comprehensive view of the phenomenon of online racism in Brazil.

It has been reported that Facebook, Inc. employs a global workforce of 4,500 people exclusively dedicated to moderating content posted on its platform and removing inappropriate content. Moreover, the corporation has recently announced plans to hire additional 3,000 people in the near future in response to the growing demand to moderating controversial content (Chaykowski 2017; Kuchler, 2017). These figures are certainly impressive. However, the corporation's decision to increase the dedicated workforce of content moderators in almost 67 percent raises other concerns. This is said because the increase suggests first that the corporation recognises the growing trend in the dissemination of inappropriate content on the platform. Second, because it may also be the result of pressures made by the civil society and policymakers in different societies (Balmer, 2017; Murgia and Khan, 2017; Ashtana and Gibbs, 2018; BBC, 2018). Moreover, given the fact that 1.3 million posts in multiple languages are shared every minute on the platform (Hopkins, 2017), it makes the task for the 7,500 content moderators highly challenging. Still according to Hopkins (2017), given the massive amount of posts to evaluate, the content moderators are usually left with something such as just ten seconds to make a decision.

Therefore, the inappropriate content to be reviewed by the team is either flagged by users or automatically captured by powerful algorithms[48] (Solon, 2017). This picture reveals that, in fact, the moderating process comprehends a shared responsibility approach. On the one hand, the corporation provides a team of content moderators of considerable size, combined with its powerful algorithms for tracking the content posted by its users. On the other hand, it can be observed that Facebook, Inc. also relies on its users to flag what is potentially inappropriate and that, eventually, it may not have been spotted by its internal mechanisms.

However, within Brazilian social context, there are not too many publicly known cases of racist content flagged by users as inappropriate and removed by the corporation. In fact, it was possible to identify just a single successful case in 2015. In that occasion, many users complained across different Facebook communities about a specific page named 'I dislike Black women' [49] (Araujo, 2015). It took around 10 days for Facebook, Inc. respond to the users' demand and take the effective action to blocking the page for violating its 'Community Standards'. However, in a matter of a few days afterwards, the administrator in charge created new ones with different names[50] but displaying the same content that had been previously blocked (Araújo, 2015b; Romão, 2015). Therefore, this example contributes to revealing that the corporation's response lack agility and that there are loopholes where people engaged in bigotry can take advantage. In another case also in Brazil prior to this one, Facebook, Inc. rejected the request to remove the content. According to the available information in news articles, the context encompassed a humorous post using a picture of the movie 'Rise of the Planet of the Apes' to mocking of affirmative action initiatives in Brazilian public universities. Facebook's response to the claimant was that the post did not violate its Community Standards on bullying and harassment (G1, 2013). In the international arena, Citron and Norton (2011) report a case where Facebook, Inc. also rejected to blocking groups disseminating messages denying the horrors of the Holocaust and claiming that it did not exist. The argument used in support of the rejection was that refusing to take down the content "allows people to see that the sites' proponents are stupid" (Citron and Norton, 2011, p. 1475).

The cases discussed are interesting examples that evidence the complexity and, oftentimes, not so clear and straightforward guidelines concerning the corporation's policies to tackling inappropriate content. On this regard, Hopkins (2017) reveals that the guidelines provided by

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[48] It stands for a step-by-step procedure for solving a problem or accomplishing some end especially by a computer. (Source: https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/algorithm - Accessed on 30/09/2017).

[49] The original Facebook page displayed that "nothing is better than blonde women, *morena*, redhead and Asian. However, the Black ones we want to keep a distance".

[50] It was not possible to find the current page(s) of the original creator, what suggests that, eventually, he may have either turned the content private or deleted them for good. Nevertheless, he runs a *YouTube* channel where he openly advocates in favour of Nazism, legalizing the raping of women, denying the Holocaust, among several other controversial topics.

Facebook, Inc. to its users are very simplistic and they do leave room for doubts. In contrast, the corporation's internal manuals, although much more robust, also make the work of its thousands of content moderators very difficult and highly stressing (Hopkins, 2017; Solon, 2017). In fact, analysing the corporation's 'Community Standards'[51], available on Facebook's website, reveals some intriguing aspects. The document says that "Facebook removes hate speech, which includes content that directly attacks people based on their: race; ethnicity; national origin; religious affiliation; sexual orientation; sex; gender or gender identity; or serious disabilities or diseases" (Help, 2017, p. 2). However, the policy continues, people are allowed to use the social media platform "to challenge ideas, institutions and practices". Within this process, they can also use "humour, satire or social commentary related to the topics". In the last paragraph of the policy, the corporation says that "while we work hard to remove hate speech, we also give you tools to avoid distasteful or offensive content" (Help, 2017, p. 3).

Therefore, in conclusion, it is possible to observe that the corporation has put in place considerable resources to tackling inappropriate content (both human and technological resources). Nevertheless, it has transferred a great deal of responsibility on its users' shoulders. They are left with the options to either flag what they consider inappropriate or using functionalities to avoid being exposed to this type of content. However, the problem is that this last approach does not prevent that any person can potentially be the subject of mockery and/or discrimination somewhere across the social media platform, even if he/she blocks content with such characteristics. In other words, the person can, eventually, chose to block being exposed to discriminatory content but, if he/she is the subject of the bigotry, his/her image will still be circulating across the platform. Furthermore, the corporation faces a huge identity dilemma because it is unclear whether it is a technology company or a media organization (Demartini, 2017). Consequently, navigating over this grey area opens room for people posting content that, potentially, can be harmful and distasteful to certain groups of people. However, posing as a technology company, Facebook, Inc. does not consider that they have any responsibility regarding what people post. They argue that they are just providing a tool for people engaging with each other across a network. On the other hand, as a media corporation, they would be held accountable for what is published and having to comply with certain clearer editorial guidelines (Ingram, 2016; Rajan, 2016; Jazeera, 2017).

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[51] The policy is the same globally. It is translated from English to the local language and it is a three-pages long document available online at Facebook's Help Centre.

Chapter 4:   Methodology

This chapter **starts** with a literature review addressing the methodological approach adopted in previous studies (both in Brazil and internationally) investigating racialized humour and its manifestation in the online environment. This review is important because it provides the supporting arguments for the adoption of critical discourse analysis in this study. Within that, the data collection process for the study has adopted a dualistic approach: 1) identifying and collecting 217 public Brazilian Facebook pages; and 2) conducting a series of eight in-depth interviews with different social actors in Brazil. Therefore, the chapter's **second section** explains the process involved in the identification and collection of the public Facebook pages, whilst the **third section** addresses the interview process. The **fourth section** addresses the ethical considerations and reflexions involved in dealing with publicly available social media data. The fact that the data is public does it imply that it can be used without following rigorous research protocols? Do they demand users' formal written consent to be used for research purposes? These are some of the reflexions addressed in the section. Finally, the **fifth section** brings a positionality reflection concerning three aspects: 1) social distance in relation to research participants, 2) gender and race, and 3) dealing with disturbing content.

4.1   Choosing the appropriate research method

Two important constructs compose the present study: humour and social media platforms. However, the natural question emerging from this initial assertion is what methodological approach would be more appropriate for the present study? It is clear that the research questions driving the study (see section 1.4) address the comprehension of embedded meanings in people's narratives on Facebook constructing, reinforcing and reproducing a certain social reality. Consequently, this affects the way a researcher frame questions, collect data and recruit research participants. In addition, Starks and Trinidad (2007) argue that the choice for a specific research method is influenced by the analysis of three major aspects. First, the goal of the study, meaning whether it is describing, understanding or explaining a social phenomenon. Second, the authors continue, it is relevant to consider the study's target audience, which can be comprised of practitioners, policymakers or theorists. Finally, the outcome of the study such as a thematic description of the phenomenon, the understanding of discourses shaping social relations or generate explanatory theories. Thus, how did previous authors have investigated the mentioned constructs? Which methodological choice have they made? These initial reflections are important because they contribute towards the definition of the research method applied in the present study to explore the humorous racialized discourses on Facebook in Brazil.

Whilst humour has been studied for a long time in social sciences (e.g. Stephenson, 1951; Chapman and Foot, 1977), research addressing social media platforms is relatively recent (see Caers *et al.*, 2013). Concerning the study of both constructs within Brazilian social context, they are equally recent and there are few published studies in comparison to the international arena. Important studies addressing humour and/or social media in Brazil include Fonseca (1994; 2012), Goldstein (2003), Dahia (2008; 2010), Marinucci (2012) and Halfeld (2013). In his pioneering study on the subject matter of racialized humour in Brazil, Fonseca (1994, p. 5) explains that he adopted "an anthropological and historical methodological approach to analyse racist jokes". The author adds that this approach allows the researcher interpret a multitude of facts of social realities constructed by the jokes. Some years afterwards, the author published a subsequent work in book format (Fonseca, 2012) but since it is based in his masters' dissertation, the methodological approach remained the same. As with Goldstein (2003), the author has developed an ethnographic study for a number of years in a deprived community in Rio de Janeiro. The type of humour the author identified in that social context is characterised as a form of resistance adopted by the community members (mostly *Negro* people) to navigate amid their several everyday lived experiences of social and racial inequalities. In the two studies published by Dahia (2008; 2010), the author develops extensive literature review of mostly social psychology studies to support her interpretations of the whitened social construction created by racist jokes in Brazil. Different from these authors, Marinucci (2012) does not focus exclusively on humour against or involving *Negro* people but rather analyses Brazilian humour more broadly encompassing also other social groups (e.g. women, disabled people, and politicians). The author also adopts literature review to support her interpretive analysis. Finally, Halfeld (2013) adopted discourse analysis to investigate political humour in Brazil conveyed on Facebook. The author developed her analysis based on the French school of discourse analysis with a linguistic focus.

In the international arena, there are several studies investigating racialized humour in online environment. Examples include Billig (2001), Laudone (2010), Weaver (2011a; 2013), Arango (2013), Hughey and Daniels (2013) and Malmqvist (2015). The interesting aspect is that on what regard the methodological approach adopted by this group of authors, Laudone (2010) is the only one who has not employed critical discourse analysis. The author has employed a combination of in-depth interview with eighteen undergraduate university students and content analysis of participant's Facebook profiles. However, a question that can be raised is why critical discourse analysis has been the predominant choice among these authors. On this regard, Arango (2013) brings an interesting reflexion. The author argues that the development of critical discourse analysis of racist discourses manifested in different forms encompasses not only the single case per se but in fact, a node within a network of social relations. In other words, the critical discourse analysis contributes towards unveiling a system of social and racial relations that evolves over time and it is shaped by the context where they are created and reproduced. In complement to this reflection, it is pertinent to argue that language and discourse are not just descriptive but, in fact, a

form of social action and, as such, capable to be systematically interpreted and explained (Fairclough, 1989; 1995).

Consequently, more important than the status of prominent methodological approach adopted by several authors investigating racialized humour, there are other relevant aspects supporting its choice in the present study. First, in his studies of critical analysis discourses and racism, van Dijk (1993; 2005) advocates that this methodological approach enables the researcher analyse written and spoken texts to reveal the discursive sources of power, dominance, inequality, and bias. Second, Morgan (2010) advocates that there are three major advantages brought by the adoption of discourse analysis: 1) the technique can reveal often unspoken and unacknowledged aspects of human behaviour turning salient, hidden or dominant discourses that maintain marginalised positions in society; 2) it can reveal or help to construct a variety of new and alternative social subjects positions that are available, which in itself can be very empowering to the most vulnerable people; and 3) critical discourse analysis can provide a positive social psychological critique of any phenomenon under the gaze of the researcher. Finally, Starks and Trinidad (2007) explain that discourse analysis allows the researcher to examine how shared meanings, beliefs and ideologies are created and reproduced through people's discourses. The combination of the arguments presented by these authors (van Dijk, 1993; 2005; Starks and Trinidad, 2007; Morgan, 2010) are relevant because they converge with the aims of the present study in accordance with the research questions raised and contribute to justify the chosen methodological approach. Nevertheless, it is also relevant to say that no matter how much care and attention is dedicated towards choosing the most appropriate research method, none is perfect. According to Morgan (2010, p. 4), the main criticism is that the "proponents of discourse analysis believe that meaning is never fixed and so everything is always open to interpretation and negotiation". However, the conclusion is that the advantages seem to be more relevant than potential limitations and, consequently, I consider that the method is appropriate to analyse the phenomenon under investigation.

4.2   Identifying and collecting public Facebook pages in Brazil

Facebook is currently the world's prominent social media platform with over 1.8 billion users (Kemp, 2017). Facebook's success and popularity in Brazil is reflected in the fact that there are 122 million active users in the country, rendering Brazil the world's third-largest market behind only the US and India (Kemp, 2017). These data are significant because this number of active users represents 58.3% of the country's population, far above the global average of 37 percent (Kemp, 2017). Moreover, recent data reveal that on average Brazilian users spend three hours and 43 minutes per day connected to this particular platform positioning the country second in the world according to this metric (Kemp, 2017). Consequently, given the considerable reach and popularity of Facebook in Brazil, it represents a suitable source of primary data for the study. In addition,

some authors (Daniels, 2009; van Dijck and Poell, 2015) argue that prominent social media platforms such as Facebook are ubiquitously present in peoples' lives and they represent a particular arena where disparagement humour discourses can be more easily accessed than in ordinary, face-to-face daily interactions, given the sensitive nature of the content (Weaver, 2011a).

Thus, the search for the relevant content on Brazilian public Facebook pages has been taken into consideration the timeframe comprised between 2008 and 2016. The reason for the adoption of this timeframe lays in the fact that within this period a number of relevant symbolic milestones for the *Negro* community (see Appendix B) have taken place in Brazil, such as for example: a) protests by leading *Negro* movements demanding greater participation of *Negro* female models at 'São Paulo Fashion Week' in January 2008 (Duffy, 2008; Martins, 2013; Nunes, 2013), b) publication of a series of papers and news articles addressing the 120th anniversary of the emancipation of slaves (Jaccoud *et al.*, 2008), c) implementation in 2010 of a Federal Law known as 'Statute of Racial Equality' aimed at tackling racial inequalities (Savarese, 2010; Silva, 2010; Estarque, 2015; Tokarnia, 2015; Santos, 2016), d) in 2011 Facebook overtook Google's Orkut as the prevalent social media platform in Brazil (Bonfils, 2011; Ghoshdr and C., 2014; Google, 2014), and e) over 2016 it is still possible to identify the occurrence of several cases of online racism across the country, and these events have called the attention of Brazilian society (Azevedo, 2016; BBC, 2016; Campos *et al.*, 2016; Senado, 2016). Consequently, it is considered that this timeframe comprises a number of relevant symbolic milestones and events that may have contributed to bringing to the surface a rich array of comments and discourses related to racial relations in Brazil.

4.2.1   Performing the Facebook data collection

The design of online data collection process for the relevant content on Brazilian public Facebook pages is essentially supported by an initial pool of 131 keywords in Portuguese (see Appendix D for the complete list) related to racism and disparagement humour applied in a leading web-based search engine. This set of keywords was selected based on different studies that have investigated racial insults in Brazil (Guimarães, 2000; 2003), racist jokes (Fonseca, 1994; Dahia, 2008; 2010; Fonseca, 2012) and, as well as, several websites displaying solely racist jokes against *Negro* people (Clube, 2003; Pretos, 2009; Gazolla, 2011; Preto, 2015; Reocities, 2015).

Once the keywords are typed in the search engine box, always associating it with 'Facebook', it brings the results of the search performed with a series of URLs[52] (oftentimes restricted to the first page) and I must then evaluate whether the keyword used effectively brought relevant results or not. In case the keyword has not brought any relevant content, then the information must also be registered in order to classify later on which ones were efficient for this

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[52] URL stands for Uniform Resource Locator, or the unique address of any file available on the internet

purpose and which ones were not (see Appendix D). For a better clarification, invalid results to the scope of the present study include, for example, URLs leading to other social media platforms such as Twitter or Instagram. In the sequence, I must evaluate whether the URL displays public content or private, and this aspect is easily verified once one tries to access any content of the specific URL, because for any public Facebook page its complete timeline of events is immediately visible and open to anyone regardless if the person holds a Facebook account or not. On the other hand, for private Facebook pages only the home is visible containing very basic and broad information. In order to have access to its timeline and posts, it is required to log on with a valid Facebook account and either be a friend of the owner of the page or request his/her permission to access the content. Consequently, if the Facebook page is public, it is considered of interest to the present study, whereas if it is private it is not considered as a valid source of data.

In addition, it was observed that several of the search results driven by the pool of keywords led not only to relevant Facebook data but also to several news articles directly connected to the content. This is explained because, as previously mentioned, many cases of racism on Facebook have reached the headlines of newspapers and magazines (see section 1.3). Consequently, this secondary data was also collected alongside the Facebook URLs given the fact that they provide rich complementary secondary data about the context of the cases, the profile of the victims subjected to online mockery, demographic information and victims' statements.

4.2.2   Overview of the Facebook data

The internet search made with the mentioned set of 131 keywords in Portuguese has enabled me to identify a <u>total</u> of 222 Facebook URLs comprising the timeframe 2008 – 2016. During the online searching process, it was possible to observe that 43 keywords out of the initial pool of 131 did not bring any relevant result for the study (see Appendix D). Therefore, the total number of effective keywords was 88 (or 67.18 percent of the initial pool). The search was conducted in São Paulo (Brazil) between 28 July to 24 August 2016 comprising a total period of twenty-five hours and twelve minutes of internet browsing. It is also relevant to explain why the online search was performed in Brazil rather than in the UK. In Europe, it is in place a law known as 'Data Protection Law' and 'Right to be Forgotten', what grants people the right of not having any information about them displayed on search engines across the continent (Ausloos, 2012). Due to this regulation, some search results involving ordinary citizens (Europeans or not) may be automatically removed. Since this law is not in place in Brazil, the results were not affected by this restriction. Within this set of 222 Facebook URLs, five of them were private and, consequently, they were disregarded, what brings the actual number of <u>public</u> Facebook URLs to 217 as shown Figure 3. Concurrent with this search conducted in Brazil, the 88 keywords also led to 224 news articles in Portuguese intertwined with several of the public Facebook URLs identified. These news articles cover the timeframe 2012 – 2016 and they address 42 cases of racism on Facebook across the country.
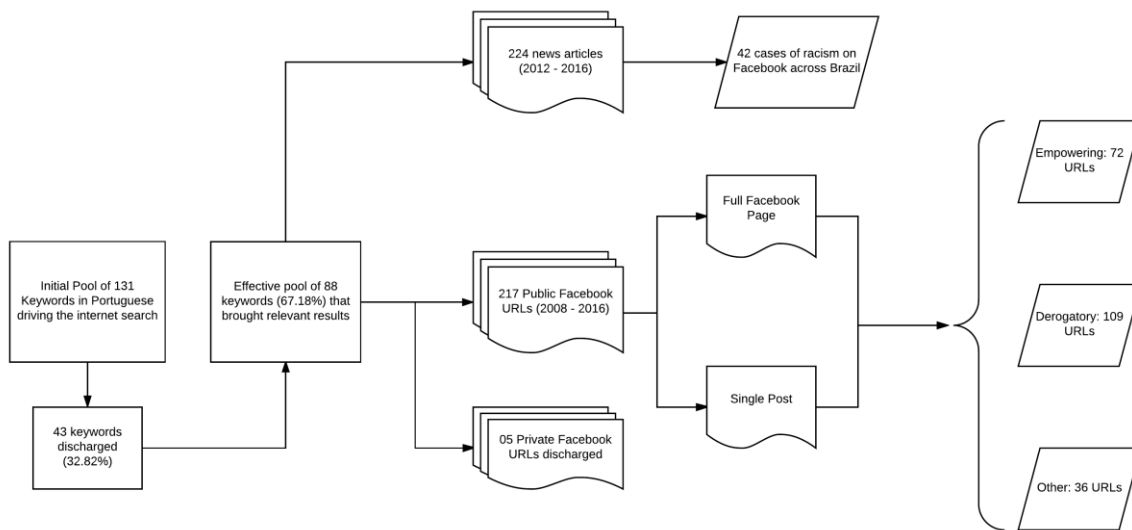
Figure 3: Summary of Facebook data
Source: the author

It is also important to explain that the 217 public Facebook URLs comprise both what I call full Facebook pages and single posts. Essentially, the full Facebook page displays a stream of posts on its timeline that can encompass just a few months or up to several years. Only to give an idea of the extent of the data collected, once each one of the public URL was saved as an individual PDF file, it can give origin to a short document of few pages and in some other occasions, large document with 700+ pages. The single post, as the name suggests, comprises an isolated post followed by a series of associated comments made by the users. The number of associated comments in any given post does vary considerably and, in some cases, can reach hundreds or, in other circumstances, none at all. These two types of Facebook URLs differ mostly on their form and not on their content. Consequently, this conceptual classification has had no impact on the critical analysis process. Evolving from this step, the analysis of the broad content displayed in the 217 public Facebook URLs has also enabled me to classify them in accordance with three predominant thematic categories as follow:

a) **Empowering:** It is meant to classify content that tries to empower *Negro* people, praising their value as active members of Brazilian society, challenging the discrimination and prejudice they are subject of, raising public awareness against any form of discrimination and bigotry, and increase their self-esteem;

b) **Derogatory:** It encompasses content aimed at derogating *Negro* people through verbal insults, derogatory humour and pictures/memes/videos;

c) **Other:** This group of public Facebook URLs is related to general content that, at least initially, looks quite ambiguous or more neutral such as, for example, a newspaper that has just displayed a post about a racial issue or other subject matter, and people have made comments about it. However, in this case, the newspaper per se is neither

empowering the *Negro* people nor derogatory towards them. Actually, the URL is just an arena that some users have decided to express their ideologies.

One of most relevant aspects emerged from the search illustrated in Figure 3 consists in the contrasting tension between the two broad thematic categories (Empowering and Derogatory) because it portrays adequately the phenomenon under investigation. By one hand, it can be observed that there is a number of public Facebook URLs displaying content predominantly aimed at derogating *Negro* people (109 in total, or 50.2 percent). In contrast, there is another group of public Facebook URLs displaying arguments and standpoints aimed at praising the value of *Negro* people and challenging the disparagement discourses (72 in total, or 33.2 percent). In between them, there is also a small group of public Facebook URLs (36 in total, or 16.6 percent) thematically classified as 'Other'. Apparently, they do not play a decisive or pungent role in the process but even so, they cannot be overlooked since they also provide relevant data for the study.

4.3   Conducting in-depth interviews in Brazil

Eight semi-structured in-depth interviews were conducted for the present study as a complementary approach to the Facebook data, allowing me to capture more profound and complex narratives (see Table 1). Convergent with this line of reasoning, Turner (2010, p. 754) says that "interviews provide in-depth information pertaining to participants' experiences and viewpoints of a particular topic". In addition, Seidman (2006, p. 9) argue that the purpose of performing in-depth interview goes beyond data collection and, in fact, it is "interested in understanding the lived experience of other people and the meaning they make of that experience". Consequently, the data emerged from the public Facebook pages in Brazil enabled me to investigate the discourses embedded in the disparagement humour and associated comments towards *Negro* people. The interviews represent rich opportunities to dig into other relevant aspects such as the potential social impacts of these attitudes and understand how different social actors interpret and/or experience the phenomenon.

Thus, the following step consisted in the design of the interview per se taking into consideration that "qualitative interviewing does not just happen by chance" (Brinkmann, 2013, p. 45), and contrary to the ordinary everyday conversation, they require prior planning and careful thinking. For the present study, I have chosen to apply semi-structured in-depth interview, first because it relies on a planned set of questions convergent with the research problem. Second, because it allows sufficient flexibility for the emergence of related ideas and standpoints by the participant that, eventually, the researcher had not previously envisioned them (see Appendix F, for a detailed view of the 'Interview Guide').

Chapter 4

Table 1: General profile of interviewees

#	Interviewee Name	Genre	Race	Organisation	Role	Category	Place	Interview Date
1	Jurema Werneck	F	Black	Criola	Head	NGO	Rio de Janeiro	21/07/2016
2	Maria Lúcia da Silva	F	Black	Instituto Amma Psique Negritude	Head	Institute	São Paulo	19/08/2016
3	D.S.	F	Black	---	---	Individual Activist	São Paulo	08/08/2016
4	Maurício Pestana	M	Black	Secretaria Municipal de Igualdade Racial	Secretary	Polcicymaker	São Paulo	18/08/2016
5	Djamila Ribeiro	F	Black	Secretaria Municipal de Direitos Humanos	Secretary	Polcicymaker	São Paulo	05/08/2016
6	Elaine Aparecida Dias	F	Black	SOS Racismo - Assembleia Legislativa do Estado de S.P.	Coordinator	Polcicymaker	São Paulo	10/08/2016
7	Carmen Dora	F	Black	Comissão de Igualdade Racial OAB-SP	President	Committee for Racial Equality in a Lawyers Association	São Paulo	26/07/2016
8	Moacyr Netto	M	White	W3Haus	CEO	Advertising Agency	São Paulo	22/08/2016

The interviews took place in Brazil, in the cities of São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro, between 14 July and 6 September 2016. Some of the most salient aspects to discuss regarding this process consist in the country's political scenario at that time and the challenges faced getting access to some social actors. It is known that fieldwork trip does present us with a number of unexpected and unpredictable challenges, but some are manageable whilst others are not because they are beyond the researcher's control (Mathee *et al.*, 2010; Yin, 2011).

To start with, the political scenario in Brazil during the fieldwork trip could be characterised as permeated by a considerable degree of uncertainty because the elected president, Dilma Vana Rousseff, had been suspended from office on 12 May due to an ongoing impeachment trial. The vice-president, Michel Temer, following what the constitution sets, took office as interim president until the upper house of Congress could conclude the trial, what happened only on 31 August (Lopes and Phillips, 2016; Romero, 2016; Sandy, 2016; Watts, 2016). What is the relationship between this macro political scenario and the present research? Given the fact that the outcome of the president's trial was uncertain, several governmental initiatives, projects and social policies were kept on hold until a final decision by the upper house of Congress could be taken. Consequently, my attempts to interview certain national-level policymakers were unsuccessful.

The second relevant challenge experienced in the fieldwork consisted in the substantial power of gatekeepers when it comes to get access to opinion makers and prominent public figures. It was possible to notice that oftentimes there is a considerable staff of assistants blocking the access to them, surrounding these high-profile people. However, as gatekeepers, they not only build a strong protective shield around the person, but they also filter what may be acknowledged by that figure or not and, therefore, the attempts (no matter how genuine) may end up being blocked there. I have attempted to reach certain opinion makers and a small group of prominent public figures that have been subjected to online disparagement mockery on Facebook (e.g. journalists, actors, singers, and professional sportspeople) but, unfortunately, they ignored me.

On the other hand, whilst following the formal route and established channels of communication to contact policymakers have proved to be practically innocuous, the personal network has proved to work better. In other words, in case we know someone who knows somebody else within the governmental structure, it can contribute to open doors; otherwise, the chances of being ignored are huge. Moreover, the experience in the fieldwork has also allowed me to notice that in certain occasions, personal presence can contribute to getting things moving favourably forward. This is said because, in one particular governmental agency that I had negotiated the interview well in advance prior to the fieldwork trip, I had to go there in person three times and phone other four times insisting to schedule the interview with a senior member. This general picture has even raised some interesting reflections. In the first place, the use of personal connections to manage being received by some policymakers resembles the concept of the 'cordial man' (see section 3.2). According to Holanda (2012b; 2012a), the 'cordial man' relies on his/her personal connections or social status in order to achieve a certain goal, rather than strictly following a given set of rules. Second, the difficulty I had to schedule an interview with the particular governmental agency, which ultimately is meant at supporting *Negro* people that have been subject of situations of racism, makes me wonder how it must be like for those who are in need of their specialised support. In view of the fact that the communication channels I used were the same that this agency provides to the public that looks for their support.

The third relevant fieldwork challenge consisted in the fact that there was an expectation that, eventually, having successfully interviewed a senior policymaker it would contribute to grant me access to other policymakers in a snowball effect but at least in my case that did not happen. Therefore, each policymaker that I got in contact with has required individual negotiation strategies and approach. Some were successful whilst others were not. Finally, in regard to the victims of online racism on Facebook, many of them I was aware of who they were because they have been the subject of the 224 news articles identified during the Facebook data collection process (see section 4.2.1). Nevertheless, getting effective access to interview these people have proved to be more challenging than expected. Based on these news articles and extensive online search I managed to find the contact details of twenty-one people. In addition, the leader of one NGO and one policymaker have shared with me the contact of people they knew, but even so, it was not possible to reach them.

Within the group of twenty-one victims of online racism that I managed to identify in the fieldwork and formally requested permission to interview, three of them (all women) had initially agreed to be interviewed either via Skype or e-mail, but after a couple of messages exchanged, they did not get back to me anymore. After insisting for a couple of times I decided to step back because, eventually, I could unintentionally become an inconvenience to them or being interpreted as a stalker. At a certain point, I came to realise that most probably they have changed their mind due to the sensitiveness of the issue for them. The evidence for this reflection is based on

statements given by some people found on interviews given to newspapers and magazines such as, for example: a) "I do not like to talk about this issue anymore because it hurts too much and it brings to the surface painful memories of past experiences of racism" (T.J.S., female, nineteen years old, 2015); b) "I am ashamed to get out from home and people staring at me, questioning and remembering the issue" (J.H.S, male, twenty-years-old, 2015); c) "my attorney said to me not to give interviews about the issue" (C.D., female, twenty-five years old, 2015). Consequently, I consider that these sample of statements represent good indicative that probably the actual persons I got in contact with share similar feelings and they were not feeling comfortable enough to address their sensitive experience with a strange person, given that I do not share any common link with them.

Thus, the successful interviews during the fieldwork have contributed to add a rich array of different perspectives of the phenomenon under investigation. Within this context, Yin (2011, p. 110) says that doing fieldwork also involves the ability of "being able to cope with the uncertainties it creates". Therefore, I was able to overcome the obstacles embracing the opportunities to talk with social actors that in the preliminary research design had not been envisioned such as individual social activists[53] and the CEO of an advertising agency. This last social actor, in particular, was included because, during the interview with the NGO Criola in Rio de Janeiro, I was told that the agency had proactively created an anti-racism awareness campaign with the motto 'Virtual racism. Real consequences'. After designing it, the agency got in contact with the NGO to establish a partnership for its dissemination and reinforcement nationwide. The core idea behind the campaign, made up of some short videos posted on Vimeo (W3Haus, 2016a; 2016b), on YouTube (CCTV, 2015; Criola, 2015a; Pakman, 2015), and also a series of billboards distributed across the country (Criola, 2015b), is that the attitude to engage on racist and discriminatory discourses in the virtual environment does have consequences in real life. Consequently, it made perfect sense to interview the CEO of the advertising agency to understand the full context around the development of the campaign and his views about the phenomenon.

4.4   Ethical considerations

Social media platforms represent a new social and behavioural phenomenon, and consequently, they denote a new territory for social science research worldwide and impose challenging ethical questions. One of such challenges comprises, for instance, what is the most recommended approach in dealing with data displayed on this arena. Taking into consideration that the posts published by people on public Facebook pages are openly available to anyone then, apparently, it can suggest that we should consider that there are no obstacles in using these data for

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[53] Different from the other interviewees, she requested to be anonymised in the study. Therefore, that is the reason she is referred to simply as D.S. in the study.

research purpose. Nevertheless, Zimmer (2010) argues that it is not so simple and straightforward as it initially may seem, and regardless of the easy access to the data, ethical considerations regarding people's privacy must guide the research methodological procedure. In fact, the review of several recent studies addressing social media platforms (Kushin and Kitchener, 2009; Laudone, 2010; Salmons and Woodfield, 2013; Woodfield *et al.*, 2013; Kosinski, 2015; Kosinski *et al.*, 2015; Salmons, 2015) reveal that initiatives towards safeguarding people's privacy is a common concern. There are authors such as Teixeira (2013) and Sormanen and Dutton (2015) who openly disclose the details of the social media communities where the data were extracted. However, this approach does not seem to be dominant, because it may allow the identification of any individual research participant. Therefore, for the present study, I have chosen to adopt the approach of implementing a set of strategies and initiatives to safeguarding people's privacy, regardless the fact that their posts are public and easily accessible. They comprise the following:

1. I do not display any Facebook user's real name or alias in the thesis and instead of that I have adopted alpha-numeric coded identification;

2. I do not display the real name of the Facebook communities where the data were obtained, and instead of that, I have also employed impersonal alpha-numeric codded identification;

3. I do not disclose information regarding the accurate geographical location of any particular person and/or Facebook community;

4. I do not use and/or reproduce images in the study that may lead towards the accurate identification of any particular person or Facebook community. Wherever a illustrative image is used, I have applied digital pixel effect to blur possible identification elements;

5. I do not display in the thesis any hyperlink that may establish connections amongst different users and/or across Facebook communities.

Additionally, another challenge imposed by this new platform is the fact that there are countless people who create fake accounts for a number of reasons (Laursen, 2009; Gosling and Johnson, 2010). This attitude represents a relevant issue that in the present study is being considered more as a natural limitation beyond the researcher's control than a variable that could jeopardise the research findings. The reason lays in the fact that even the large corporations behind the leading social media platforms themselves face difficulties in spotting all of them and dedicate a considerable amount of resources and personnel to this task alone (Cao *et al.*, 2012). Moreover, following the same line of reasoning, Gosling and Johnson (2010, p. 81) argue that "although much of the information found on a person's social profile is likely to be honest and unedited, social networkers and bloggers of any age may falsify other personal data or embellish or delete

information in their narratives". Consequently, for the purpose of the present study, the posts and comments displayed on public Facebook pages will be treated as the manifestation of real people behind them, since the researcher will have no means and/or specialised technical capabilities to identify whether a particular account is truly genuine or false.

4.5   Positionality reflections

Four main reasons have triggered my interest in researching the topic of racism on social media in Brazil. First, within Brazilian social context, slavery and racism are considered inconvenient topics, what avoids the civil society holding constructive debates to tackle their consequences. The country's mainstream means of mass communication (TV and leading newspapers/magazines), that are very influential in shaping people's perception of social realities, usually do not give room for the emergence of this type of topic (Sheriff, 2000). When they rarely do so, it happens once a year on 20 November[54] and there is no continuation of debates. There is a deep-seated belief that racists are 'the others' not 'us', and also that 'racial democracy' is a consolidated fact (Rodrigues, 1995). Within this scenario, why discuss racism if there is no such issue in Brazil? Second, the common use of playful jokes to convey conveniently one's values and beliefs concerning an assigned social inferiority position of *Negro* people. This widespread practice has been naturalised over time and it is reproduced and reinforced generation after generation (including in the context of primary school). In addition, since jokes are socially acceptable form of communication, people can convey racist ideologies without being considered racist. After all, they are just 'harmless' jokes recited with affection (*brincadeirinha*) for entertainment purpose. Third, it has called my attention not only the surge of racist discourses on social media (on Facebook in particular but not exclusively on this platform), but mainly the aggressive nature of the comments and the use of colonial-like vocabulary. Finally, it causes me discomfort constantly witnessing the lack of fairer, more accurate and inclusive social representation of *Negro* people in Brazil. Thus, my experience in investigating this topic has raised positionality reflections concerning three major aspects: 1) social distance in relation to research participants; 2) intersection of gender and race; and 3) dealing with disturbing content.

As argued by Merriam *et al.* (2001), Chavez (2008) and Bourke (2014), reflecting on positionality involves understanding where I, as a researcher, stand in relation to my research participants and study object. Moreover, does this relative position grant me an insider or outsider status? In this case, how is it reflected in my study? These are important reflexive questions. I am a male middle-class, university-educated, *Negro* Brazilian citizen. Moreover, I have been raised in that social context and aware of its main social and cultural conventions, I am a native speaker of Portuguese and familiar with several slangs, jokes and other informal expressions. Therefore, it

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[54] *Negro's* Consciousness Day

could be inferred that these characteristics would turn me into an insider researcher and grant me unrestricted access to research participants. In addition, the literature also reveals that the debate about insider/outsider status encompasses two important dimensions: 1) greater access to research participants especially within the researcher's own culture; and 2) level of objectivity or bias in analysing the data (Merriam *et al.*, 2001; Chaves, 2008).

However, in practice, rather than fixed and clearly delineated, the insider or outsider status proves to be more fluid and circumstantial and it does not jeopardise the objectivity of the research analysis (Merriam *et al.*, 2001; Chavez, 2008). In other words, whilst in some circumstances my personal characteristics may have contributed to shorten my social distance in relation to research participants, in others it may have not. It is also relevant to comment that I was born and brought-up in a working-family and I became a middle-class person only in my adulthood. Consequently, I expected that this background would help me to engage with research participants across different class. However, the result was different from expected on this sense. A reflex of this dimension in my study is that the general profile of my interviewees (see Table 1) is not too far from my own concerning class and cultural capital. On the other hand, even unbeknownst to me, my general profile might have turned me into an outsider in relation to the several victims of racism I requested to interview belonging to different social classes (see section 4.3).

Evolving from this reflection, Merriam *et al.* (2001, p. 406) say that "all researchers begin data collection with certain assumptions about the phenomenon being investigated, situations to be observed, and people to be interviewed". Prior to fieldwork, I believed that the victims of online racism would be evenly distributed between male and female *Negro* people. Nevertheless, the fieldwork revealed that women are far more affected than men are. Therefore, this aspect had a twofold impact in my fieldwork. By one hand, it became evident the need to recruit female participants and, to a certain extent, it has worked since the majority of my interviewees (six out of eight) are *Negro* women. However, whilst under the racial dimension I was an insider researcher, I was an outsider concerning gender. On this context, Chavez (2008, p. 476) argues that the benefits of being aware of the cultural rules where your research participants are part of, "may be weakened or strengthened based on the ways in which various social identities may shift during interaction with participants (e.g. race, gender, age)". In other words, being a *Negro* Brazilian citizen may have facilitated my interaction with the participants but concerning gender I was an outsider. Nevertheless, feminist authors such as Riessman (1987), Gilbert (1994) and Lal (1996) argue that gender alone do not grant an insider status to a researcher and the implied advantages in relation to a researcher from a different gender. Consequently, in the context of this study, I consider that this aspect has not represented a hindrance in my analytical process.

Finally, even being raised in that social context, where racist jokes negatively depicting *Negro* people are naturalised, being exposed to this depreciative content was also subject of positionality reflection. The content was (is) disturbing and uncomfortable to read and deal with

because they may be addressed towards a specific person but they affect us collectively (i.e. *Negro* people). I must say that dealing with this type of content was very challenging because the derogatory posts triggered several painful past lived experiences of racism. I consider that such impacts are beyond the researcher's control and they cannot be completely avoided. Consequently, the question was, how to avoid (or reduce) my insider status in relation to this context to interfere in my objectivity. The approach I adopted consisted in an effort to assume an outsider positionality as much as possible to enable me to interrogate the data accordingly. I regularly stepped back from the data, avoiding dealing with massive amounts of derogatory posts at once to analyse. Creating these regular breaks, where I dealt with other aspects of the research such as the literature review, contributed to reduce the discomfort. Have I achieved perfection with this outsider perspective? Probably not because the derogatory posts also 'talked' to me. However, I consider that more important than achieving or pursuing perfection in this process, are the reflection emerged during the analytical process and making clear for the reader where I stand as a researcher in relation to the data collection and their interpretation.

Chapter 5:   Anatomy of racism on Facebook

The analysis of the primary data available in the 109 public Facebook URLs of derogatory nature, in combination with secondary data available in 224 news articles, allowed me to identify a set of four important elements composing what I call the **anatomy of racism on Facebook**. These elements are: 1) the predominant target of online racism in Brazil, 2) the proponents of white supremacy, 3) the long tail of published posts and its capacity for long-lasting engagement with users, and 4) the names of the Facebook communities where derogatory content is often disseminated.

Thus, **I raise three main intertwined arguments** in this chapter. **First**, for the proponents of colonial-like white supremacy in Brazil, upwardly mobile *Negro* women represent 'trespassers' of long-established racial hierarchy boundaries and a threat to the whitened national identity. **Second**, modern digital technologies such as Facebook enables these people establishing strong connections amongst themselves, forming a new type of unity sharing common ideologies, such as an **echo chamber effect**. Combined, these people turn Facebook into a form of a virtual public square (or *pelourinho*) for inflicting 'exemplary' punishments on the 'trespassers' aiming at re-establishing the 'original' balance. Furthermore, the technology enables people to disregard social distances and social convention constraints, in such a way that they can perform and engage in a different way to express deep-rooted racism. These attitudes differ from the ones performed in ordinary offline social contexts, that requires reduced social distance, and they reverberate in the online environment for a long period (what I call **long tail of posts**). This dynamic not only exponentially amplifies the reach of white supremacy discourses on Facebook but also contributes towards shaping contemporary racial relations in Brazil based on such ideologies. **Finally**, the 'racial democracy' discourse contributes towards blurring Brazilian society's perception concerning its enduring racial inequalities. Moreover, it avoids debating the subject matter whilst, simultaneously, delegitimising demands for greater racial equality. As with successful upward social mobility experienced by a growing number of *Negro* people (particularly women), it does not 'whiten' them, and neither shield them against experiences of racism. This happens because, under the perspective of the proponents of white supremacy, they remain *Negro* and, for them, this is a defining feature.

5.1   White supremacy within Brazilian context

I consider relevant to introduce an explanation concerning the use of the expression white supremacy in this research. There are several international studies employing this same expression under a political and civil rights context such as, for example, Hage (1998), Bonilla-Silva (2001) and Daniels (2009). However, the question is how pertinent is the adoption of this expression

within Brazilian social context to analyse racial relations? Three previous studies have employed this expression within Brazilian context to convey the notion of superiority of the white racial group in relation to others and granting them symbolic privileges (Twine, 1998; Vargas, 2004; Nogueira, 2013). In the study analysing whitening ideology and 'racial democracy' in Brazil, Twine (1998, p. 66) uses white supremacy to convey the idea that "the predominance of Euro-Brazilians among the economic, political, religious, and social elite is taken for granted and thus not visible". In other words, the symbolic predominance of white people in Brazil in positions of power, leadership and privilege is naturalised in the collective mind-set and considered as the norm. Furthermore, Twine (1998, p. 136) adds that "joking is a socially acceptable way to articulate beliefs publicly and reproduce white supremacy and black inferiority". Again, the author employs white supremacy to express the oppositional dualistic aspect of Brazilian racism that praises whitening as symbol of modernity and progress in contrast to backwardness attributed to *Negro* people. Vargas (2004) advocates that white supremacy in Brazil embodies a system of beliefs that maintains white people's symbolic privileges unchallenged through neglecting racism's pervasive effects on *Negro* people. As with Nogueira (2013, p. 24), the author explains that white supremacy is an "ideology stating that European descents and white skin people are superior to other people, such as African and native indigenous".

Therefore, in conclusion, the use of white supremacy in the present study has the aim to convey the idea of how racial hierarch and privileges have been socially constructed in Brazil over time. It reflects the deep-seated colonial ideology of the white people occupying the upper position in the social and racial hierarchy. In contrast, any attempt from other racial groups aspiring to achieve such privileged positions, is understood as a threat to their status quo. Such attempts, as the present study addresses, are challenged and discredited by the dominant elite in such a way that the privileged position remains unchanged. Ultimately, as argued by Nogueira (2013, p. 25), in Brazil "the ideology of white racial supremacy blends with the threefold ideology: myth of racial democracy, whitening ideology and prejudice of colour". Thus, the use of white supremacy within the context of the present study is pertinent because it embodies the same ideas advocated by these authors that, in fact, are convergent with the theoretical framework developed in Chapter 2.

5.2   The predominant target of racism on Facebook

In order to draw a profile of the predominant target of the victims of racism on Facebook in Brazil, I have analysed a set of 224 news articles that have published details of dozens of cases. These news articles cover the timeframe 2012-2016 and address 42 different cases of racism on Facebook. These secondary data are important because they contribute to revealing other relevant aspects of online racism in Brazil that are not available in the 109 public Facebook URLs of derogatory nature gathered for the study. Consequently, based on these secondary data, it was possible to bring to the surface several important pieces of evidence. In the first place, within the

42 cases, in 34 of them (i.e. 81 percent) the victims are *Negro* women, while the remaining eight (nineteen percent) are *Negro* men. With regard to their age, they range from eighteen years old to 70 years old. However, the majority of the *Negro* women (twenty-two out of 34) are aged between twenty to 35 years old, while the median age is 26 years old. Finally, what concerns the geographical distribution of the 42 cases, they are scattered across thirteen states out of Brazil's 26 states. Nevertheless, the majority of them (almost 60 percent) are concentrated in the states of Rio de Janeiro (fourteen cases), São Paulo (seven cases) and Bahia (four cases), as shown in Figure 4.
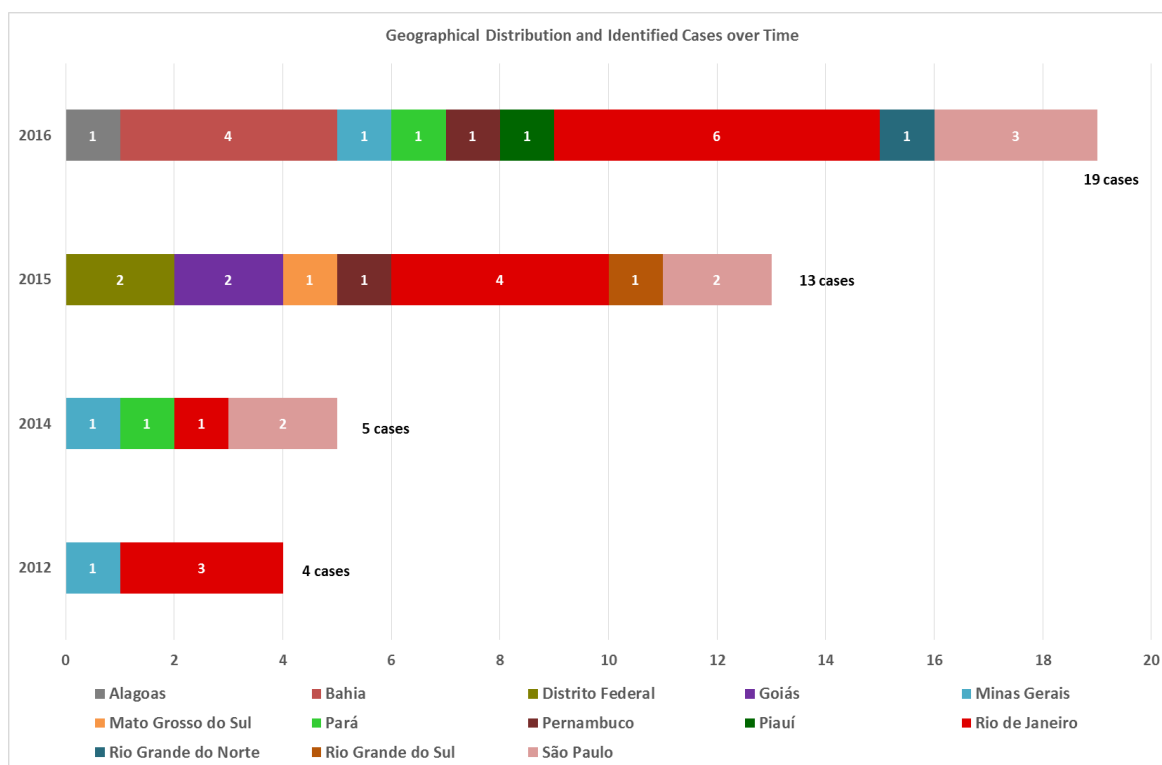
Figure 4: Geographical distribution and identified cases of racism over time

The data displayed in Figure 4 reveal a constant increase in the number of cases over time, jumping from four cases in 2012 to nineteen cases in 2016. However, it is important to explain that these figures represent only a fragment of what happens on Facebook in Brazil because, according to SAFERNET (2015), the reported cases of racism on Facebook have soared from 2,038 cases in 2011 to 11,090 cases in 2014. To collect the data, the organisation provides an online platform where people can report their cases in accordance to nine categories of offenses[55]. In addition, the users must also provide the URL where the content was published and detailed description of the

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[55] They encompass the following: 1) life threat; 2) homophobia; 3) xenophobia; 4) mistreatment of animals; 5) child pornography; 6) racism; 7) neo-Nazism; 8) human trafficking; and 9) religious intolerance.

event (SAFERNET, 2018). It is also relevant to say that the 42 cases that comprise the current analysis represent the ones who have been captured by the radar of newspapers and magazines. Namely, hundreds of others did not make news headlines. This explanation also helps to understand the gap observed in 2013 in Figure 4. The gap must not be interpreted as a lack of cases of racism during that period. In fact, it means that none of them was captured by the editorial radar of news outlets, or the cases took place in other social media platforms such as Instagram or Twitter, that are not within the scope of the present study.

5.2.1 Geographical concentration of cases of racism

As introduced in the previous section, the majority of the victims are based in Rio de Janeiro and in São Paulo, and it is important to understand the reasons behind this trend. An important clue to shed some light on this is found in the occupation of the identified victims in the 42 cases analysed. In Rio de Janeiro, 50 percent of them are either actresses or singers, and 21.4 percent are university students. The city of Rio de Janeiro hosts the country's leading TV network (an important employer for many actors/actresses and singers) and, consequently, there is a higher proportion of prominent actresses living there than in São Paulo and in several other locations as well. The relevance of this finding is that, within Brazil, Rio de Janeiro is also well-known as a place where there are bigger chances of ordinary citizens meet celebrities in an ordinary daily context such as, for example, on the beach, bars, restaurants, theatre, and sometimes even at supermarkets. Namely, these public figures are more exposed in Rio de Janeiro than in several other cities across the country.

Thus, there are two inferences that can be made. First, the fact that these prominent figures are more accessible in Rio de Janeiro than in other cities, this aspect may trigger on Facebook users a perception of reduced social distance in relation to the celebrities. It is also important to explain that 'more accessible' here means that, in relation to other large Brazilian cities; these prominent figures are easier to be seen in ordinary circumstances. Namely, the celebrities' more privileged social position, granted by their occupations, does not seem as an insurmountable barrier to several Facebook users, or a huge social distance. Being relatively more accessible may be interpreted by Facebook users that the reduced social distance would imply a permission to convey their derogatory discourses also towards them. In other words, being 'within their reach' would turn them into an almost ordinary citizen, and then also capable of being targeted like everybody else. However, given the celebrities' differentiated social position, the Facebook users benefit from it to amplifying the reverberation of their discourses. Different from that, in São Paulo, the proportion of actresses and singers as victims is lower than in Rio de Janeiro (only 28.6 percent), whilst journalists represent another 28.6 percent within the cases analysed. São Paulo's urban atmosphere differs considerably from Rio's and, oftentimes, the prominent figures live and circulate predominantly in neighbourhoods that are more exclusive than the average citizen is used to

navigate (i.e. the social distance seems to be more clearly established). However, the qualified exposure granted by the mentioned occupations (especially on TV) is associated with success and symbolic positions of privilege, what also make them an appealing target for Facebook users.

The second inference is that the high qualitative exposure achieved by these successful *Negro* women in mainstream media both in Rio de Janeiro and in São Paulo, contribute to making them a convenient target for the Facebook users, regardless of social distance. A supporting evidence corroborating this argument is found on the statement made by a man arrested by the police a few years ago charged for racial injury against a well-known *Negro* woman (source: G1, 2015).

> The members of my Facebook community aimed at becoming famous [amongst our Facebook peers]. We have spread an attack towards a prominent Black figure because we thought that a racist attack would be the easiest way to achieving the desired fame. (E.M.S., male, 2015)

In fact, the data reveal that social distance between the Facebook users and the victims of racism does not represent a hindrance to them, because in 76.2 percent of the 42 cases analysed, the users had no relationship with the victims. They did not know the victims in offline context and neither were friends on Facebook. This finding has two major implications. First, those users tend to feel at ease to convey their discourse towards people that, in offline context, they might not have access or relationship. Second, this lack of social connection may also contribute for them expressing their views employing harsh vocabulary (see section 5.3.1).

5.2.2   Young *Negro* women: why they have become targeted

It is intriguing the evidence that *Negro* women aged 20-35 years have been the predominant target of racism on Facebook. What explains this phenomenon? Why this age range in particular? My argument is that three major aspects explain this: 1) the increasing number of *Negro* women with university degree challenges the ingrained belief that they are 'destined' to perform domestic work; 2) the proponents of white supremacy consider that their visibility and exposure is a threat to Brazil's whitened national identity; and 3) in reproductive age, their potential motherhood postpones Brazilian modernity.

The social roles commonly attributed to *Negro* women in Brazil are oftentimes associated with subservient and unskilled occupations such as, for example, room maid, helper, house cleaner, cook, and domestic worker. This perception represents a legacy of colonial society. The occupations performed by the *Negro* female slaves in the big house were room maid, wet nurse, cook and house cleaner. According to Antonieta (2013, p. 20), "colonial period in Brazil left an inheritance on people's mind that Black women are useful solely for domestic work or exhibiting their bodies". In addition, a history teacher and social media activist, who used to work as domestic

worker herself until 2009, says, "Unfortunately, for *Negro* women, domestic work is inherited from one generation to another. My mum, my aunt, and my grandma were domestic workers. It is impossible to dissociate it from our slavery past" (Barrucho, 2016, p. 3). In fact, a recent example contributes to illustrate how ingrained is colonial legacy into people's mind. A businesswoman posted on social media pictures of the rehearsal for her fifteen-years-old daughter's debutante party called 'Imperial Garden'. In the pictures, the white girl, wearing a colonial-like dress, is served by two *Negro* women and one *Negro* man, characterised as slaves (Copole, 2018; Dovale, 2018).

However, despite this deep-seated colonial legacy, studies such as the one conducted by Artes and Ricoldi (2015) reveal that, currently, *Negro* women have greater access to higher education and they are receiving degrees in a variety of disciplines (e.g. medicine, journalism, law, business administration, etc.). They are still lagging behind their white counterparts, as other studies reveal (Vieira, 2015; Queiroz and Santos, 2016), but there has been improvements over the past two decades. What can be inferred is that this trend of increasing number of *Negro* women in higher education shatters the deep-seated belief that they were 'destined' to perform domestic work. Therefore, rather than engaging solely in subservient social roles, several *Negro* women are becoming medical doctors, dentists, business managers, journalists, etc., and this may upset the proponents of white supremacy because it goes against their perception in regard to *Negro* women.

Evolving from this reflection, since the early years of the twentieth century, the country's proud visible face (both domestically and overseas) has been built and reinforced on top of white women beauty standard (see section 2.6). A contemporary example illustrating the perpetuation of this ideology was the opening ceremony of the 2016 Summer Olympic Games in Rio de Janeiro, where the blonde, blue-eyed, white supermodel Gisele Bündchen, was chosen by the organisers to perform a catwalk and represent Brazilianness before the eyes of the world. Consequently, under the perspective of the proponents of white supremacy ideologies, the *Negro* women achieving qualified exposure represent a type of 'transgression' (or trespassing) of the racial hierarchy boundaries. What does qualified mean in this context? It stands for the engagement with careers that historically have been associated with white male privilege (e.g. medicine, journalism, law, etc.) and this type of engagement challenges their 'expected' subservient occupations (e.g. room maid, cook, cleaner, etc.). Within this context, given the 'transgression' shatters the 'original' balance of Brazilianness; it would be subject to some type of punishment aiming at re-establishing the 'original' balance. In the past colonial society, African enslaved people who misbehaved or failed to comply with their masters' expectations and commands were subject to severe public punishments on the *pelourinhos*[56]. Therefore, for the proponents of white supremacy in Brazil, Facebook has become their modern-day *pelourinho*, whilst the derogatory posts and associated

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[56] Pillory. In Brazilian colonial society, it represented the public place, such as a small central square, where 'justice' was practised through physical punishment towards *Negro* people and anyone else considered criminal. The punishments were always performed with whipping (Moura, 2004)

comments represent a form of virtual whip. They inflict 'exemplary' public punishments against *Negro* women. Therefore, I argue that the aim is not only to discredit their achievements but also discouraging others to follow suit and re-establishing the 'original' racial hierarchy boundaries and the whitened national identity.

Regarding the fact that these *Negro* women aged 20-35 years are within their reproductive age is also intriguing. For long in Brazilian social context, *Negro* motherhood has been subject of derogatory humour. Examples of this include the following jokes:

Joke #1: What does a Black pregnant woman have in common with a car that has a flat tire? They are both expecting a monkey.[57]

Joke #2: Why a Black woman expecting triplets was arrested? Because she was charged for gang formation.

Joke #3: Soon after finishing the caesarean procedure, the white doctor slaps at the Black baby until he cries. Since he does not stop beating at the baby, the Black mother pleads him to stop. Then the doctor says: 'tell him to give my watch back'.

Combined, these jokes convey two powerful embedded discourses concerning *Negro* motherhood. First, by comparing their offspring with an animal, the joke removes the humanity of both the mother and the baby. Moreover, it also positons them underneath the lowest position in the racial hierarchy since their humanity has been removed. Second, the jokes imply that delinquency is innate to *Negro* people from birth, inherited from the mother, and passed on from one generation to another. Furthermore, potential *Negro* motherhood indirectly upsets the whitening ideology since their offspring may not be white but either *preto* or *pardo* (Black or Brown). Consequently, under the perspective of the proponents of white supremacy ideologies, their reproductive potential represents the postponement of achieving the desired modernity embedded in the whitening of the population. In other words, *Negro* motherhood represents the perpetuation of Brazil's backwardness, since whitening ideology has contributed to establish this association with *Negro* people.

5.2.3   Social class of the victims

With regard to the social class of the *Negro* people identified in the 42 cases, there is no specific data addressing that, however, taking into consideration their reported educational level and occupation, it is possible to infer that they encompass lower, middle and upper social classes. In convergence to that, the sociologist Rocha (2015, p. 47) explains that "social classes are not

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[57] In Portuguese, car jack is called monkey

defined solely by occupation". Nevertheless, the author continues, due to research limitations caused by lack of objective data such as income level, the approach to infer social class position based on people's occupation "does not cause substantial loss that invalidates its use" (Rocha, 2015, p. 50). Thus, within the reported educational level of *Negro* people identified in the 42 cases they include nine university students. Even though this aspect is not an absolute determinant of their income level or social class position, it is indicative of their upward social mobility potential in the near future. In addition, there are other nine people engaged in occupations that require a university degree (four journalists, one anthropologist, one environment specialist, one business manager, one dentist, and one medical doctor) and, consequently, it can be inferred that at least eighteen people out of 42 are well-educated citizens. On the other hand, there are also people engaged in low-qualified occupations that, within Brazilian social context, suggest that they belong to lower social classes (e.g. hairdresser, electrician, and gas station attendant). Finally, there is a third group of people engaged in occupations in the fields of acting (four actors/actresses), music and singing (four people), professional sports (three people) and policymaking (two people). Some of these people are considered national celebrities and quite successful in their chosen careers whilst others are not famous, but in general terms, their public acknowledgement and commercial success contribute to suggest that many of them belong at least to the middle social class and upwards.

5.2.4   Summary

To sum up, it is possible to infer that the general profile of the preferred target of racist comments on Facebook in Brazil shows the following characteristics: a) *Negro* women, b) university educated, c) aged between twenty to 35 years old, d) predominantly belonging to the middle social class, and e) mostly residents of Rio de Janeiro or São Paulo. Consequently, the available data clearly reveal that racism on Facebook in Brazil is strongly gendered given that 81 percent of the victims (within the cases analysed) are women. Moreover, the data also supports the argument that the lived experiences of racism in Brazil are not even between the genres, what converges with Caldwell (2003, p. 21) who advocates that "of all Brazilian social groups, Black women are the most profoundly impacted by Brazilian beliefs and prejudices". The author argues that because she understands that the intersection of race, gender and class tend to affect them more strongly than other social groups. In addition, the data also contribute to challenging an ingrained adage in Brazil that money can 'whiten' *Negro* people. This adage means that successful upward social mobility would grant a white-like social status to *Negro* people, exempt from experiences of racism and completely integrated into the class society (Dzidzienyo, 1971; Dávila, 2003; Wade, 2010b; Colonna, 2016). However, given that a considerable proportion of the identified victims belong to the middle and/or upper social class positions, the 'money whitens' argument lacks support. If the 'money whitens' myth was a flawless rule, the upwardly mobile *Negro* women identified in the study would not be targeted. Furthermore, in offline social contexts, racist

discourses may be regulated by social convention constraints that suggest what can, and what cannot be verbalised according to the circumstance. On the other hand, on Facebook, the dynamic seems to be different, and neither offline social convention constraints nor social distances restrain racist discourses.

5.3 The proponents of white supremacy on Facebook in Brazil

Depicting a picture of the proponents of white supremacy on Facebook consists in an intriguing and, at the same time, challenging task. It is intriguing because reading the threads of disparagement posts and their associated comments naturally raises some questions such as: a) who are the people who engage in posting them on Facebook, and b) what drives them to write this type of content. The task is also challenging because there are no previous studies in the Brazilian social science literature addressing this topic and neither there is a wealth of secondary data available. One of the reasons for the lack of secondary data is that, usually, the people arrested and/or charged for racial injury in Brazil deny the requests to be interviewed. Therefore, the present study can add a contribution to start filling this gap. For this purpose, I have relied on a combination of evidence revealed by the research participants interviewed in the fieldwork in Brazil (see Table 1), evidence emerged from the 109 public Facebook URLs of derogatory nature, and information available in the 224 news articles.

5.3.1 The proponents' general profile

Based on the set of 109 public Facebook URLs displaying solely derogatory content, it was possible to identify that amongst their 13,595 unique users, 65.6 percent are men, 28.6 percent are women, and there is a small proportion of users that was not possible to identify their gender (5.8 percent). Also interesting to observe is that what concerns the people effectively arrested by the police and officially charged for racial injury on Facebook, the majority of them are also men, what converges with the broad picture revealed by the data. In some of the cases investigated by the police, they have found that some of the people behind the racist comments are under-age, and according to the law, they cannot be held accountable. However, in several others, they are adult males in their early twenties upwards. In addition, the data also reveals that the male users are more prone to use swear words than women what, to a certain extent, replicates an unwritten social convention in Brazil that establishes that this type of vocabulary is more socially acceptable to be employed by men (also a symbol of masculinity) than by women.

This is said because, in general in Brazil, it is considered that swear words are not appropriate vocabulary for women, especially in male-dominated public spaces (Lazzaretti *et al.*, 2009; Campos *et al.*, 2010). Nevertheless, this explanation must not be interpreted as a flawless rule, since there are also several female users on Facebook employing male-like harsh vocabulary.

Within that, Kirk (2013) reveals that in the US social context, the use of swear words and harsh vocabulary on Facebook is quite frequent, and there are different terms employed by male and female users and also across different age groups. With regard to Brazilian social context, there is no equivalent study; however, the data gathered for the present research reveals some interesting facts. Male users are more prone to use swear words that refer to male genitalia and, oftentimes, in active ways (e.g. suck my dick; I'm gonna bang your ass; fuck you; fuck; you deserve being fucked up; asshole; fagot; and son of a bitch). The female users, in turn, do not employ the same array of swear words referring to male genitalia, even though they are also found sometimes. However, they are more prone to employ terms that question other people's moral integrity (e.g. fuck you; bitch; cow; whore; you need a black cock in your ass; son of a bitch; and chicken).

This finding is relevant because it is intertwined with the fact that 76.2 percent of the proponents of white supremacy disregard any social distance between them and the victims (see section 5.2.1). This suggests that disregarding social distance; they may feel at ease in expressing their views employing this array of vocabulary in unrestricted way. Since there are no previous relationship between the parts (proponents and victims), there is no embarrassment in using them. Ultimately, paraphrasing Billig (2001), I understand that these people have no *crise de conscience* about being racist.

5.3.2 Motivations of the proponents of white supremacy

In this study, the motivation of the proponents of white supremacy is considered as the reasons for their racist attitude on social media platforms. The Facebook data alone do not offer enough evidence to address this important aspect. Consequently, to develop a more consistent analysis, I have resorted to the interview data to support this task since this same topic was also discussed with the research participants (see Appendix F). In the interviews, I was interested in learning the research participants' views and interpretation about this aspect. To a certain extent, they have shown different views about it, however, they proved to be rich qualitative data because rather than conflicting standpoints, they are complementary. The analysis of their statements concerning the proponents' motivations allowed me to observe the emergence of four main categories: 1) discomfort with *Negro* people's upward social mobility; 2) masquerading ideologies; 3) sensation of impunity[58]; and 4) intersectionality of gender, race and social class.

As with the first category, Djamila Ribeiro (Secretariat of Human Rights, São Paulo) argues, "it is inconceivable that the person is not fully aware of what he is doing and, conveniently, justifying that it is just a joke. I consider that the aim is, in fact, to outrage us [the *Negros*]".

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[58] It is important to explain that, within Brazilian social context, the sensation of impunity is triggered by reduced confidence in the legal system. Due to repeated lack and/or mild punishments to transgressions that the ordinary citizen believes that should be severely punished, people develop this perception that the rule of law does not apply to all indistinctively (see section 3.4).

Moreover, Ribeiro adds, "these people aim to cause harm to us because they feel a discomfort with *Negros'* upward social mobility achievements". A similar point of view is advocated by Elaine Aparecida Dias (SOS Racism, São Paulo), who says that the people who engage in this type of attitude "are trying to make us step back, to give up our achievements, to quit attending higher education and progressing". Therefore, these research participants suggest that *Negro* people (women in particular) occupying social roles commonly associated with predominantly white male privilege, can disrupt the status quo triggering the type of reactions seen on Facebook.

The second category (masquerading ideologies) has been advocated by Maria Lúcia da Silva (Amma Psique Institute, São Paulo). According to her perspective, people use Facebook as a type of stage where "they can put on a mask to allow them to be what they really are, but that they cannot reveal in public realm". This idea is complemented by the argument of Djamila Ribeiro (Secretariat of Human Rights, São Paulo), who says, "Since being openly racist in public can be embarrassing and inappropriate, they hide behind the computer screen". In summary, the interviewees are arguing that, different from ordinary offline social interactions, on Facebook, people feel at ease to unleash their racist beliefs and ideologies.

The third category (sensation of impunity), is intertwined with the second since the proponents' perception that nothing serious can be inflicted on them, contributes for them feeling at ease. In this regard, Jurema Werneck (NGO Criola, Rio de Janeiro) says that "people write this type of thing on Facebook, and consider that it is perfectly ok because they believe that nothing is going to happen to them." In complement, Maria Lúcia da Silva (Amma Psique Institute, São Paulo) thinks, "since most of the time nobody is arrested, nothing happens, and the consequences are mild or not relevant in the person's life they keep doing it". Moacyr Netto (W3Haus, São Paulo) brings an interesting argument to this conversation saying "if there are no effective moves towards changing the perception of lack of legal consequences, people will keep engaging in this type of attitude on Facebook". Therefore, based on these arguments, it is clear that the deep-seated belief that they will not be held accountable for their attitudes, contributes to the continuation of the process. In addition, returning to the discussion developed in section 3.4, it is possible to observe that, in fact, the anti-racism legal framework in Brazil contributes towards the development of this widespread perception. There are different studies revealing that people who engage in posting racist comments on Facebook rarely face severe legal consequences (Diniz, 2015; Moraes, 2015; G1, 2017).

Finally, what regard the intersectionality of gender, race and social class; D.S. (female social activist, São Paulo) brings a relevant contribution to the analysis. She argues, "Within Brazilian social context, *Negro* women are positioned at the bottom of the social pyramid behind white male, white female and *Negro* male". Therefore, she complements, "*Negro* women become vulnerable easy targets for racists on Facebook." The idea behind this statement is that the intersection of

gender, race and attributed social class position of inferior value, represent elements amplifying the likelihood of becoming subject of racist attitudes.

In conclusion, the interview data suggests that four intertwined motivational categories explain people's racist attitudes on Facebook. However, more important than this, I argue that, in fact, the four categories converge towards a core motivation that is colonial-like whitening ideology. The four categories can be considered as facets of a single construct because they represent elements present in the whitening ideology. The discomfort with upwardly mobile *Negro* people means that the balance of the racial hierarchy is being threatened and demands corrective actions. The same applies to the intersection of gender, race and class that, ultimately, means that in Brazil these elements play an important role in positioning people in the social and racial hierarchy. Finally, the perception that they cannot be punished and masquerading ideologies, represent means to manifest white supremacy (i.e. considering themselves above the others and even above society's laws and regulations) that, according to Nogueira (2013) blends with the whitening ideology.

5.3.3   What triggers posting derogatory content on Facebook

Expanding from the discussion developed in the previous section, there is another relevant question to be addressed. What are the predominant events triggering people to take the action to post derogatory content on Facebook? In other words, I am interested in understanding what are the major defining events driving users to take action to post derogatory content. Since the 109 public Facebook URLs do not provide all the necessary contextual information to address this question, I have analysed the secondary data available in the 224 news articles. As previously mentioned, this set of news articles cover 42 cases of racism on Facebook. For each case, I examined what was the context and circumstances immediately prior to the racist post. This examination allowed me to group the triggering events into eight categories: 1) expressing disagreement with a previous post or comment made by somebody else that the victim considered discriminatory or inappropriate; 2) evidence of professional or academic engagement with prestigious careers (e.g. medicine and journalism); 3) interracial relationship; 4) leading position in successful TV programmes either as host or guest; 5) enjoying vacation abroad; 6) praising and/or using Afro hair style; 7) winning beauty contest; and 8) rejection of dating proposition.

These eight categories of events have triggered two types of attitudes by the proponents of white supremacy: a) active or b) reactive. The 'active' user comprises people who deliberately post negative and derogatory comments against *Negro* people, apparently for no specific or particular reason. Namely, it is not possible to identify any clear and explicit evidence that a post made by a victim would possibly trigger the derogatory comment. As with regard the 'reactive' comment, it is commonly made to counterpoint something that the victim has said, done or achieved. However,

the data reveal that the 'reactive' posts are oftentimes done aggressively, discrediting, disqualifying and reducing the value of the victim and/or his/her achievement, appearance, ideas, etc.

After analysing the 42 cases in accordance with the emerged eight categories of triggering events, it was possible to identify that there is a greater proportion of 'reactive' derogatory posts (64.3 percent of the cases) in comparison to 'active' posts (35.7 percent)[59]. However, what do these data represent and reveal? Indeed, first, it is possible to observe that several of the mentioned eight categories of triggering events are symbolic markers of belonging to positions of privilege and power (e.g. qualitative appearance on TV programmes, vacation abroad, winning beauty contest, and engagement with medical career). Second, others are symbols of clear identity and political positioning, and assurance of their own choices (e.g. interracial relationship, rejection of dating proposition, defending a different point of view, and adopting Afro hairstyle).

Therefore, to a certain extent, it can be inferred that the users have reacted to these posts subtly arguing 'how dare you to occupy this privileged position that it was not meant for you?' Alternatively, 'how dare you to speak your mind, and take a clear and strong positioning about something when you are supposed to be subservient and engaged in low qualified occupations?' Within this context, we can recall the argument made by Elaine Aparecida Dias (SOS Racism, São Paulo) that people are trying to make *Negros* step back and give up their achievements. In addition, Djamila Ribeiro (Secretariat of Human Rights, São Paulo) argues that *Negros'* upward social mobility causes discomfort to racists. Therefore, it means that the greater proportion of 'reactive' posts mirrors the attitude of challenging the advancements of *Negro* people towards improved social roles and creating additional obstacles on their way upward. In other words, such achievements represent a threat both to the 'original' racial hierarchy boundaries and to the whitened national identity and, consequently, trigger the challenging derogatory posts.

5.3.4 Proponent's approach in regard to online anonymity

The previous two sections have addressed, respectively, the proponents' motivations and the major triggering events driving them to post derogatory content on Facebook. However, an additional element within this context is their perception in regards to online anonymity acting as a sort of personal shield. Hidden behind this capability, they oftentimes feel at ease to unleash their ideologies in unrestricted way. This perception develops an understanding that they would be 'protected' from being held accountable for their attitudes on social media (see section 3.3.1). However, is the 'protection' a fact or rather resulting from a perception built on top of unsubstantiated assumptions? In the following paragraphs, I present the arguments in support to the explanation that their imagined 'protection' is rather a perception than a flawless fact.

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[59] For a detailed view of these data, see Appendix I

Technically speaking, it is not impossible for people creating anonymous profiles on Facebook, as revealed by several authors writing for portals specialised in technology (Edwards, 2014; Franzen, 2014; Hill, 2014; Trotman, 2014; Perez, 2016). Online anonymity enables people express their views, beliefs and ideologies free from social convention constraints. However, within the context of racism on Facebook in Brazil, does this technical capability grant people a flawless 'protection' from being held accountable for their attitudes, or is it a perception?

An illustrative example of this belief is found in the conversation below. The context encompasses a *Negro* pregnant woman who expressed her disagreement with some comments made in the same Facebook community. She considered them discriminatory and offensive towards *Negro* people. In return, she got answers such as the following sample:

Post #1:   Get an abortion bitch. The baby deserves that. (0837-MXE-M; 2015)

Post #2:   She alleges to be pregnant but, in fact, she has swallowed a baby. Soldiers, get ready. We have the mission to remove the baby from inside this whale immediately. (0838-XVD-M; 2015)

Post #3:   Hi guys. Do not worry. The comments have been made on a private Facebook community and within six months, any legal complaint of this nature prescribes. For the authorities grant confidentiality breach takes much longer than that. The only issue would be the print screens. Delete everything that involves her in the conversation and that is it. Believe me, I am a law student. (0836-AFA-M; 2015)[60]

Therefore, what the Facebook data reveal (and **Post #3** above clearly illustrates) is the fact that there is an incongruence in the behaviour of several users, because the moment their offenses are under the spotlight of news outlets they oftentimes take at least one of four attitudes: 1) shift the status of their Facebook page from public to private; 2) delete the derogatory post; 3) delete their Facebook profile; and 4) claim that the post was meant to be a harmless joke. In other words, the incongruence lays in the fact that, before their attitude becomes public, they feel empowered and shielded from the external world behind the computer screen. However, the possibility of being effectively found and exposed as a result of what they have done concerns them, suggesting that the imagined shield is not as impenetrable as originally conceived in their minds. In addition, there are data revealing that 83 percent of Facebook users in Brazil engaged in posting derogatory comments against *Negro* people delete their account once their comments become subject of news articles (W3Haus, 2016a; 2016b).

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[60] It was not possible to find evidence to assure the accuracy of the claim made by this user. However, introducing himself as a law student, he aims at conveying an expert-like advice that would assure that nobody would be held accountable for the attitude.

Furthermore, there are different voices in Brazil arguing that, contrary to several users' belief, online anonymity does not prevent people from being identified if necessary to enforce the rule of law (Rodrigues, 2015; Lopes and Ricci, 2016; Soares, 2016b). Namely, the same time the technology grants people with the possibility to navigate anonymously in online environment, it can also be used to track and locate the person when needed. On this regard, in a recent case of racism on Facebook in Brazil, the Rio de Janeiro based NGO Criola fostered a nationwide awareness campaign with dozens of billboards across the country calling people's attention about the social impacts of online racist attitudes (BBC, 2015; Charlton, 2015; Folha, 2015). Such billboards were composed with a selection of Facebook racist posts and positioned around the users' neighbourhood (however with their names and pictures blurred), what contributes to illustrate that there are technical means to locate them.

Therefore, in conclusion, this type of attitude suggests that, in reality, they may have a clear idea of the negative impact of their derogatory post and that they are concerned that they can, in fact, be reached by the authorities and be held accountable for their actions. Within that, Djamila Ribeiro (Secretariat for Human Rights, São Paulo) argues, "a person who engages in a racist act is fully aware that his attitude is of racist nature. He knows that it is going to cause discomfort to somebody else, but even so, he teases [us] and takes his chances because he believes to be superior in relation to the other".

5.3.5   Summary

In conclusion, this section has revealed that, within the context of Brazilian racial relations, white supremacy is intertwined with whitening ideology and 'racial democracy'. Within that, the proponents of such ideology on Facebook are predominantly men (65.6 percent), mostly aged twenty years upwards. Moreover, these users tend to employ more wear words than their female counterparts do. There are four aspects explaining their motivations (i.e. reasons) to engage in this type of behaviour: 1) discomfort with upwardly mobile *Negro* women; 2) masquerading ideologies; 3) belief that they are untouchable; and 4) intersection of gender, race and class. Nevertheless, the analysis reveals that, in fact, these categories converge towards the whitening ideology and this encompass the core motivation.

Evolving from this point, eight categories of events contribute to understand what drive the proponents of white supremacy to take the action to post the derogatory content on Facebook. Briefly, they encompass *Negro* people's symbolic belonging to positions associated with privilege and power, taking clear political standing about his/her ethnic identity. Finally, several proponents of white supremacy believe that online anonymity might grant them a 'protection' to unleash their discourses and not being held accountable for them. However, the data reveal first that there are technical capabilities available to locate them. Second, that the imagined 'protection' is rather a perception than a fact. The evidence in support to this argument is that once their attitudes is under

the spotlight of mainstream media, they take one of four actions: 1) delete the post; 2) delete the account; 3) shift the profile from public to private; and 4) claim that the post was meant to be a harmless joke.

5.4   The long tail of Facebook posts

Briefly, the long tail of Facebook posts means that a particular post published on a given date can, potentially, engage people (both new and recurring users) for months and sometimes even for around three years after its publication (see Table 2). In addition, it also means that rather than ceasing the conversation soon after the publication, the engagement keeps the derogatory talk active for a long period. Thus, I argue that the long tail of posts revealed by the data shares similar core element found in the echo chamber effect that is ideological homogeneity. This element plays a relevant role in attracting like-minded people to the same conversation for a long time and keeping it active. To support this argumentation, I present three case studies illustrating the long tail main characteristics. Finally, the analysis of the long tail of Facebook posts also raises an important question. How the manifestation of racist ideologies on social media differs from offline context? I explain that the technology enables it to happen for two reasons. First, in ordinary offline social context, racist insults are triggered by situations of conflict, whilst on social media they are predominantly motivated by ideologies. Second, different from offline context, the technology enables the derogatory discourses to reach a wider audience and reverberate them for a long period.

5.4.1   The long tail of posts and the echo chamber effect

There is a vast international literature addressing the echo chamber effect on social media platforms such as, for example, Harris and Harrigan (2015), Bessi *et al.* (2017), Ingrams (2017), Takikawa and Nagayoshi (2017) and Justwan *et al.* (2018). With regard to the Brazilian social science literature, my literature review did not identify any study addressing this topic what may suggest the existence of a gap. As it can be observed, the list encompasses very recent studies. Moreover, these studies predominantly address echo chambers in the context of elections and people's political polarization. What I find of particular interest amongst this sample are the studies conducted by Bessi *et al.* (2017), Takikawa and Nagayoshi (2017) and Justwan *et al.* (2018) in regard to their argumentation around the trend of like-minded people forming echo chambers on social media platforms. In a study addressing political polarization on Twitter in Japan, Takikawa and Nagayoshi (2017) argue that repeated circulation of convergent standpoints reinforce them and leaves no room for opposing views. In addition, Bessi *et al.* (2017) say that once people are attracted to engage in an echo chamber, they tend to remain there. Moreover, the authors continue, to persuade people to come out of the echo chamber, one must deconstruct the ideology that ties them together. This argument in particular is relevant within the context of the present study because it represents the resistance initiatives nurtured by the *Negro* movement in Brazil (see

chapter 7). Furthermore, Justwan *et al.* (2018) developed a study addressing the effect of social media echo chambers on US voters' satisfaction with democracy after the 2016 elections. The authors argue that "social media echo chambers not only undermine genuine democratic discourse but also contribute to political polarization at the population level" (Justwan *et al.*, 2018, p. 5).

Thus, we can ask what is the connection between this argument centred on an electoral context and the present study. The clue to answer this relevant question lies in the study conducted by Justwan *et al.* (2018). In another section, the authors say that echo chambers are "ideologically congruent and homogenous environments in which political views are not debated but instead reinforced and amplified" (Justwan *et al.*, 2018, p. 2). Consequently, following this line of reasoning, what is central in any echo chamber? Ideological homogeneity. This same core element is present in the context of the long tail of posts revealed in the present study reverberating the echo for a long period in the cyberspace.

Namely, the continuation of the derogatory conversation on Facebook represents the repetition of several verbal insults towards the same person or social group for a long period. Figuratively speaking, it is like a hammer repeatedly hitting on a nail. While in an ordinary offline social context, oftentimes, the users would refrain from verbalising the same type of racist comment they do online, on Facebook they are provided with tools that allow them to do that and connect to several others like-minded people who contribute towards its reinforcement and amplification (i.e. the hammer becomes bigger, heavier and stronger).

5.4.2 Three illustrative case studies of long tail of posts

Facebook is built on top of a powerful network of nodes (i.e. people/users) that expand rapidly at exponential rates (see section 3.3). Within that, the users can connect to a wide number of other people sharing common ideologies, beliefs and values and, consequently, amplifying their voices in large proportions. On this context, Cann *et al.* (2011) explain that a network with only five members can provide ten connections among them, another one with ten members can generate 45 connections, and one with fifteen members rise to 105 connections. Therefore, this explanation contributes to illustrating the potential amplifying reach of discourses disseminated on Facebook. Evolving from this reflection, Table 2 brings a sample of fifteen Facebook URLs that contribute to illustrating better the concept of long tail of posts.

Table 2: Long Tail of Posts

#	Facebook Community	Date of original post	Date of most recent associated comment	Tail Length			Number of associated comments [*]
				Days	Months	Years	
1	0048-CC-D-SP	18/08/2012	23/12/2014	857	29	2.3	3
2	0068-FF-D-SP	29/01/2013	09/04/2016	1,166	39	3.2	160
3	0070-HN-D-FP	22/03/2015	23/02/2016	338	11	0.9	3
4	0090-PE-D-FP	17/01/2013	02/02/2016	1,111	37	3.0	5
5	0167-HM-D-SP	21/01/2013	12/12/2013	325	11	0.9	10
6	0172-PN-D-SP	10/04/2013	13/06/2016	1,160	39	3.2	7
7	0173-AGB-D-SP	31/01/2013	10/06/2013	130	4	0.4	6
8	0183-ORB-D-FP	22/11/2015	25/04/2017	520	17	1.4	26
9	0183-ORB-D-FP	16/02/2016	07/07/2017	507	17	1.4	221
10	0193-VFRCB-D-SP	26/02/2015	10/01/2017	684	23	1.9	144
11	0194-VFRCB-D-SP	25/01/2015	15/07/2017	902	30	2.5	35
12	0195-VFRCB-D-SP	27/01/2015	25/09/2016	607	20	1.7	31
13	0197-QT-O-SP	10/07/2016	15/07/2017	370	12	1.0	1,531
14	0199-QT-O-SP	15/07/2016	08/02/2017	208	7	0.6	960
15	0222-FD-D-SP	07/04/2013	28/03/2014	355	12	1.0	9
			Avergage	616	21	1.7	210

(*): it stands for comments triggered by the original post

Based on this data, it is possible to observe that the original posts have been able to engage users from a few months up to around three years. On average, the long tail can potentially last circa twenty-one months. However, the long tail must not be analysed solely based on its length, but also in combination with the respective number of comments triggered over time. What is the relevance of the associated comments in this context? Kosinski *et al.* (2015) and Larsson (2015) reveal that some of the most important of Facebook's functionalities available for its users comprise 'like', 'share' and 'comment'. They represent the means for its users engaging with any given content displayed on the social media platform. Whilst both 'like' and 'share' are far more visible and easily recognisable metrics suggesting the level of success and popularity achieved by a particular post, on the other hand, they have the disadvantage of not requiring too much reflection by the user and they can, in fact, be the result of an impulse gesture. However, on what concerns the 'comments' they demand a different type of engagement from the user because they suggest that the person may have felt compelled to expressing something beyond a simple and automatic click on an icon. In other words, I argue that he/she wants to say something else a bit more elaborated, even if he/she 'talks' through emojis[61], for instance.

In fact, the combination of both metrics (elapsed time and the number of associated comments) is what allows us to have a better perspective of what happens during the long tail and the possible emergence of similar trends or not. For this purpose, I have chosen three posts (numbers 02, 10 and 13 from Table 2) to build their respective graphical perspective. They have

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[61] Any of various small images, symbols, or icons used in text fields in electronic communication to express the emotional attitude of the writer, convey information succinctly, communicate a message playful without using words. (source: https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/emoji, Accessed on 14/08/2017)

been selected first because their respective long tail lasts for one year or more. Second, because they display a considerable number of associated comments that allow plotting meaningful graphs since other posts shown in Table 2 also have long tail but fewer associated comments that do not contribute to plot significant graphical representations. They were plotted based on the number of associated comments ('y' axis) and all the dates available on the Facebook timeline of each post displaying the associated comments triggered by the original publication ('x' axis).

5.4.2.1   Case study one

The graph shown in Figure 5 reveals a picture where a large number of associated comments were made on the original date of its publication (102 comments made by 91 unique users on 29/01/2013) and the remaining 58 comments are almost evenly distributed along the tail without any significant residual peak. The context of the original post consists in a joke about *Negro* people: 'I do not make jokes about Black people because racism is crime, and crime is Black' stuff'. Subsequently, comes a series of associated comments (pro and against) and in several moments, other jokes reinforcing the original message (e.g. 'Why there is no fortune teller in Africa? Because Blacks have no future'). Even though the distribution of associated comments displayed in this graph is practically even over time, it calls the attention its continuity and, in certain moments, the small interval between the comments.
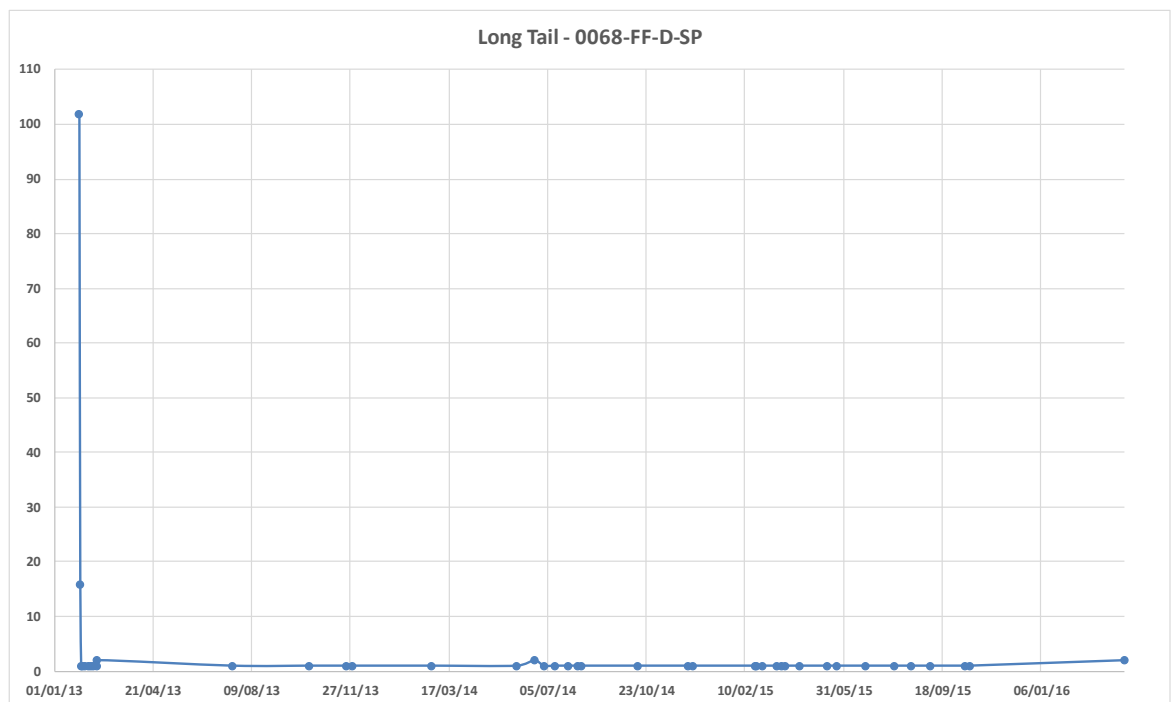

Figure 5: Long Tail of 0068-FF-D-SP

What is also interesting to observe is the fact that within the cohort of 91 unique users expressing comments, eleven of them appeared at least twice and one male user alone (0818-VL-

M)[62] made thirteen derogatory comments on that day. Furthermore, none of these 91 unique users was found in the remaining 58 comments along the tail, suggesting that the original post and its associated 102 comments somehow attracted or engaged several new users over time that kept the conversation going.

5.4.2.2   Case study two

The graph shown in Figure 6 reveals a picture slightly different from the previous one. The context of the original post consists of a picture showing a smiling *Negro* teenage girl holding a leash around the neck of a white teenage girl. There is no information regarding where or when the picture was taken, who are the two girls and even if it was shot in Brazil or elsewhere. However, it is possible to identify that a *Negro* man advocating Black supremacy posted it. The picture is followed by a long text that, in summary, inquires what the Black Movement in Brazil would do if the depicted situation were reversed.
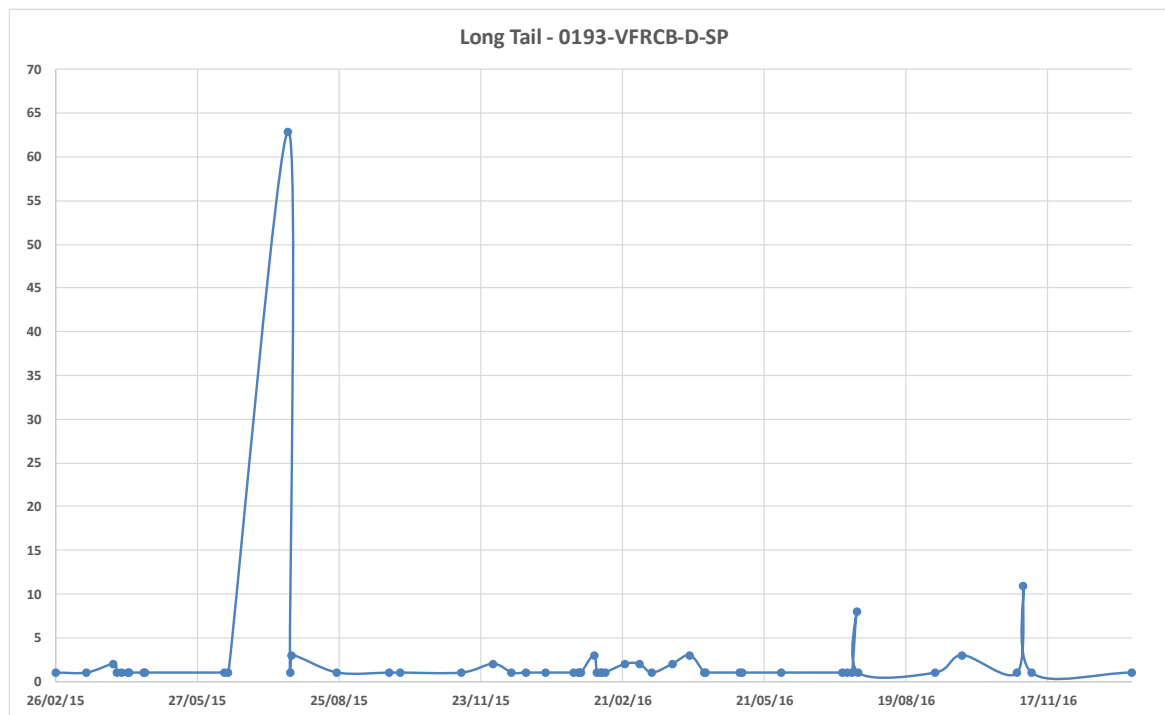
Figure 6: Long Tail of 0193-VFRCB-D-SP

The first intriguing aspect regarding this post lays in the fact that the peak of comments took place only around five months after the original publication (63 comments made by twenty-three unique users on 24/07/2015 in contrast to just one comment made on its publication on

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[62] Codded identification to safeguard user's privacy in accordance with the ethical procedures adopted in this study.

26/02/2015). The second intriguing fact consists of two smaller peaks (eight comments made on 19/07/2016 and eleven comments made on 02/11/2016). What would be the cause for these three aspects in this graph? What can be observed is that a single female user (0817-MOM-F), who participated five times in the thread of comments on that day, triggered the peak of 63 comments. She posted a comment criticising white people who had claimed, in the same Facebook URL, that they were being victims of reverse racism within the context of the picture displayed in the original post. The conversation escalated (both in support and against her) and consequently it reached this number of 63 comments. In the second peak of eight comments, it is possible to observe that four users that had participated in the previous debate returned to make additional comments. However, apart from that, there is no other relevant factor. Finally, the third peak of eleven comments represents, in fact, a heated debate between the same female user identified in the first peak of 63 comments and another male user (0819-RL-M) challenging her arguments. There are three interesting facts in this heated debate. First, that this male user was not present in any of the previous conversations what, similarly to the previous case study, suggests the potential long-lasting engagement capacity of the post in attracting new users to the conversation. Second, that he started the debate with the female user and, finally, that no other user took part in this debate.

5.4.2.3   Case study three

The context of the original post that triggered the comments represented in Figure 7 consists of a 45 seconds video displaying a white elderly woman apparently delivering a lecture to a large audience. She speaks in English (the short video brings captions in Portuguese) to what presumably seems to be a predominantly white audience (there are only three short close-up takes of the audience). She challenges the audience to stand up who, among them, would be happy to be treated the same way society treats Black people, and no one stands up. She then enquires why they allow happening to others what they do not want for themselves, and the video finishes at this point. In the sequence comes all the associated comments both in support and against the message addressed in the short video. The graph shown in Figure 7 is interesting because it displays a picture with overlapping characteristics present both in Figure 5 and in Figure 6. In the first place, the peak of comments took place on the original date it was published (435 comments made by 423 unique users on 10/07/2016). In the second place, because it has also shown some significant smaller residual peaks over the long tail (e.g. eighteen comments on 18/09/2016; 35 comments on 10/11/2016 and again eighteen comments made on 22/01/2017).
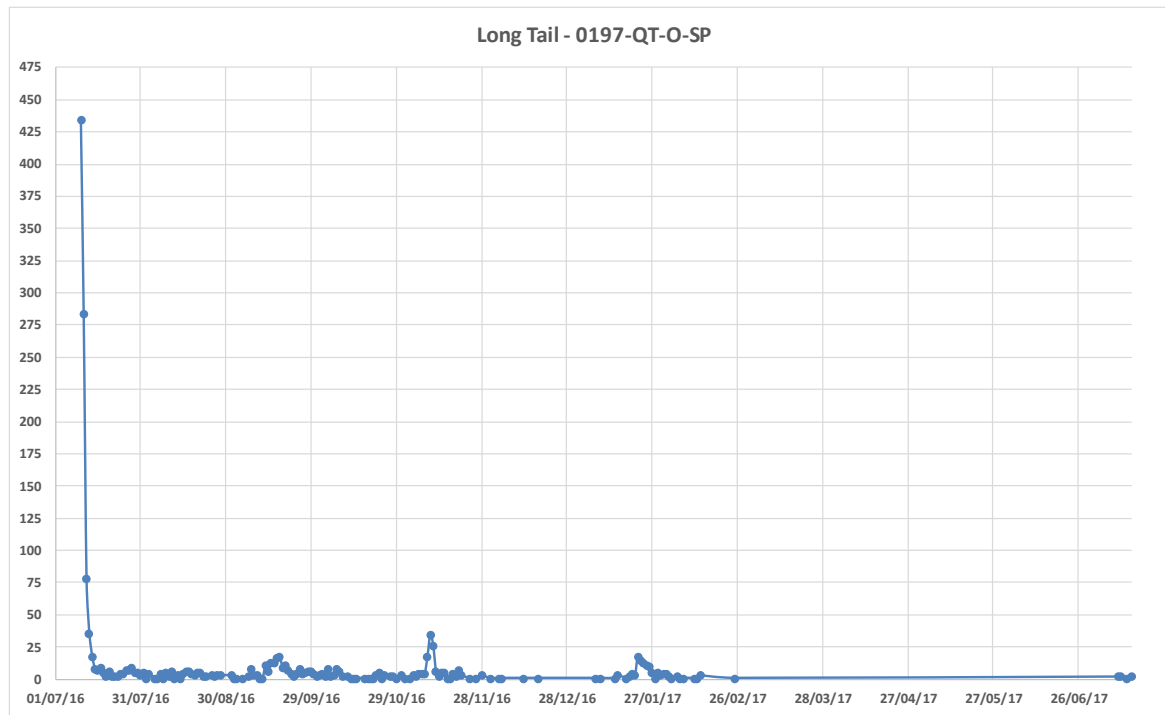
Figure 7: Long Tail of 0197-QT-O-SP

The analysis of the thread of comments triggered by the short video reveals that many users manifested support to the argument developed by the elderly woman. However, running a word frequency query on *NVivo*, it was possible to discover an interesting aspect of the conversation. It is the fact that several users have brought to the surface the subject matter of affirmative actions in public universities in Brazil, and the comments can be characterised predominantly of negative nature. The people repeatedly claim that 'quotas'[63] represent a form of reverse discrimination, that they also represent unfair treatment and that, thanks to them, *Negro* people do not need to make any effort to be admitted into public universities. This debate is permeated across the long tail, but the majority of them is concentrated around the first three days of the publication of the original post (i.e. between 10/07/2016 until 13/07/2016), what contributes to understanding the large number of comments made on the first day, as shown in Figure 7.

As with the three residual peaks, it was possible to observe firstly that they have involved predominantly new users (69 out of 71 users in these three residual peaks only), what, similarly to the previous two examples, contribute to illustrating the potential long-lasting engagement of Facebook posts. Second, it is also possible to notice that the conversation around affirmative actions continued in these peaks and, besides that, comments manifesting denial of the existence of racist practices in Brazil.

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[63] Both in daily ordinary conversations and in the mainstream media in Brazil, affirmative actions are usually referred to simply as 'quotas'.

5.4.3 Why racism on Facebook differs from ordinary offline social context

The analysis of the long tail of posts developed in the previous section raises an important question. How racism on Facebook differs from racist attitudes performed in ordinary offline social context? I argue that they differ in two major aspects: 1) the circumstances triggering the racist attitudes; and 2) their reach and reverberation.

Racist insults against *Negro* people in ordinary daily circumstances is not a new phenomenon in Brazilian society. On this regard, Levine (1973) explains that several newspapers in the 1930s used to openly disparage *Negro* people. Moreover, different scholars such as Guimarães (2000; 2003), Oliveira and Barreto (2003), Silva (2003), Bartel (2014) and Machado *et al.* (2016) reveal that racist insults still happen in a variety of ordinary daily contexts. In other words, these authors are evidencing that racist insults against *Negro* people is, in fact, an enduring social practice rather than recently emerged with social media platforms. In addition, with regard to the vocabulary employed to insult *Negro* people, the studies conducted by Guimarães (2000; 2003) and Machado *et al.* (2016) reveal similarities with the ones found in the present study. This finding corroborates the enduring social practice just mentioned. Furthermore, it also contributes to illustrate that the embedded ideologies nurturing the insults have also been reproduced for a long time and continue to circulate and being reinforced.

Nevertheless, different from what happens on Facebook, what triggers racist insults in ordinary offline social contexts are predominantly situations of conflict (e.g. argument between neighbours, disagreements in the workplace, argument after car collision, argument in parties, etc.). Supporting evidence for this claim is found in the study conducted by Machado *et al.* (2016). The authors have analysed 2,061 cases of racism brought to court across nine Brazilian states. They argue that "when racial insults operate in a conflictive way, [negative] stereotypes are employed to disqualify the person and, quite frequently, animalising the *Negro* person. The court cases refer much more significantly to situations of conflict" than other circumstances (Machado *et al.*, 2016, p. 23). Furthermore, the eight categories of triggering events prior to posting derogatory posts, as discussed in section 5.3.3, do not reveal similar circumstances of conflict.

Thus, does it mean that racial insults are not verbalised in other non-conflictive circumstances? Most probably, that is not the case. However, on this regard, I find interesting the argument developed by Silva (2003) addressing situations of racial conflicts in Brazil. The author says that currently, people do not verbalise everything that comes to their mind indistinctively or without pondering the place where they are. In other words, the idea embedded in this argument is that, apart from conflict situations where oftentimes the racial offenses emerge more easily, people might refrain to be openly racist in other circumstances due to current social conventions. However, since on social media the proponents of white supremacy subvert offline conventions, they do not feel constrained in unleashing racialized insults.

The second difference between the context of social media and ordinary daily context are the reach and reverberation of the racist insults. The above-mentioned studies addressing racist insults in Brazil provide no evidence that the ordinary offline social context engage a multitude of people and neither that they trigger long-lasting conversations. It does not mean to say that they do not reverberate or cause impact on the parties involved. What I am arguing is that, oftentimes, their reach is more limited when compared to the context of social media platforms. On Facebook, for example, the long tail of posts reveals that the racist insults are capable to reach a wider audience and keep the derogatory conversation for a long period and attracting other people to the conversation. Therefore, this explains why social media platforms enable people to construct, disseminate and reinforce racist ideologies in different ways found in ordinary offline social contexts. Ultimately, racist insults against *Negro* people in Brazil has not changed its form over time, as the perpetuation of the vocabulary employed indicates. Nevertheless, social media platforms enable the proponents of white supremacy ideologies convey their values and beliefs differently from what it is seen in offline social contexts.

5.5   What's in a derogatory Facebook name

Initially, the names employed in several Facebook communities displaying content classified as derogatory may look trivial; however, a closer analysis of some terminologies adopted to composing their names reveals interesting aspects. The first aspect that calls our attention is the adoption, by some of these communities, the combination of strong swear words composing their names such as: a) son of a bitch; b) fuck off; and c) fagot. Moreover, there are also others employing unusual terminologies such as: a) assassin; b) thug; c) scoundrel; d) cursed; and e) sue me if you dare to. However, looking at them, the important question is: what do they reveal?

First, analysing threads of derogatory posts and associated comments displayed on Facebook communities employing this array of vocabulary, it is possible to identify a convergent trend. Most of the vocabulary and expressions employed in such communities can be considered rude and impolite in ordinary social contexts, and several of them are not expected to be employed in face-to-face social interactions. They are commonly used in informal social settings amongst people that share a certain degree of social proximity that allow them to express freely in such a way. In addition, they are also found in situations of conflict, as revealed by Machado *et al.* (2016) or in the context of football stadium (Bartel, 2014). Nevertheless, in more formal social settings (e.g. work environment, academic environment, or with people that do not share close ties) it is not expected to hear them. However, apparently, in online environment, these people do not feel constrained by any social convention and openly employ them without any type of concern.

To a certain extent, it is possible to infer that the harsher the combination of vocabulary employed to name the community, the more comfortable their users feel to unleash an equivalent

level of aggressiveness in their vocabulary. In addition, the employment of this array of vocabulary on Facebook suggests that the users are not concerned with social distances the same way as people would consider on face-to-face social interactions. A possible explanation for this behaviour lies in the belief nurtured by several users that online anonymity would represent a sort of protective shield for them (see sections 3.3.1 and 5.3.4).

The adoption of strong swear words and unusual terminologies to composing the names of the Facebook communities may also contribute to conveying upfront to anyone interested, an idea of their nature and the type of content on display. Consequently, the content may be more appealing to certain groups of users than to others. Another possible explanation for the adoption of this type of vocabulary may be to attract more attention towards themselves. According to Manfred (2012, p. 2), "the person with the loudest, most inflammatory opinion gets the most attention" on social media platforms. Moreover, the users who engage in such communities may share common values, norms, beliefs and ideologies in such a way that they feel comfortable in expressing their views making use of that array of vocabulary without any fear of being censored. McPherson *et al.* (2001, p. 416) explain that this behaviour is characterised as homophily, what stands for "the principle that a contact between similar people occurs at a higher rate than among dissimilar people." In convergence with this argument, Takikawa and Nagayoshi (2017, p. 3143) say that "homopholic ties are considered to be building blocks of echo chambers". In addition, Lazarsfeld and Merton (1954) explain that there are two types of homophily: 1) status; and 2) value. The first type refers to similarities based on informal, formal and ascribed social status. As with the second type, shared values, attitudes and beliefs represent the link bonding groups of people. Consequently, similarly to derogatory and racist posts acting such as magnets attracting like-minded people, the adoption of strong swear words may have the same effect towards establishing strong bonds.

On the other hand, there is also another group of Facebook communities employing softer terminologies such as 'joke' and 'humour', in combination with other words, to composing the name that are more socially acceptable than swear words. Nevertheless, whilst the communities employing swear words and unusual terminologies oftentimes target their 'humour' towards a specific group of people, the ones using softer words is much wider in scope. Consequently, they target not only *Negro* people but also other social groups such as: a) blonde women; b) homosexuals; c) obese people; d) migrants from the North-eastern regions of the country; e) Portuguese immigrants; f) Japanese immigrants; g) Jews; h) followers of religions of African ancestry; and i) supporters of certain football teams. Thus, it can be inferred that targeting a wide group of people, the administrators of these communities are conveying the subtle message that, apparently, there would be no reason for anyone to complain about the content since several social groups are being subjected to mockery. An illustrative example in support of this argument is found in a Facebook post endorsing a derogatory humorous post about *Negro* people that says; 'A joke is

a joke, guys. There are jokes about blonde-haired women, jokes about mother-in-law, and so forth. There's no big deal' (0523-FHQ-UI; 2015; 117 'likes'). However, what the Facebook communities are constructing and disseminating is the spectacle of the other for the amusement of few. On this regard, Billig (2001, p. 277) argues that "the person finding the joke funny is implicitly accepting the stereotyped assumptions about the nature of the other".

5.6   Chapter summary

In conclusion, I highlight three relevant aspects. First, that racism on Facebook in Brazil is strongly gendered (i.e. predominantly target towards middle-class *Negro* women aged between twenty to 35 years). Within that, it is also possible to understand that, despite the claims that 'racial democracy' still reigns in Brazil regulating harmonious racial relations, and that money 'whitens' *Negro* people, the data reveal a different picture. In fact, the 'racial democracy' discourse contributes towards blurring people's perception of the enduring racial inequalities; avoid debating the subject matter whilst delegitimising demands for greater racial equality. In addition, the successful upward social mobility experienced by a growing number of *Negro* women), does not exempt them from experiences of racism.

Second, the proponents of white supremacy are predominantly men (65.6 percent) on their early twenties oftentimes employing harsh vocabulary to belittle *Negro* women. Within that, their core motivation to convey their racist discourse encompasses a deep-seated belief in the whitening ideology. This belief is manifested through four intertwined facets: 1) discomfort with upwardly mobile *Negro* women; 2) masquerading ideologies; 3) nurturing the belief that they are off-limits in regard to the rule of law; and 4) intersectionality of race, gender and class.

Finally, Facebook contributes towards providing these people with capabilities that enable them to perform and engage in racist attitudes different from what can be observed in ordinary face-to-face social interactions in Brazil. The technology affords them the following main capabilities: 1) establishing connections amongst like-minded people composing a new type of unity conveying their shared views, beliefs and colonial-like ideologies such as an echo chamber; 2) differently from face-to-face social interaction, they can construct and disseminate their common views across a wide audience for a long period; 3) affords them with the possibility to reduce and/or even disregard any social distance between them and the target of their derogatory discourse; and 4) the possibility of anonymous online navigation contributes towards the development of an illusory perception amongst several users that they would be off-limits. This perception leads them to unleash their verbal aggressiveness without constraints or *crise de conscience*.

Chapter 6: Unveiling the derogatory discourses on Facebook

In this chapter, I develop the argument that, in the context of Facebook in Brazil, the dissemination of racist discourses aims at undermining improved symbolic social spaces of *Negro* women and repositioning them back to their 'original' place of inferiority. Over time, the Brazilian racism, constructed on the grounds of 'racial democracy' and whitening ideology, has been internalised in the collective mind-set (including non-white people), in such a way that discursive racist manifestations have been naturalised and conveyed through derogatory jokes. This dynamic, combined with racial hierarchy, establishes boundaries of belonging and legitimate national identity and, consequently, the ascribed social spaces of different racial groups.

Within this picture, Facebook as a modern-day public square enables the proponents of white supremacy ideologies to perform and engage in a form of virtual whipping through derogatory humorous posts and associated comments. Within that, in the study of whitening ideology and 'racial democracy' in Brazil, Twine (1998, p. 136) says that "joking is a socially acceptable way to articulate beliefs publicly and reproduce white supremacy and Black inferiority". I argue that the proponents' desired outcome of this practice consists in legitimising the racial hierarchy boundaries, whilst undermining the collective achievements of *Negro* women. In order to achieve this goal, the predominant derogatory discourses on Facebook not only challenge improved social spaces of *Negro* women, but they also convey white supremacy ideologies aiming at reinforcing the 'genuine' Brazilianness. Moreover, they reduce the value of their achievements through expressions of laughter and jeer and, finally, they silence the opposing voices, what means that they delegitimise demands towards greater racial equality.

This argumentation has been developed based on critical discourse analysis of the set of 109 public Facebook URLs of derogatory nature. The data have been explored both inductively (i.e. interrogating the data set to allow the emergence of key narratives) and deductively, meaning exploring the possible occurrence of certain topics addressed in the literature review. This process led me to identify four major narratives: 1) challenging the social space of *Negro* people; 2) distilling white supremacy ideologies; 3) conveying whitening ideology through laughter; and 4) silencing of the opposing voices.

6.1   Challenging the social space of *Negro* people

Different authors have addressed the concept of social space. Lefebvre (2009, p. 186) adopts a philosophical approach towards the concept, arguing, "Space is permeated with social relations; it is not only supported by social relations, but it also is producing and produced by social relations". Bourdieu (1989) establishes a conceptual comparison between social and geographical spaces. The author argues that proximity amongst social agents, groups or institutions within a given social setting implies the sharing of common properties, whereas increased distance among them implies the opposite. For Bauman (1993), social space differs from physical space, meaning that the social space is socially constructed by people according to assigned meanings and established rules of engagement and interaction. Among these authors, I consider that Bauman (1993) is more relevant within the scope of the present study. Based on that, my inference is that social space is ascribed within a given physical space, but its social agents, who manage the rules that grant symbolic meaning to its internal dynamic, assign its symbolic value.

Within Brazilian social context, racial hierarchy system establishes the expected symbolical social space of different racial groups in the country. In other words, Brazilian citizens share common physical space made up of tangible geographical boundaries. However, within this physical space, there are also several other social spaces with varied symbolic values. These social spaces not only have established rules of engagement and interaction but also belonging. Namely, in Brazil, there are different ascribed symbolic social spaces for white and *Negro* people, with the latter often positioned in social spaces associated with inferiority. Thus, as *Negro* people move upwards in Brazilian social class ladder, reaching improved symbolic social spaces, the dominant elite challenge them, since they are not expected to occupy such arenas associated with privilege and whiteness. Supporting evidence for this argumentation is found on the studies conducted by Dzidzienyo (1971), Silva (2000) and Wade (2010b), as previously addressed in section 2.4.3.

An interesting illustrative example of this ingrained ideology encompasses the following joke: 'When does a Black go upwards in life? When his favela shack explodes' (Displayed in the Facebook URL: 0136-PJ-D-SP; 2014; eight 'likes')[64]. This joke conveys the subtle message that *Negro* people are prone to live in a *favela* and, consequently, belonging to the lowest social strata, because *favela* represents a strong social marker in Brazil (Goldstein, 2003). In addition, the joke also subtly explores the belief that upward social mobility of this racial group is unlikely or resulting from an extraordinary event such as 'an explosion' propelling the person upwards in life. In fact, this joke also plays with rules and exceptions. Namely, successful upward social mobility of some *Negro* people (i.e. the exception) do not change the overall dominant rule establishing that

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[64] The identification is made up by the codded name of the Facebook URL where the post was extracted (in accordance with the ethical procedures adopted in the present study), the year of its publication and the number of 'likes', when available, to illustrating the level of 'popularity' of the content.

their social space is associated with positions of inferiority. In order to explore in greater depth this aspect of challenging *Negro* people's social space, I have interrogated the 109 Facebook URLs of derogatory nature. Consequently, I bring a sample of three case studies to illustrate the predominant narrative.

6.1.1 Case study one

The context of this first case study encompasses a Facebook post made by a *Negro* woman (actress, 31 years old, Rio Grande do Sul, 2015)[65]. She published on her public Facebook page a series of pictures of herself together with her white partner travelling across some European cities while on vacation. This fact triggered several negative reactions such as[66]:

> **Post #1:**   The *Negra's* place is in the fields harvesting cotton, and not travelling across Europe. (0664-LS-M, 2015; four 'likes')

> **Post #2:**   She is pretty but, unfortunately, the *Negros* are not on sale anymore. (0835-LRZ-M, 2015; fifteen 'likes')

In analysing **Post #1,** it is possible to highlight two compelling elements. Firstly, it clearly establishes the expected symbolic social space for *Negro* people in general, as well as the *Negro* woman expected actions. Harvesting cotton in the fields can be interpreted as a symbol used to convey the idea of engagement in any subservient and unskilled occupation, corresponding to colonial-like ideology (Schwartz, 1985). The predominant ideology at that time (and still deep-seated in the collective mind-set of the present day) positioned white men at the top of the racial and social class hierarchy, followed by white women. Africans were positioned at the bottom of that social and racial hierarchy, being considered mere 'slaves of sickle and hoe', as argued by Bethel (1984), which implies that they were useful solely for unskilled duties in the plantations (or as conveyed in the Facebook post, in the fields). **Post #2** highlights a similar ideological element, as the user claims that '*Negros* are not on sale anymore', once again resonating with colonial society that enslaved Africans and sold them such as any other merchandise. However, the act of 'selling' *Negro* people in the context of **Post #2** cannot be taken literally just, as it would have been in colonial period; rather, it must be considered more indirectly, as a way of reducing a person's value and positioning him/her as inferior. Objectifying a person can be deemed as an indirect way of removing his/her humanity and, in addition, any trace of power.

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[65] To safeguarding people's privacy, whenever a victim is cited in the present study, it is informed only the gender, occupation, age, state of origin in Brazil and the year the event took place.

[66] The identification within brackets used across this chapter stands for: the codded name of the person that posted the comment, followed by the year of its publication, and the number of 'likes', when available, with the aim to indicate the level of 'popularity' reached by the particular post.

Furthermore, returning to **Post #1**, what does 'Europe' represent? It conveys the idea of the birthplace of modernity and civilization, as widely advocated soon after the emancipation of slaves and the emergence of the Republic, given that blackness in Brazil has since been considered the opposite of such values (Andrews, 1997; Twine, 1998). Additional supporting evidence for this reflection is presented by Goldstein (2003, p. 78), who explains that, during the early years of the Republic, "Rio's elites travelled to Paris, read French, and admired Paris as an example of what a 'civilized' city should look like". This contact influenced the city's 'modernisation' process, which ultimately pushed *Negro* people away from the centre towards the emerging *favelas*. Consequently, it can be inferred that the post conveys a belief that 'Europe' is not the right place for *Negro* Brazilian women. The meaning attributed to 'Europe' in **Post #1** transcends the physical, geographical space, and embodies element of the whitening ideology and, therefore, a *Negro* person in such social space that embodies symbolic white privilege, is not easily acceptable or conceivable. Moreover, given the fact that the construction of Brazilian national identity has been established on top of a whitening ideology that, for several decades, displayed white beauty as the country's proud international public face, a *Negro* woman in Europe is not considered legitimate enough. Furthermore, under the perspective of the proponents of white supremacy, *Negro* women embodies the postponement of Brazil achieving modernity (see section 5.2.2).

6.1.2   Case study two

The context of this case study is quite similar to the previous one. A *Negro* woman (business manager, 28 years old, Rio de Janeiro, 2016) published on her public Facebook page some pictures of herself while skiing in a snowy destination abroad during her vacation. This event triggered the publication of several derogatory humorous comments and, amongst them, three posts, in particular, called our attention:

> **Post #1:**   Are you also going to steal the snow? (0828-CCT-M; 2016)

> **Post# 2:**   You have stolen even the white snow, ape. (0824-CEE-M; 2016; three 'likes')

> **Post #3:**   Wait until the snow melts down and use the water to do the dishes. (0820-EJA-M; 2016; four 'likes')

Post #1 challenges the 'right' symbolic social space for *Negro* Brazilian women, but makes use of a different figure of speech in relation to what was seen in the previous case study. For most Brazilian citizens, long lasting and thick snowy landscapes are associated predominantly with Northern Hemisphere countries. Over time, this association has been amplified by images and discourses fostered in several TV news programmes, by movies and popular culture of people dressed elegantly and enjoying winter sports, which are considered refined and expensive (such as skiing, for example). Thus, it can be observed that **Post #1** establishes the association between

blackness and delinquency alongside the suggestion that, since thick snow is not something very common in Brazil, a *Negro* woman would probably steal it. In addition, given that moral defects comprise one of the most common categories of racial insults in Brazil (Guimarães, 2003), that helps to understand why the user chooses an insult based on theft.

Post #2 conveys practically the same idea but using slightly different wording. Nevertheless, there are two subtle additional elements in it: the adverb 'even' and the adjective 'white'. The addition of 'even' not only associates blackness with delinquency, but also implies that having failed to be satisfied by, supposedly, stealing something else, she may have also 'stolen' the snow. In other words, the slight addition reinforces and augments the trait of moral defection that the joker associates with *Negro* people. The meaning of 'stealing the snow' can also be questioned, given that it certainly cannot be taken literally. If we adjudge that stealing essentially means forcefully or skilfully taking ownership of something that originally did not belong to the person, it can be inferred that it represents reaching a social space that did not belong to her. Consequently, her presence in that social space does not seem 'natural'. In addition, 'white snow' may at first sound redundant given that it must be common knowledge that snow is naturally white. However, it can be inferred that the joker aims to amplify the embedded whitening ideology, reinforcing the belief that such places (snowy international destinations) are meant only for white people. Post #2 finishes with another typical racial insult, categorizing *Negro* people as animalistic by nature, which serves to place them lower on a social hierarchy than others.

Finally, in Post #3, it is once again possible to observe a challenge to *Negro* women 'rightful' social space in Brazilian society, albeit by adopting a different figure of speech in relation to the other posts. As previously explained, in the Brazilian social context, heavy snow almost axiomatically implies reference to an international destination. Consequently, the *Negro* woman is assumed to be performing some type of subservient and unskilled occupation such as cleaner, rather than travelling across 'white' and/or snowy international destinations. In sum, these three posts coalesce contrasting notions of white and *Negro* people's boundaries of belonging and expectations of the latter as regards occupations (unskilled and subservient), moral traits (delinquent), appearance (ape or animalistic) and symbolic devalued social spaces (cotton fields). Furthermore, in a country whose international face has been proudly constructed around beauty standards of famous white female models such as *Xuxa* and Gisele Bündchen (see section 2.6.2), a *Negro* woman in such a scenario is portrayed as an intruder. Such 'intrusiveness' consequently, strips her of any legitimacy to be considered a genuine representative of Brazilianness abroad. Within that, it is important to highlight the connection between this narrative and the aspects that explain why *Negro* women have been targeted on Facebook (see section 5.2.2). In summary, we notice the repetition and reinforcement of the same discourse challenging the legitimacy of their Brazilianness.

6.1.3   Case study three

The context of this case study relates to a *Negro* man (university student, twenty-four years old, Rio de Janeiro, 2015) who had been accepted to attend medical school abroad. Soon after that, he posted on his own Facebook page a text sharing his experience aiming at encouraging and inspiring other underprivileged youngsters like himself (indistinctively of race) to follow the same pathway, overcoming difficulties and obstacles to fulfilling such a dream. His post triggered a variety of negative posts and some of the most representative expressed the following:

Post #1:   Wow, I had no idea that a *Negro* could become a medical doctor. Who fancy taking the chances of a consultation? (0829-GJD-M; 2015)

Post #2:   I would never. (0830-CAL-M; 2015)

Post #3:   A Nigger. Wait a minute, let me get my whip. (0831-DSJ-M; 2015)

Post #4:   Say hi to your cellmates. (0833-RAE-M; 2015)

It is interesting to observe, once again in these comments, the challenge of the symbolic social space being occupied by the *Negro* person. Just as 'Europe' and/or 'snowy international destinations' are not expected to fit with blackness, the same happens with medical school. This career is considered 'noble' in Brazil and historically associated with male white privilege (Santana, 2015b). In fact, still according to Santana (2015b), there has been an increase of *Negro* students graduated in medical school over the recent past, but they are still lagging behind in relation to their white counterparts. Nevertheless, what is embedded in **Post #1** is first, the expression of incredulity that a *Negro* person could successfully overcome (or maybe 'trespass') the unsaid and unwritten boundaries (or 'the invisible colour line' as Du Bois (1903) used to say in reference to unequal opportunities for Blacks and whites in the US) preventing people like him to reach such privileged social space. Second, the post challenges the specialised skill of the professional-to-be and compares it to a risky endeavour for his future patients. The post is then immediately followed by an explicit endorsement (**Post #2**).

With regard to **Post #3**, it is possible to observe that the user has adopted the symbolic figure of a whip to not only discredit or disqualify the *Negro* student but also mainly to allocate him in a different social space. In other words, the discourse is that his 'natural' social space is at the *senzala* being punished rather than in medical school. As it has been previously addressed in section 2.3.3, the *senzala* is not only a physical depriving space used as accommodation for the slaves in colonial society but also a symbolic representation of inferiority, complete servitude and lack of future life prospects. During colonialism, misbehaviours such as running away from captivity or not complying with his/her master's commands represented sufficient reasons for public 'exemplary' punishment as a means to discourage others to do the same. Consequently, in

the context of **Post #3**, it can be considered that before the eyes of the user, the *Negro* person had committed 'a transgression' due to the fact of not only being accepted to attend medical school but, on top of that, the university is abroad (what implies superior competence to be accepted). Following this line of reasoning, the 'transgression' of the *Negro* person was amplified (medical school + abroad) and that would demand 'exemplary' public punishment. This picture converges with the argument developed in Chapter 5, meaning that Facebook enables people to use the platform as a virtual public square (the contemporary *pelourinho*) to performing 'exemplary' corrective measures. Within that, the derogatory humorous posts analysed represent the modern-day whips inflicting punishments aiming at re-establishing 'the natural order' and avoiding the crossing of the 'invisible colour line'.

Finally, in **Post #4**, the user disqualifies the *Negro* student making use of a common association within Brazilian social context of blackness and delinquency as identified by Guimarães (2003). In fact, it can be observed that this association is another legacy of colonial society given that "Africans were [considered] strangers, pagans, thought to be untrustworthy or dangerous" (Schwartz, 1985, p. 330). Over time, this type of negative association has been incorporated into popular culture and conveyed in several jokes such as, for example; 'What shines most in Blacks? The handcuffs, when he is not holding a knife to rob the bank' (displayed in the Facebook URL 068-FF-D-SP; 2013). On this regard, Weaver (2011b, p. 95) argues that this type of joke "contains stereotypes that inferiorise inside of a rhetorical comic device that, in certain readings, becomes more than 'just a joke' that can support racism through making the stereotype appear truthful and less or not ambivalent".

6.1.4　　　Summary

In conclusion, I recall an interesting unwritten 'rule' within Brazilian social context that *Negro* people 'know their place' in the class society. This belief has been nurtured for several decades and it implies that, since *Negro* people are aware of their position of inferiority in society, racial tensions in Brazil are inexistent. Different authors have analysed this belief, arguing that it represents a facet of Brazilian racism, attempting to justify its own pervasive internal logic (Fernandes, 1965; Dzidzienyo, 1971; Gonzalez and Hasenbalg, 1982; Goldstein, 2003). As such, I argue that derogatory humour in Facebook posts is used to convey colonial-like white supremacist ideologies with the aim to establish the boundaries of social belonging. Such boundaries delineate who are legitimate occupants of the core of Brazilian society and who should stay at the edge. In addition, contrary to what several Facebook users claim, such jokes are not exempt from social impacts and meant for entertainment purpose only. In fact, they serve the purpose to construct, disseminating and reinforcing ascribed social places to different racial groups. On top of that, the racist discourses conveyed through derogatory humour also represent symbolic punishment to *Negro* people (however, women in particular) who dare 'trespassing' the boundaries of their

assigned inferior and subservient social spaces. Within this context, Facebook plays the relevant role of enabling people to perform and articulate colonial-like racist attitudes in different ways found in ordinary offline social contexts.

Therefore, racist discourses in Brazil have not dramatically evolved in form over the years, as the jokes and derogatory posts analysed in this study have circulated for several decades. Nevertheless, the proponents of such supremacist ideologies have adapted themselves to contemporary social circumstances by moving their arena to online environment. The consequence of this shift is that through Facebook they are able to reverberate their voice to wider audience and for a long period. Furthermore, by presenting these jokes as harmless *brincadeirinhas*, these Facebook users enjoy a convenient and socially acceptable escape route, whilst overlooking the legitimacy of demands for greater racial equality. By ridiculing 'the other', the white supremacists devalue the demands raised by the *Negro* community, silence their voices and aim to ensure that the dominant racial hierarchy system remains unchallenged and unchanged.

6.2   Distilling white supremacy ideologies

As previously addressed in section 5.1, white supremacy in Brazil is intertwined with whitening ideology, 'racial democracy' and prejudice of colour (Nogueira, 2013). In fact, this ideology is manifested in dualistic discourse that positions whiteness and blackness in extreme contrasting poles. They are characterised, respectively, with positive and negative attributes. Thus, the following two case studies have the aim to evidence this type of narrative found on Facebook.

6.2.1   Case study one

The context of this case study encompasses a Facebook URL (0068-FF-D-SP; 2013; 42,228 'likes') displaying several jokes about *Negro* people and below there is a sample of such jokes and their associated comments:

> **Post #1:**   At a certain moment there was a white guy and a Black, then…Gosh! Where's the fuck my wallet? (0363-BB-M; 2013; seven 'likes')
>
> **Post #2:**   Why did the lion lick its own ass after devouring a Black man? In order to get rid of the bad taste out of its mouth. (0372-TL-M; 2013; 'three 'likes')
>
> **Post #3:**   What an ice cream bar said to the coffee bean? I would rather have a dick in my ass than to be Black. (0375-CF-M; 2013; six 'likes')

Post #4:   It is already time that we put an end to this racism issue. It is time for both of us (humans and Blacks) to live in peace. (0416-WM-M; 2013; 59 'likes')

Post #5:   Why Blacks do not pay the bus fare? Because in a police car there is no fare taker. (0369-PJN-M; 2013; thirteen 'likes')

Post #6:   Why there are no Blacks with Down syndrome? Because God does not punish twice. (0370-JBV-M; 2013; 46 'likes')

As it can be observed, the sample of posts brings a considerable series of jokes establishing strong disqualifying associations with blackness. They are present not only in this particular Facebook URL but also across several others of derogatory nature. The joke displayed in **Post #1** clearly conveys the discourse that *Negro* people are prone to stealing things, get involved in delinquent acts, or once they are around things may 'disappear'. In fact, the association 'blackness = delinquency' encompasses a deep-rooted idea within the collective mind-set in Brazil (see section 6.1.3). However, the question is what lies underneath this association? According to Guimarães (2000), this association conveys the idea of social anomaly. Namely, fostering this type of association through jokes, the user establishes differentiated belongings by contrasting positions. Within that, the 'anomalous' *Negro* people belong to the margin of society and, by exclusion, whiteness is at the core representing 'the normal'. Similarly, Davies (1990, p. 322) argues that "jokes contribute to indicate who is at the centre of a culture and who is at the edge". Furthermore, this anomalous association is reinforced by other jokes that attribute *Negro* people's delinquency as a character trait innate from birth and inherited from the mother (see section 5.2.2).

As with **Post #2**, it depicts an imaginary situation of a lion devouring a *Negro* person, and that even the animal's faecal orifice may 'taste' better than a *Negro*. However, the important question is; what does this degrading depiction reveal? It plays with exaggerated figures of speech with the aim of ridicule the other. Recalling the studies of Christo (2009) and Braga (2013), it is possible to observe that in colonial society, Brazilian iconography used to depict *Negro* women exaggerating the proportion of certain aspects of their bodies (especially the nose, lips and the buttocks). The objective behind this type of depiction is to emphasise the difference, the deviant from the dominant beauty standard and highlight the contrasts. Consequently, even though they address two different aspects (lack of hygiene and beauty), both of them make use of exaggeration in the discourse constructing 'the other' as deviant. It can be inferred that exaggerating negative aspects of 'the other' represents a means to emphasising the normative aspect of the dominant group's characteristics.

Post #3 also makes use of racially offensive vocabulary and exaggeration as a figure of speech. However, what is the role of the comparison of sexual nature? First, the joke leaves no room to identify the possible ice cream bar symbolic 'gender'. Initially, it may seem an irrelevant

detail. However, this aspect could reveal the manifestation of an intersectionality element of homophobia on top of the racism. This has been mentioned because the data also reveals that, in some Facebook URLs of derogatory nature, it is possible to identify offensive expressions negatively associating blackness with homosexuality, such as, for example: 'Besides being a fagot, he's also Black' (found in the URL 0086-PG-D-FP; 2016; 730 'likes'). In this case, playing simultaneously with sexual orientation and race, the discourse amplifies its discrimination capacity. Nevertheless, according to Wade (2010a), some possible meanings that can be attributed to the act of anal intercourse (depicted with strong vocabulary in **Post #2**) can include, for example: a) an act of subordination; b) humiliation; c) domination; and d) lack of power. The joke states that being penetrated on the anus it is better than to be a 'Black guy'. Consequently, it can be inferred that the intention is not towards exalting the possible pleasures and satisfaction of this sexual act, but rather its negative aspects. Thus, the joke conveys the picture of a 'humiliating' subservient and powerless condition that, potentially, can be considered even more dignifying than to be *Negro*. Ultimately, the embedded discourse is that the symbolic social space of *Negro* people is even below the lowest level of human dignity.

Post #4 is quite tricky because it starts developing an argument that, initially, seems to propose breaking the flow of derogatory jokes but, in fact, it endorses them striping humanity from *Negro* people. It is a different type of discursive construction but, in essence, it still conveys the same colonial-like white supremacy ideologies seen in the previous posts. Removing the humanity from *Negro* people is a way of objectifying them and, consequently, turning them into legitimate targets of mockery and disqualification. Similarly to other posts already analysed in this chapter, **Post #5** brings again to the conversation the deep-seated idea associating blackness with delinquency, however, deprived of any subtleness and leaving no doubt about its meaning. Finally, **Post #6** conveys a strong idea that blackness would be some sort of God's curse rather than a natural human condition. Moreover, the joke also explores the idea of blackness not only as an undeniable visual marker but also as peculiar and deviant from the 'normal'. In sum, the selection of posts conveys ideologies of white superiority in contrast to degrading and humiliating condition of blackness, alongside association of undesirable character traits such as delinquency and lack of hygiene.

6.2.2 Case study two

The context of this case study encompasses a young interracial couple enjoying their relationship and expressing their mutual affection online. The *Negro* woman (student, twenty-years-old, Rio de Janeiro, 2014) posted a picture of the couple on her public Facebook page, and a sample of the negative reactive posts include the following:

> **Post #1:** Where did you buy this slave? Can you sell her to me? (0635-CV-M; 2014; 44 'likes')

Post #2:   I bet that you have stolen the white guy from his white girlfriend only to take the picture. (0636-GR-M; 2014; sixteen 'likes')

Post #3:   It looks like you are in the *senzala*. (0638-RS-M; 2014; twenty-four 'likes')

Interracial relationships are not new within Brazilian social context and, apparently, they should not cause any surprise nowadays. In fact, interracial relationships have been part of Brazil's history since Portugal settled the first villages in the 1530's especially because the Portuguese men "were unaccompanied by females on their arrival in the country", as reported by the English traveller Koster (1816, p. 385). Moreover, interracial relationships have been at the core of the formation of Brazilian society and its miscegenated population. Nevertheless, what must be highlighted, and these jokes bring to the surface, is that colonial interracial relationships were not considered legitimate bonds (and, consequently, neither their offspring). The Catholic Church (a powerful and influential institution in colonial society) considered that unions between white male Portuguese settlers with indigenous and African women were illicit and sinful (Bethel, 1984). However, even so, they still happened. They did not have the same status of a 'regular' and official relationship as with white women, but they did not cease to happen because, for the white settlers, the African women were mostly their sexual objects. This context contributed to the development of an ideology that positioned white and *Negro* women in contrasting oppositional poles. By one hand, white women represent the basis of a 'good family', respectability, obedience and chastity. On the other hand, *Negro* women have been associated with sexual permissiveness and lack of moral traits.

Thus, it can be inferred that, in essence, the three posts convey discourses disqualifying the particular *Negro* woman influenced by the ingrained colonial ideology. The embedded message is that her relationship is not legitimate enough since the users claim that she had 'stolen' the white partner from a white (and consequently genuine) woman. The claim explores not only the alleged lack of legitimacy but also the undesirable character trait of delinquency. Furthermore, the underlying discourse also highlights that she is not in equal standing with the white partner because, suggesting that she is 'a slave on sale', means that the white partner is above her (similar to a master), while she is reduced to the condition of a merchandise. Finally, recalling the figure of *senzala* in **Post #3** represents that her 'original' and, 'deserved' social space is below or behind the Big House (*Casa Grande*), but not in equal conditions to whiteness.

6.2.3   Summary

Therefore, in conclusion to this section, it can be observed that the discourses embedded in the sample of posts represent the manifestation of white supremacy ideology. Within that, they clearly establish differentiated social positions of superiority vs inferiority and lack of legitimacy.

The figures of speech do vary from one another, but the ingrained elements of whitening ideology are present and manifested. The oppositional dualities between whiteness and blackness are exaggerated as a means to highlight 'the other', the different and the deviant. The discourses also strip humanity from *Negro* people to legitimizing the mockery of the objectified subject. Finally, they try to sustain inequality making evident that *Negro* women are not in equal standing with white male people since the latter represent the summit of modernity, civilization and the aspirational social progress that Brazilian dominant elite has been pursuing for so long.

6.3 Conveying whitening ideology through laughter

Another revealing aspect emerged from the derogatory data is that in several occasions the users do not explicitly verbalise their opinion about a derogatory post. Instead of that, they simply display expressions that represent laughter. There are several forms to represent that on social media but usually they employ some type of onomatopoeia to suggest the sound of laughter and jeer such as, for example: a) kkkk; b) rrrrr; c) rsrsrsrs; c) ahahaha; d) LOL[67]; and e) the use of graphic icons known as emoji. However, the important questions are: 1) what is the relevance of this manifestation; and 2) what does it mean? Laughter is important because it contributes to concealing identification with discriminatory discourses but without sounding explicitly racist. They provide a convenient escape route for people expressing what it might not be appropriate to verbalise openly (Dahia, 2010). Laughter also represents a detachment between the person and the subject of mockery, meaning that he/she is standing at a higher position in relation to the subject of the humour (Halfeld, 2013). In addition, Weaver (2011b, p. 14) brings similar argumentation saying, "Humour and laughter are created from, and convey, a sense of superiority over the object of laughter." There are also authors who address laughter as 'lulz' or 'lolling' but, in essence, the arguments are convergent with what has been discussed since they understand that they represent the phenomenon of collective and dissociated amusement of few at the expenses of others (Philips, 2011; Mantilla, 2013; Milner, 2013). Thus, the following case studies contribute to illustrate the manifestation of this type of discourse.

6.3.1 Case study one

The context of this first case study encompasses a sample of four jokes about *Negro* people displayed in different Facebook communities. Each of them is followed by comments where the users manifest their endorsement with a variety of amusement expressions.

> **Post #1:** Why there is no black food? Because it would steal its nutrients.
> (0174-AGB-D-FP; 2013)

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[67] LOL stands for Laugh out Loud (Milner, 2013)

Comment #1:	LOL! (0343-MFK-M; 2013)
Post #2:	A Black man passed away and soon after arriving in heaven, an angel asks for his name. In reply, he says 'Leonardo Di Caprio'. The angel then says 'come on, you are pulling my leg! Tell me the truth'. However, the Black man insists and then the angel calls the head office enquiring: can you confirm if the Titanic sank or went on fire? (0188-PGMG-D-SP; 2015; 117 'likes')
Comment #1:	kkkkkkkkk (0520-AS-F; 2015)
Comment #2:	I have enjoyed the joke! kkkkkkkkkkkkkkkkkkk (0524-CR-F; 2015)
Post #3:	A Nigger meets a hot blonde woman in a party. They go to her place and there he finds that she is well off. He get nuts. They go to her bedroom where there is a large full-HD flat TV. The woman lays down on the bed completely naked and says to him; 'come my Nigger and do what you know how to do best than anyone else, making justice to your race'. He then grabs the flat TV and runs away. (0151-LC-D-SP; 2016; eight 'likes')
Comment #1:	That was amazingly funny. kkkkkk (0537-DB-M; 2016)
Comment #2:	kkkkkkkkkkkkkkk (0538-BM-M; 2016)
Post #4:	Why a Black pregnant woman expecting triplets was arrested? She was charged for gang formation. (0167-HM-D-SP; 2013; four 'likes')
Comment #1:	Even my mother found it funny. Kkkkkkkkkkkkkkkkkkkk (0476-JN-UG; 2013)
Comment #2:	ahahahahahahahahahahahahah (0479-RMF-M; 2013)

As it can be observed on the four examples displayed (**Post #1** to **Post #4**), there is clear evidence of the expression of amusement by the users, and the longer the onomatopoeia, the funnier it may have sound for the person. These expressions of laughter are challenging to interpret because they can be ambiguous. On the one hand, they can represent that the person has simply enjoyed the joke that has been posted and considered it amusing and harmless. However, on the other hand, they can also represent an endorsement to the discourse embedded in the disparagement humour. The sociologist Billig (2001, p. 277) argues that "the person finding the joke funny is implicitly accepting those stereotyped assumptions about the nature of the other". In other words,

what the author is saying is that the person is expressing agreement with the disqualified and caricature depiction of 'the other' embedded in the joke, or taking that portrayal as natural, acceptable and consistent with reality. Watson (2015, p. 410) explains that, according to Freud's psychological theory of relief, people laugh, "To release emotional or psychic tension and this produces pleasure". Indeed, this is a possible analytical approach to the behaviour found in the selected posts on Facebook. However, it does not change the fact that their 'source of relief' to releasing their psychic tensions and achieve pleasure is comprised of ridiculed *Negro* people. Dahia (2008, p. 705) advocates, "Mocking of someone is equivalent to turn the person powerless, make him/her weaker and infantilised".

Consequently, the laughter of these users represents a subtle and not verbalised agreement with the derogating discourses embedded in the humorous posts. Moreover, the laughter also represents a peculiar form of manifestation by the users of these communities because, given its ambiguity, it provides them with a convenient escape route. It means that they cannot be immediately pointed out as supporters of that discourse. This convenient escape route is consistent with the easy social navigation in Brazil provided by what the anthropologist DaMatta (1986) has coined *jeitinho* (tap-dance) previously discussed in section 3.2. Concisely, it means that people skilfully dodge themselves from the contestations of this type of attitude claiming that they were simply 'friendly' and harmless jest. However, on the other hand, it also intrigues the fact that they find amusement in discourses that diminish the value of other people. On this regard, Fonseca (2012, p. 23) also questions the meaning of the laughter in derogatory jokes and he advocates that "the act of laughing at the other suggests that the person believes that he/she has relative superiority over the laughable subject. It highlights the identity gap between him/her and the virtual object of laughter."

6.3.2 Case study two

An additional intriguing aspect observed is an indirect effect of the laughter of one person in relation to other users on Facebook. This is said because if one sees that somebody else has considered the post funny and amusing, he/she can feel at ease to expressing his/her jeer as well fearless of any impact or consequence since he/she is not the only one laughing about the content. Clear evidence in this direction lays in the fact that it is not difficult to find that laughable comments conveyed through the mentioned onomatopoeia expressions is followed suit by others in the sequence, what ultimately can represent a different facet of the endless echo in the cyberspace of racist discourses. To illustrate this aspect, the context of this case study comprises a joke posted on 02/11/2013 when that triggered 38 comments and twenty-one of them are laughs.

Post #1: A vulture had swallowed a diamond and the owner of the precious stone hired a man to kill the bird and retrieve it. When the man arrived to kill the bird, there were hundreds of them flocking

together and just one apart. Then he shot exactly that lone bird and it happens it had swallowed the diamond. The owner was surprised and asked how he knew. The man replied that when Black becomes rich he does not mingle. Kkkkkkkkkkkk (0129-LPP-D-SP; 38 comments; 115 'likes', 02/11/2013)

Comment #1:   It is just a joke. Kkk (0500-MS-F, 03/11/2013)

Comment #2:   That was awesome! Kkkkkkkkk (0508-MJ-F, 06/11/2013)

Comment #3:   Cool! Kkkk (0507-PJP-M, 06/11/2013)

Comment #4:   kkkkkkkkk (0871-IQ-F, 12/11/2013)

Comment #5:   kkkkkkkkkkkkk (0872-BR-F, 12/11/2013)

Comment #6:   I love this joke! Kkkkkkkkkkkkkkkkkkkkkkk (0503-AA-F, 22/11/2015)

Comment #7:   kkkkkkkkkkk (0866-LA-M, 22/11/2015)

Comment #8:   kkkkk (0869-SS-F, 02/11/2016)

There are two relevant aspects to mention concerning this thread of comments. First, it is clear that the joke triggered several laughable expressions, and the longer the onomatopoeia, the funnier is may have sound to the user. Second, different from the approach adopted in all the previous case studies, I have indicated the exact date the comments were posted. The reason is that it contributes to reveal the manifestation of the long tail as previously addressed in section 5.4. Therefore, as it is possible to notice, the joke kept engaging new users from its original publication on 02/11/2013 up to 02/11/2016, or exactly three years afterwards. In addition, rather than returning users, it has attracted mostly new one since 30 unique users made the 38 comments.

As such, Fonseca (1994, p. 5) argues that discriminatory humorous messages in Brazil addressed towards *Negro* people are "oftentimes made either by 'white' and 'whitened' people". This argument represents an important remark within the scope of the present study. First, because it means that white people are amongst the ones constructing, disseminating and reinforcing the racist discourses on Facebook. Second, because 'whitened' means that not necessarily every person who engages in the racist practice are solely whites. However, it means that colonial-like white supremacy ideology is internalised across different racial groups, and it is naturally manifested in people's discourses. In fact, the previous discussion developed in section 2.6.3 represents a strong supporting evidence of this argument, because the literature reveals that, oftentimes, *Negro* women learn from childhood, within the context of their own homes, to dislike Afro hairstyle and praising whitened straight hairstyle as the sole genuine feminine beauty pattern. Within that, the following

posts contribute to illustrate this argument. They have been published in support to jokes in two different Facebook communities.

> **Post #1:** Even though I am Black myself, I love jokes about Blacks. One thing is to be racist, and other is to find amusement in a joke. How long does it take for a Black woman take the trash out of the house? Nine months. Kkkkkkkkkkkkkkkkkkkk (0446-IR-M; 0068-FF-D-SP; 2014; thirteen 'likes')

> **Post #2:** Pay attention: Black is colour and *Negro* is race. Do not make confusion. Unfortunately, the ones with most internalised prejudice are ourselves *Negros* (except me), because we are always in the defensive position about any silly stuff. (0873-SP-F; 0129-LP-D-SP; 2013)

Therefore, in conclusion, it appears that on Facebook, the relevance of the person's racial group is reduced because the whitening ideology influencing his/her perception plays a more prevalent role. This way, people of different racial groups, including *Negro*, not only find amusement in the derogatory jokes, but they also naturalise and grant legitimacy to them. In addition, granting legitimacy to the mockery provides a navigation strategy to the non-whites across the colour continuum (see section 2.5.2) in such a way to allowing him/her to keep a distance from the lower positions in the racial hierarchy and getting closer to the opposing pole.

6.4 Silencing of the opposing voices

Whilst the predominant discourse circulating in the set of derogatory Facebook URLs convey negative perceptions of *Negro* people, it is possible to observe that there are also some opposing views taking place in the same arena. However, it is interesting to understand how this dynamic develops once some users express disagreement with the dominant view.

6.4.1 Case study one

This case study encompasses a post conveying a series of jokes about *Negro* people followed by the comment made by a female user displaying her disagreement with the content. Her comment triggered a series of others displaying disdain for her opinion and endorsing the initial jokes.

> **Post #1:** Why do the Blacks only eat white chocolate in the cinema? To avoid biting their own finger.
>
> What shines most in a Black? The handcuffs, when he is not holding a knife to rob the bank.

Why Blacks do not attend evening school? To avoiding being failed by absence.

What is the difference between a tin full of shit and a Black? The tin.

(0170-ML-D-SP; 2014; sixteen 'likes')

Comment #1: How disgusting. What did you have in your mind when you published this offensive post? (0197-AS-F; 2014)

Comment #2: Today's best! (0196-YM-ML-M; 2014)

Comment #3: Fuck off and stop whining. I am just playing around. (0200-ML-M; 2014)

Comment #4: Where is the racism here? It is just a joke. (0200-ML-M; 2014)

Comment #5: kkkkkkkkkkkkkkk (0202-MR-M; 2014)

Comment #6: Fuck you! (0203-FH-M; 2014)

Comment #7: I cannot stop laughing! (0210-AR-F; 2014)

Comment #8: Too much mimimi[68]. (0200-ML-M; 2014)

These examples contribute to reveal that, by challenging discriminatory discourses on Facebook, one faces disdain by the proponents of such ideologies and they attempt to silence and discredit opposing voices. Moreover, in convergence with the discussions developed in the previous section 6.3, it can be observed that expressions of laughter and jeer also plays an endorsement role in this process of discrediting opposing voices. Even though expressions of laughter can be quite ambiguous in relation to the person's intent, it is considered that, within the context of the thread of jokes, they represent agreement with the mockery. This picture leads us to the following question: would a Facebook URL of derogatory nature be the appropriate arena for expressing opposing views? According to Manfred (2012, p. 2), on social media platforms, "the person with the loudest, most inflammatory opinion gets the most attention". Moreover, as previously addressed in section 5.5, the users who engage in this type of derogatory conversation appears to share common values, beliefs and ideologies. Therefore, apparently, challenging discriminatory discourses on Facebook communities of derogatory nature may not be the most fertile ground for expressing opposing views.

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[68] Differently from the onomatopoeia expressions of laugher and jeer, this particular expression is used in colloquial conversation to expressing the idea of exaggerated and unjustifiable whining by a person.

The escalating posts trying to silence the opposing voices represent, in fact, an attempt to defend their set of shared values, beliefs and ideologies. The defence has been made either aggressively making use of strong swear words, endorsing the discourse and/or discrediting the opposing view with laughter and classifying them as mere whining. With regard to expressions of whining, in particular, it is interesting to observe that much more than a linguistic resource, it conveys something else. Classifying opposing views as whining means that the other person's standpoint is worthless and deserves no attention. So that, whatever the opponent says is literally reduced to this minimalistic verbal expression *mimimi* that, in essence, is meaningless in Portuguese.

6.4.2   Case study two

With regard to this second case study, it reveals a different type of defence of shared beliefs and ideologies making use of other elements to amplifying the offence. The context of the original derogatory post (published in the URL 0220-PN-D-SP; 2015; 2,743 'likes') encompasses a group of five white female undergraduate students of medicine making fun with their faces painted in black. Some users considered the post offensive to *Negro* people and expressed their concerns as the sample below illustrates.

Post #1:   This type of behaviour is not expected from future female medical doctors. It is completely inappropriate. (0719-DM-F; 2015)

Post #2:   Honey, I know why you took it personal and you are mad about it. You are fat and dates a *Negro*. Therefore, you should indeed feel offended. I understand. Kkkkkkkkkkk. (0711-CC-F; 2015; three 'likes'*)*

Post #3:   Do you know what irony means, stupid? The girls are just playing around. For sure, you must be Black. (0708-LL-F; 2015)

Post #4:   These people complain about everything. (0714-VT-M; 2015)

Post #5:   Do you see? Lots of *mimimi* leads to that my dear: reaction! (0839-HF-M; 2015)

Both the female user 0719-DM-F who challenged the post and several others expressed that they considered the post offensive to *Negro* people in general because the so-called blackface[69] recalls racist practices. On the other hand, in the same URL there are dozens of other voices

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[69] It stands for a makeup applied to a performer playing a Black person especially in a minstrel show (source: https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/blackface, Accessed on 21/09/2017). Moreover, within Brazilian social context, blackface jokes and performances are not seem positively by the *Negro* movement because for many years, *Negro* actors were not allowed to perform leading roles in soap operas and, instead of that, white actors had their faces painted in black to performing such roles (Araújo, 2000)

advocating that the post was harmless. However, the fact is that the post with the five white girls triggered a series of heated debates in that specific arena. Within that, it is possible to observe that racism and the past slavery heritage is an inconvenient subject matter in Brazilian society. Therefore, the posts contribute to revealing that voices challenging attitudes considered of racist nature (that for some may represent simply harmful jest) are silenced with discourses bringing additional racist ideologies as the one seen in **Post #2**. Moreover, discrediting the relevance of the debate is another discursive strategy to striping its legitimacy as something not worthy of a wider debate. Furthermore, still in **Post #2**, it is possible to observe that the embedded discourse reveals the intersection of race and politics of beauty. Claiming that a possible affective relationship with a *Negro* person would be an 'offence' means, in fact, that the female user 0711-CC-F is positioning her opponent in the lower rankings of the racial hierarchy. In addition, bringing obesity to the conversation represents another way to amplifying the otherness in her opponent recalling that the dominant beauty standard is, primarily slim, white and blonde-haired woman such as the five girls. Therefore, what is deviant from this standard is not considered pretty enough.

6.5   Chapter summary

In conclusion, it is important to highlight that the data reveals that, to date, colonial ideologies are very strong and vivid in the collective mind-set. Supporting evidence for this argument is found across several posts analysed in this chapter through expressions such as: a) cotton fields; b) *Negros* on sale; c) whip; d) humans vs Blacks; e) Nigger; f) slave; and g) *senzala*. They represent the verbal manifestation of Brazilian white supremacy ideology that has been consistently reproduced, reinforced and, on top of that, transmitted across different generations. Consequently, this suggests that, despite the claims that Brazilian society is exempt of racism, due to its 'racial democracy', the data reveals otherwise. In fact, racism is learned, internalised and naturalised in people's discourse. Convergent with this argumentation, Nogueira (2013, p. 24) says that "although colonial period is over, its rationale still remains running within the social relations [in Brazil], structures of power, social division of work, production of knowledge and identities".

Furthermore, I argue that *Negro* people in Brazil, and women, in particular, have been experiencing several relevant symbolic achievements over the years. Nevertheless, people who still nurture the belief that they should not go that far from the *senzala* constantly challenge their attempts to moving out of their ascribed symbolic social space of inferiority. Namely, getting out of their ascribed inferior social space exposes them to the modern-day *pelourinho* (i.e. Facebook), becoming the target of racist virtual whipping (i.e. derogatory posts and associated comments). Such 'exemplary' punishments are inflicted on them with the purpose of re-establishing the 'original' balance concerning racial hierarchy and legitimate national identity. In other words, given that an important unwritten 'rule' regulating racial relations in Brazil is that '*Negro* knows his/her place' [of inferiority], the punishments remind him/her of that. Within this context,

Chapter 6

Facebook enables people perform and articulate racist practices motivated by colonial-like white supremacy ideologies. In addition, successful upward social mobility achieved by *Negro* women is oftentimes ridiculed and laughed at. Finally, opposing voices are silenced and discredited, in such a way to keep the status quo unchanged.

Chapter 7:   Counter-racist discourses on Facebook

Previous chapter 6 revealed that, in Brazil, white supremacy ideologies are still very strong and vivid in the collective mind-set. In addition, such ideologies are transmitted across different generations, reproduced and reinforced, such as in an echo chamber effect. Consequently, this picture leads us towards an important question: how do *Negro* Brazilians (women, in particular) break this cycle? In order to persuade people to come out of echo chambers, Bessi *et al.* (2017) say that it is necessary to deconstruct the ideology that ties people together. Thus, in this chapter, I argue that, within the context of Facebook in Brazil, Afro hairstyle embodies the most relevant political response to racism, not only questioning Brazil's 'whitened' hegemonic aesthetics ideals but also most challenging white supremacy ideologies. The discourses grounded on Afro hairstyle aims at conveying a renewed perception of blackness, whilst also granting the necessary legitimacy to *Negro* women as an important and genuine constituent of Brazilian society, and in support to their upward social mobility.

Furthermore, the analysis of the counter-racist discourses on Facebook raises a second relevant question: how does it differ from previous anti-racist movements in Brazil? First, it is possible to observe that over time the whitening ideology and 'racial democracy' have been influential elements composing anti-racist discourse in Brazil. However, they have contributed more towards the denial of the existence of racism than at combating it. In addition, the lack of political power demobilised and fragmented the *Negro* movement for several decades and only from the mid-1980s it re-emerged. The literature also reveals that, concurrent with the emergence of the feminist movement, *Negro* women were at the forefront of the resurgence of the *Negro* movement. Consequently, my argument is that they differ in three major aspects: 1) social media platforms enables ordinary *Negro* women have their voice heard and amplified, 2) intertwined with the previous aspect, the technology also enable the decentralisation of the construction of the anti-racism discourse, and 3) social media is empowering ordinary *Negro* women to gain greater political independence.

The development of my argumentation is supported by critical analysis of 72 public Facebook URLs of empowering nature (see section 4.2.2). Similar to the approach adopted in Chapter 6, this data set has been explored inductively and deductively aiming at allowing the emergence of the most relevant narratives. This process led me to identify the following key counter-racist narratives: 1) Afro hairstyle as a symbolic marker of political positioning, 2) praising Black beauty[70] to boost individual and collective self-esteem, 3) empowering through sharing

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[70] I employ Black beauty rather than *Negro* beauty first because the terminology is very familiar in Brazil. Whilst some studies adopt *Beleza Negra* (*Negro* beauty), others adopt Black beauty. Second, because it allows a better connection with the international literature addressing the topic and cited in this chapter.

similar lived experiences of racism, and 4) conveying the idea that *Negro* people (women in particular) are no longer voiceless as they were in the past.

7.1   Afro hairstyle as a symbol of resistance

Within Brazilian social context, Afro hairstyle represents a relevant symbolic tension point where ambivalent ideologies are manifested. By one hand, for a long period, it has been a sort of magnet of several disqualifying associations and negative portrayals that diminish its aesthetic value (Xavier, 2013; Quadrado, 2015). Within that, the list of pejorative names employed in describing Afro hairstyle is immense, including, for instance[71]: a) hard hair; b) kinky hair; c) witch's broom hair; d) steel wool hair; e) hopeless hair; f) poorly kept hair; g) messy hair; h) untamed hair, amongst several others (Caldwell, 2003; Edmonds, 2007; Oliveira, 2016). This myriad of terminologies is oftentimes employed against both *Negro* men and women, but the latter represents the preferred target of such insults because, within Brazilian social context, the hairstyle is an important element of femininity, beauty, self-esteem and also a racial marker (Souza, 1990; Caldwell, 2003). Consequently, insulting the Afro hairstyle intersects with gender and race, meaning that the insult not only removes any trace of Black aesthetic value but also places *Negro* women in an inferior position in comparison to their white counterparts. Moreover, disqualifying Afro hairstyle contributes towards reinforcing the deviant aspect of 'the other' whilst, indirectly, strengthening the normative role played by the dominant aesthetic standard.

On the other hand, the Facebook data reveals that female Afro hairstyle also represents the most important element of empowerment of *Negro* women and challenging colonial-like racist discourse. Supporting evidence for this argumentation is found in a political movement led mostly be *Negro* women bloggers called 'My hair, my crown', where they aim to convey the message that their hair represents a symbol of their power (Aronovich, 2012; Lima, 2015; Lima, 2016; Alvez, 2017). Furthermore, one my interviewees, Maria Lúcia da Silva (Amma Psique Institute, São Paulo) says, "currently in Brazil, Afro hairstyle represents an empowerment movement where you listen *Negro* women saying that they are going through a transition process. However, the interesting aspect is that more than a hair transition they are, in fact, experiencing an internal transition". Within that, *Negro* women have been in the forefront of using Afro hairstyle as an empowered resistance element, conveying a clear political positioning and combating racism. Therefore, praising and accepting their natural hairstyle goes beyond an aesthetic choice and conveys strong political symbolic meanings (Oliveira, 2016). In order to analyse the manifestation of this sort of discourse on Facebook, I bring the following three case studies.

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[71] Their respective meanings in Portuguese are: a) *cabelo duro*; b) *cabelo crespo*; c) *cabelo vassoura de bruxa*; d) *cabelo de Bombril*; e) *cabelo sem jeito*; f) *cabelo malcuidado*; g) *cabelo bagunçado*; and h) *cabelo indomável*.

7.1.1 Case study one

This first case study brings two Facebook posts published by female users describing their self-discovery process as *Negro* women empowered by their natural Afro hairstyle.

> **Post #1:** It is not only your hair that changes when you accept it naturally curled. We also change as an individual… and a lot. (0840-DO-F; 2016; 276 'likes'; 0032-BC-E-FP)

> **Post #2:** My self-discovery process started three years ago. The first step encompassed accepting my natural Afro hairstyle, and only now that I have been admitted into university, my social position as a young *Negro* woman became more salient to me. My university is a predominantly white environment and, therefore, being a woman, *Negra*, poor and beneficiary of affirmative action represents a challenging scenario to me. (0864-AP-F; 2015; 640 'likes'; 0045-LN-E-SP)

With regard **Post #1**, it conveys an idea that the transformation experienced by the female user has gone beyond the aesthetic layer, and reached her in a deeper level as a person going through a process of self-discovery. Moreover, her statement also conveys a message of ethnic identification embedded in the acceptance of her naturally curly hair. In fact, over the years, the ambivalent discourses about natural Afro hairstyle in Brazil have constructed a very challenging scenario for *Negro* women, where many of them have manifested discontentment with their curly hair since childhood, as revealed by different authors (Souza, 1990; Caldwell, 2003; Mikulak, 2011). Consequently, accepting it and praising its beauty contributes towards breaking this damaging equation where Afro hairstyle embodies a myriad of negative attributes.

Moreover, the Afro hairstyle also challenges the hegemonic 'whitened' Eurocentric aesthetic standard that grants legitimacy only to straight hair (oftentimes blonde, such as *Xuxa* and Gisele Bündchen, as discussed in section 2.6.2) and, simultaneously, reveals a renewed perception of what it means to be *Negro* in Brazil. Within that, there is an interesting reflection brought by Souza (1990) where the author argues that being *Negro* in Brazil is not simply granted by birth. In fact, the author explains, a person 'becomes' *Negro* through the acceptance of his/her ethnic identity, values and historical roots. Ultimately, the acceptance of these elements is what validates the process of 'becoming' a *Negro* person.

Convergent with this argumentation, Hall (1990) says that a person's cultural identity (rooted in meaningful historic legacies) makes possible the person to 'becoming' who he/she is. This idea implies a proactive role to be played by the person, rather than passive, meaning that one's ethnic identity is not simply naturally granted, but developed over time and conquered. In addition, in the study 'When I discovered myself *Negra*', Santana (2015a) shares her own ethnic identity self-

discovery process. The author says that since her childhood, she has lived a conflictive relation with her Afro hairstyle, because her grandmother used to comb them in such a way to avoid looking like '*neguinha*' (a pejorative diminutive form for Black female in Portuguese). Consequently, that is the reason why the internal transformation experienced by the female user in **Post #1** matters to her.

As with **Post #2**, the female user also reveals that she has gone through a self-discovery process by accepting her natural Afro hairstyle. However, she brings to the surface a different array of relevant elements in her statement. First, accepting her hairstyle not only contributed to her self-discovery as a *Negro* woman but also to what symbolic social space she may belong. Apparently, her social position becomes more evident to her as she navigates in a social space that embodies different levels of symbolic social privileges and, additionally, in that social space she realises that she is the exception, rather than the rule. In other words, since she is not the norm in that social space, she may indirectly embody 'othernesses' before her peers. This reflection leads us towards the second relevant element that she brings to the surface: the intersection of gender, race, class and the means that contributed to her admission in the university. The combination of these dimensions composes a challenging scenario for her because they reinforce her 'original' symbolic social space that may differ from most of her peers. However, it can be inferred that discovering herself as a *Negro* woman through the natural Afro hairstyle, may contribute to her positioning within that social context and the development of navigation strategies. Therefore, the self-discovery process transcends aesthetic aspects and embodies strong symbolic, material and political positioning that may play an important role for her to succeed in that social context, regardless of the intersectional dimensions she points out.

7.1.2 Case study two

This case study brings three Facebook posts published by *Negro* women conveying two important elements: 1) internalisation of racist beliefs; and 2) abandoning of ingrained whitening ideology.

> **Post #1:** I grew up just like many *Negro* girls who had been taught to reject our own complexion, our hairstyle and our identity. I did not understand my mother's reason for constantly teasing me about my hair. However, I remember two things clearly. First, the pain of the straightening process she made me go through on a regular basis. Second, her warnings that, if I did not do that, I would be ugly and unattractive [to men]. Nevertheless, do you want to know something? My days of whitening my identity are over. I have decided to empower myself starting with my natural Afro hairstyle. (0852-DC-F; 2015; thirteen 'likes'; 0213-RF-E-FP)

Post #2: A couple of years ago I faced a self-discovery process of becoming a *Negro* woman through my Afro hairstyle, that nowadays I am aware that it is curled, rather than hard, as I got used to hear. I have been taught to hate my wide nose and Afro hairstyle since my childhood, but I was unable to hate my skin tone. Nevertheless, the moment I realised that my blackness is present beyond my skin tone, and encompasses all my features, my natural Afro hairstyle acquired a renewed and empowered meaning to me. (0854-TA-F; 2016; 96 'likes'; 0217-CMBP-E-SP)

Post #3: The *Negro* woman's hair embodies the symbol of our *Negro* race. (0849-TR-F; 2014; three 'likes; 0218-CES-E-SP)

The account of these female users reveals that racist beliefs in regard to the reduced value of Afro hairstyle and *Negro* traits, such as nose and skin tone, are learned and internalised since childhood, converging with arguments developed in previous studies such as Souza (1990), Caldwell (2003) and Mikulak (2011). In addition, they are learned within the family realm, what suggests that such beliefs are passed on from one generation to another. Additional supporting evidence for this argumentation is found in a recent article published in an influential feminist blog called 'Black Women of Brazil'. The author reveals the accounts of lived experiences of racism of three *Negro* women. One of them, says that her four-years-old nice requested to have her Afro hairstyle straightened because she had seen her mother, her godmother and the grandmother doing that (Cha, 2018). The author also says that, since the little girl had no positive reference regarding her natural Afro hair within her own immediate family, she dislikes it. Namely, these women bring to the surface the fact that the hegemonic 'whitened' beauty ideal is incorporated from an early age, in such a way that disliking Afro hairstyle becomes natural and ingrained.

Moreover, their mothers, concerned with their future female attractive potential and unable to lighten their skin tone, or removing any other characteristic *Negro's* trait, adopted the only strategy within their reach (i.e. straightening their hair). I argue that the aim was to lessen, as much as possible, an evident racial marker represented by the Afro hairstyle and allow them to navigate within the colour continuum more closely towards the white pole and move away from the *Negro*. Convergent with that, Arraes (2015) says that over time in Brazil, it has been constructed a perception that it is better to move away from the '*Negro* label' whenever possible due to its several negative associations. In addition, this picture also reveals that the negative perceptions around Black aesthetics are ingrained not only in the mind of racist people but also within the mind of 'whitened' persons, such as the mother of these women. Consequently, the negative perceptions become naturalised in Brazilian social context and transmitted across different generations over time. In fact, in addition to the naturalisation of such perceptions within the family realm, the process reaches the wider society through its incorporation into popular culture (e.g.: derogatory jokes, popular songs, and TV comedy programmes). There are different studies revealing the

dissemination and reinforcement of several negative attributes in regard to Afro hairstyle on successful popular songs (Caldwell, 2003; Trotta and Santos, 2012), in derogatory humour (Fonseca, 1994; Dahia, 2008; 2010; Fonseca, 2012) and TV comedy shows (Machado and Muniz, 2013). Therefore, the transition of such pejorative and derogatory discourses from popular culture towards social media represents the continuation of this naturalisation process and the reinforcement of the negative attributes.

The second important element present in **Post #1** and **Post #2** encompasses the conscious decision to cease fostering the 'whitened' beauty ideal that they have been taught to give credit to since their childhood. These women have said 'enough' for themselves and, indirectly, for the people around them because, posting these comments on Facebook suggests that they are willing to resonate their decision towards a wider audience. Another interesting aspect in the decision taken by these women is that they have been taken in a recent past. The user in **Post #2** in the first case study says that her self-discovery process started three years prior to posting the comment, whilst the user in **Post #2** in the current case study says that the decision had been taken in a couple of years before the post. In addition, Santana (2015a, p. 20) also shares similar experience saying that "I am 30 years old but it has been only ten years that I am *Negra*. Prior to that I was *morena*". What does it mean? It suggests that, given the fact that these women have been taught since an early age to dislike their natural Afro hairstyle, breaking the chains of this internalised belief, may require a considerable amount of energy and self-confidence. Moreover, it contributes towards the reinforcement of the argument that the process to 'becoming' *Negro* may require a great deal of maturity and understanding. Consequently, making sense of (or re-signifying) historic legacies may take time, and probably comes at an adult age.

As with **Post #3**, it attributes a strong symbolic power to female Afro hairstyle as the genuine representation of the racial group, what suggests its relevance. In addition, it also implies a need to adopt a defining symbol to embody all aspects related to blackness in Brazil. Consequently, **Post #3** conveys not only the acceptance of 'becoming' *Negro* but also, indirectly, classifying the whitening ideology as an illegitimate value to *Negro* people.

7.1.3   Case study three

The present case study brings a complementary angle to the analysis developed in the previous cases. The data reveals examples of *Negro* women voicing the acceptance of their ethnic identity first to themselves and then to the wider public. The context of these examples is similar; encompassing posts made by *Negro* women soon after other female users had published pictures sharing their own *Natural* Afro hairstyle.

> **Post #1:**   I strongly believe that accepting your natural [Afro] hairstyle is a political
> attitude to expressing, firstly to yourself, and then to the world around

you, that you accept your real identity. (0853-EM-F; 2014; three 'likes'; 0026-ANZ-E-SP)

Post #2:   We have to accept the *Negro* component that it is within each one of us. (0875-NAP-F; 2015; 0219-OSC-E-SP)

Post #3:   Independence comes primarily with self-acceptance of our ethnic identity. (0874-MIS-F; 2015; two 'likes'; 0012-MNC-FP)

First, the female user in **Post #1** highlights the relevance of accepting the natural Afro hairstyle as a political positioning. However, what is of particular interest in **Post #1** is the fact that the female user stresses that the process is first directed towards oneself, and then to the external world. Namely, before responding to external disqualifying racist discourses on Facebook, *Negro* women may need first to provide an 'answer' to themselves before addressing the voices that aim at diminishing their value. Giving the picture that several of them have been brought up nurturing 'whitened' beauty standards, they would need first to mature their own blackness. Ultimately, this process may allow them to deconstruct their own enduring internalised racism and, in the sequence, challenge the ingrained racism of 'whitened' people.

In addition, in **Post #2** it is possible to find similar discourse where the user shares her own ethnic identity acceptance and suggesting its presence on other people as well. It can be inferred that including a wider audience in this process, she is addressing the African legacy in the formation of Brazilian society. Within that, Arraes (2015) and Santana (2015a) argue that Brazilians usually do not recognise their ethnic origins and neither accept them. They rather prefer avoid being associated with Blackness. In fact, in Brazil, the Afro hairstyle plays a relevant role in this process of ethnic identification because this element "has long been used as an indicator of racial background and a basis of racial classification", as argued by Caldwell (2003, p. 20). In other words, the self-recognition process voiced by these women might also imply that they will be placed in the lower positions of Brazilian racial hierarchy.

As with **Post #3**, the female user stress independence as a relevant element of ethnic self-acceptance. To a certain extent, this discourse converges with an argument advocated by Souza (1990, p. 17) where the author argues that "one of the ways of exercising autonomy is having a discourse about oneself". Consequently, in summary, these women are 'becoming' *Negro* by taking ownership of the discourse about themselves, rather than simply internalising what the world around them provide and that have been teaching to them since early age.

7.1.4   Summary

In conclusion, this section brought to the surface three main relevant aspects concerning the construction of empowering discourse on Facebook based on female Afro hairstyle. First, that

negative attributes and disqualified perceptions around Afro hairstyle are learned and internalised even by *Negro* women since childhood in their own family realm. Such beliefs, influenced by 'whitened' beauty ideals are not only transmitted across different generations, but they have also been incorporated into popular culture and reinforced over time (e.g. songs, jokes, and TV comedy shows). Consequently, circulating also on Facebook in Brazil, they amplify their reinforcement and perpetuation. Second, despite the picture just described, Afro hairstyle also embodies the most relevant element to challenge colonial-like white supremacy ideologies. The data reveals that through the acceptance of their natural Afro hairstyle, women are (re)discovering their blackness and 'becoming' *Negro* persons, rather than keep nurturing 'whitened' beauty ideals inherited from their childhood upbringing. Moreover, more than an aesthetic choice, the process embodies a conscious political positioning. The outcome is that they achieve greater awareness of their current symbolic social space in Brazil and which legitimate space they aim at achieving, regardless of different dimensions of intersecting challenges (especially race, gender and class). Finally, even though Facebook has become a modern-day *pelourinho* for the proponents of white supremacy ideologies, it also enables the enactment of different counter-racist narratives, such as nurturing the improved political significance of Afro hairstyle as the *Negro* women's crown.

7.2   The roles played by Black Beauty on Facebook

Another recurrent aspect emerging from the data encompasses different forms of praising Black beauty as a discursive strategy aimed at deconstructing racist ideologies. My argument is that this strategy is meant mostly towards raising *Negro* women's self-esteem, and granting legitimacy to Black Brazilian beauty. However, there is one aspect of this discourse that indirectly contributes towards the reinforcement of stereotypes attached to *Negro's* over sexualised physical attributes. This aspect is explored in texts and images praising what the users consider unique *Negro's* assets such as, for example: a) sex appeal; b) virility; c) sex appetite above average; and d) and irresistible female body. However, I argue that, in fact, they represent limited perceptions of the social navigation possibilities of the racial group and, ultimately, they do not grant influential social capital to them. Thus, I bring three case studies revealing this type of narrative.

7.2.1   Case study one

This first case study introduces a series of posts extracted from different empowering Facebook communities; however, their context is similar, comprising cases where different *Negro* women were exposed to several negative posts mocking of their appearance and especially of their Afro hairstyle.

> **Post #1:**   This *Negro* woman is beautiful and her natural Afro hairstyle is amazing.
> (0841-TL-F; 2015; 0206-CV-O-SP)

Post #2:   You are a beautiful *Negro* girl. (0110-GA-UG; 2015; 0104-PA-E-SP)

Post #3:   You are gorgeous in any way possible. (0062-MI-F; 2015; five 'likes'; 0104-PA-E-SP)

Post #4:   I just want to say that you are very pretty. (0171-FB-F; 2015; one 'like'; 0104-PA-E-SP)

Post #5:   Disregard this type of negative comment, my dear. You are beautiful. (0842-ING-F; 2015; 0104-PA-E-SP)

Post #6:   She is so beautiful. Why these mad people are doing that? (0844-MSC-F; 2016; 0202-JR-O-SP)

Post #7:   You are a wonderful *Negro* woman. (0843-FGO-F; 2016; three 'likes'; 0202-JR-O-SP)

Initially, the embedded discourses in these posts may look relatively simple in comparison to several others already discussed in this chapter. However, in fact, they are not. On the surface, they may not display very intricate linguistic constructions, but even so, their embedded meaning is relevant. They are relevant manifestations because they have been triggered by a prior event of racism on social media that inspired users to post them. Namely, the fact that someone has been targeted on Facebook made users react to that event in this way. Consequently, rather than expressing their disagreement directly confronting the people who posted the derogatory content, the users have chosen instead to support the victims. Moreover, praising their beauty also represents an attempt to lessen the possible pain and wounds the victims may have experienced in the modern-day *pelourinho* caused by the virtual whipping.

According to Quadrado (2015), beauty patterns in Brazil represent important elements for the establishment of distinctions among different racial groups, and also the rules of qualified and disqualified social visibility. Namely, this dynamic establishes what elements compose the country's proud and legitimate visible face, in contrast to what features represent ugliness or the illegitimate beauty characteristics (see section 2.6.2). Therefore, this argument suggests that beauty standards may represent an additional dimension influencing the establishment of differentiated social spaces for racial groups in Brazil. Within that, analysing the topic from a historical perspective, it is possible to discover other important aspects. While in the 1960s emerged in the US the political movement *'Black is Beautiful'* (Santos, 2000; Quadrado, 2015), its echoes took some considerable time to reach Brazilian leaders of *Negro* Movement. From 1964 to 1985, Brazil was under military ruling and, consequently, any attempt to praising Black Beauty would be strongly repressed. The reason is that the military leaders were against the emergence of ideas and social movements that could challenge not only the dictatorship regime but also shatter the racial 'balance' provided by the 'racial democracy' and their project of building a 'modern' Brazilian

society (Gonzalez and Hasenbalg, 1982; Nacked, 2012). Therefore, within such historical and social context, bringing to the surface debates around racial inequalities was not legitimised and neither accepted by the country's ruling political elite. Therefore, only after the country's redemocratisation process in the mid-1980s that openly praising Black beauty became more feasible (Carneiro, 2003; Trotta and Santos, 2012).

Thus, the statements made by the users in **Post #1** to **Post #7** in support of the subjects of mockery on Facebook convey an adjacent political meaning. In other words, praising and/or giving value to Black beauty conveys a message that challenges the hegemonic 'whitened' Brazilian beauty standard, pushes the boundaries of social acceptance, and attempts to bring both racial groups in equal standing. In addition to this political facet, the discourses are also making an effort towards raising the victims' self-esteem. This argument is supported by accounts of some victims of racism on Facebook interviewed by newspapers and magazines[72]. Several of them have revealed that soon after being subject of racialized posts on Facebook they were afraid of getting out of their homes, concerned that in addition to being recognised by people on the streets, they would also laugh at them. Therefore, praising their beauty becomes an important attitude not only to raising the person's self-esteem but also for them to develop confidence about the feasibility of being *Negro* and valued, rather than *Negro* and inferior.

7.2.2   Case study two

In this second case study, I argue that sometimes the users construct the counter-racist discourse grounded on the beauty of exposed and sexualised *Negro* body. Namely, rather than deconstructing old stereotyped objectified perceptions of both male and female *Negro* body, they contribute towards their reinforcement as a distinguished attribute. Therefore, they aim at empowering *Negro* people but without acknowledging that, indirectly, they are praising limited perceptions of social navigation possibilities for *Negro* people. The construction is made mostly with the support of visual resources such as pictures and memes (see Figure 8) and fewer with texts, but even so, there are some revealing examples on this sense.

The context around **Post #1** and **Post #2** comprises a white woman who had insulted a *Negro* man, comparing him to an ape, what is a common racial insult in Brazil as revealed by Guimarães (2003) and Machado *et al.* (2016). On the Facebook URL where the posts were extracted, there are dozens of comments in opposition to what the woman had done. However, the examples brought here bring revealing elements that explore sexualised stereotyped perceptions around the *Negro* body.

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[72] Source: The secondary data gathered for the present study comprised of 224 news articles (see section 4.2.1)

Post #1: Place this racist woman in a prison cell with ten Afro-descendant men to see what happens to her. (0557-DC-M; 2014; 0115-FSP-O-SP)

Post #2: These white racist women like to insult Black men calling them ape but, in fact, what they love most is a Black cock (0566-BL-M; 2014; 0115-FSP-O-SP)

It can be observed that **Post #1** and **Post #2** explore over sexualised perceptions of *Negro* people and, in these cases, the male genitalia represents a type of 'corrective tool' to be used against misbehaving white racist women. Moreover, **Post #1** brings a revealing contradiction. The user attempts to sound polite adopting Afro-descendant as a racial identifier, rather than *preto* or *Negro*. However, he associates the racial group with delinquency by placing them in prison cells, what reveals the naturalisation of this association in people's mind. Furthermore, the number of people in the imagined cell also conveys a subtle image of overcrowded prisons, giving the fact that this circumstance represents a common scenario in the Brazilian penitentiary system (Adorno, 1991; Erdely, 2017). Within that, it is implied that if inmates are held in overcrowded cells, chances are that their behaviour may be 'less civilised', suggesting that a white woman placed within that environment could be abused by the group of *Negro* inmates. Therefore, aiming at combating racism, the user ends up conveying elements that reinforce several negative stereotypes about *Negro* people (e.g.:savagery, delinquency, and untamed sexual appetite).

In complement to this analysis, **Post #3** encompasses a context where a male user posted a comment in support to a *Negro* woman who had posted a picture of herself displaying half of her upper torso undressed (but without showing the breasts). She has written the word '*Negra*' with reddish lipsticks on her skin and expressed her blackness proud.

Post #3: I do not understand racist people. Every man loves big buttocks and large breasts. Where do they think they have come from? Certainly not from flat skinny European women. Every woman and gay man loves large penis and its respective enthusiastic and hot owner. Where do they think this genetic comes from? African legacy is the answer to both questions. (0865-NBB-M; 2016; four 'likes'; 0045-LN-E-FP)

Similarly to previous **Post #1** and **Post #2**, the aspects highlighted by the user in regard to *Negro* body also explore exaggerated sexualised characteristics (i.e. big buttocks, large breasts and large penis). In addition, the user not only argues that these characteristics are innate in African-descent people but also claims that they represent unanimous elements of sexual desire among men, women and gay men. In addition, it is also interesting to observe the reverse construction that he makes concerning Europe. It can be inferred that the strategy is aimed at inverting the traditional privileged positions attributed to whiteness (embedded in his description of unattractive European women) and constructing a positive view of blackness expressed in the desirable 'natural' genetic

traits. Therefore, in his attempt to supporting the *Negro* woman and expressing his disagreement with racist views concerning *Negro* people, the user indirectly reinforces some reductionist aspects around blackness. In addition to the array of stereotypes, the user conveys elements that explore the exaggeration of *Negro's* features. Within that, exaggerated depictions contribute towards highlighting 'the other' as deviant from the normative hegemonic and the legitimate beauty standard.

Thus, concerning the use of images in support to the victims of mockery and racialized insults on Facebook, Figure 8 brings a sample of this type of message. In this context, rather than expressing their support employing textual messages, the users have chosen this array of images instead.
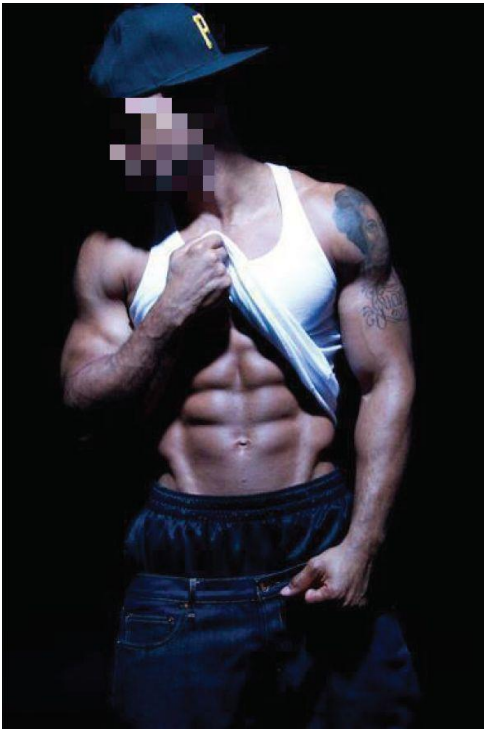
Source: Facebook URL: 0158-SNEL-E-FP; 2013

Source: Facebook URL: 0157-NL-E-FP; 2013

Source: Facebook URL: 0157-NL-E-FP; 2013
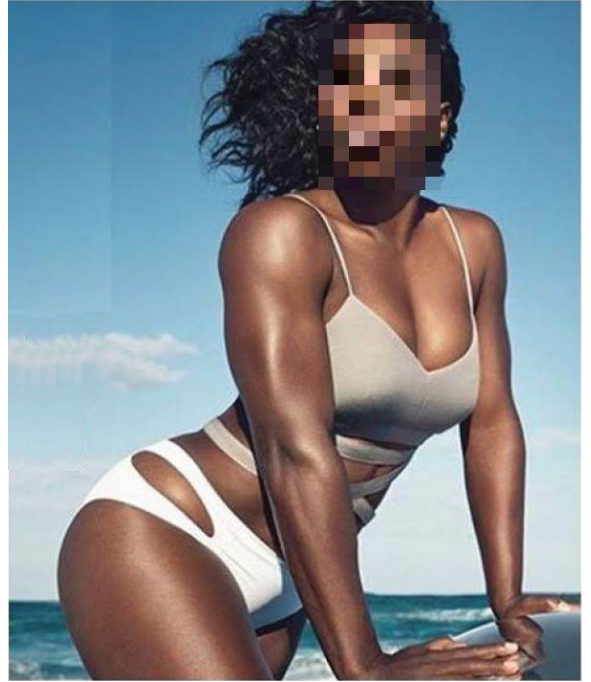
Source: Facebook URL: 0043-PNBP-E-FP; 2016

Source: Facebook URL: PNBP-E-FP; 2016

Source: Facebook URL: ANZ-E-FP; 2013

| Source: Facebook URL: 0157-NL-E-FP; 2017 | Source: Facebook URL: 0157-NL-E-FP; 2017 |
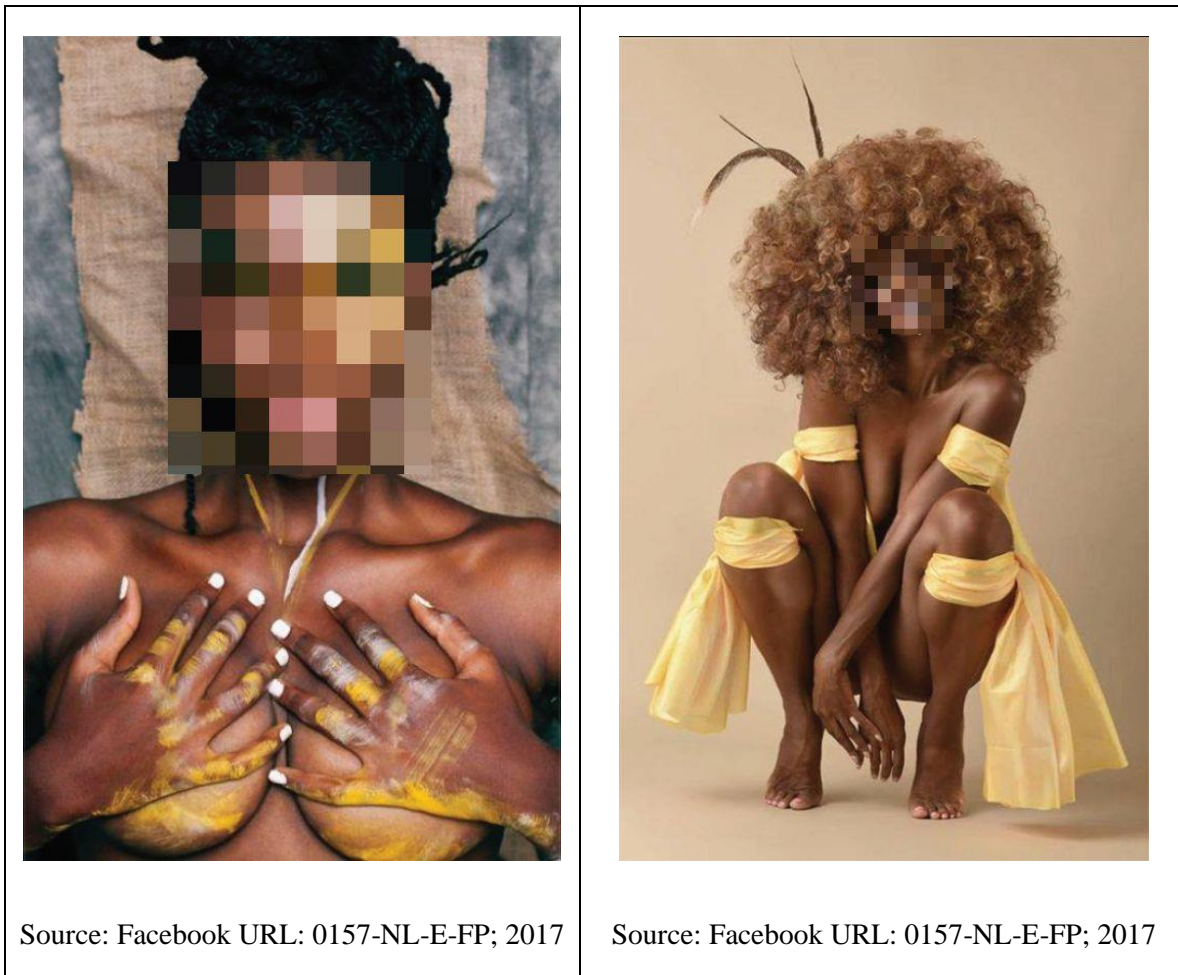
Figure 8: Sample of Black beauty pictorial imagery

However, the important question is; what drives users to construct counter-racist discourses grounded on physical attributes of *Negro* body? I argue that in their attempt to highlighting the Black beauty and combat racism, the users aim at conveying a more concrete and tangible facet of beauty. The well-shaped *Negro* body would represent the materialisation of a beauty pattern that it would be difficult for detractors deny its closeness to perfection. To a certain extent, by exploring the *Negro's* body features on Facebook (either by text or images), the users are emulating the almost perfect ancient Greek sculptures on display in museums. In fact, in Brazilian popular culture, it is well known the colloquial expression "Greek God/Goddess" in reference to someone considered gorgeous. The expression circulates mostly in informal oral communication but sometimes it can also be found in mainstream media and blogs such as, for example, Rogerio (2010), Extra (2014), Borrelli (2015) and Fernandes (2016). The implied message is that the features of the person are almost perfect, highly attractive and irresistible. However, this expression in Brazil is oftentimes employed mostly in reference to white people, rather than in reference to *Negro* people. Therefore, the exhibition on Facebook of well-shaped 'desirable' *Negro* bodies conveys the message that *Negro* people can be as beautiful as white Greek God/Goddess.

Furthermore, whilst *Negro* people in Brazil are oftentimes absent from relevant power structures, the embedded message aims at challenging this scenario with elements that convey a

different type of power. It is a manifestation aimed at teasing the emergence of envy in the minds of their detractors. Namely, they are trying to make evident that only being born *Negro* to be granted with that 'natural' set of physical attributes and sensuality not found in other racial groups. In convergence with that, Corrêa (2006, p. 88) argues that "the 'natural' characteristics and abilities such as strength and sexuality, are commonly associated with *Negro* people, whilst 'intellectual' or cultural activities are within the white's domain".

7.2.3   Summary

Therefore, in conclusion, empowering discourses praising Black beauty as a means to counter-attack racist discourses may contribute towards raising the victims' self-esteem, his/her level of self-confidence, and convey a political positioning that symbolically levels white and *Negro* people in Brazil. Nevertheless, the moment the discourses are constructed on the grounds of elements highlighting predominantly *Negro's* 'natural' physical features, the side effect is the reinforcement of enduring ingrained limiting stereotypes. Furthermore, this type of discourse conveys a reductionist vision of *Negro* people in Brazil, bringing their physical attributes to the foreground rather than elements of their cultural capital. The latter is important because the power structures in Brazil are not under the domain of people with greater physical abilities or the most well shaped bodies, but those with greater cultural and social capital.

7.3   Empowering embedded in shared lived experiences of racism

The data also reveals that a relevant form of counter-racist discourse encompasses manifestations of solidarity with the victims. To a certain extent, even praising the Black beauty, as discussed in section 7.2, can also be considered as a form of solidarity. However, what really calls the attention is a particular form of solidarity represented by the account of similar lived experiences of racism by several users. The argument developed in this section is that the sharing of lived experiences of racism plays the role of connecting like-minded *Negro* women through common pains. The accounts do not necessarily confront the racist discourses directly, but they attempt at restoring the victims' resilience by evidencing that they are not alone and that other people understand the dimension of their pain. Moreover, sharing their experiences also contributes towards establishing bonds among them and inspiring collective combat against Brazilian racism. Finally, it also becomes evident that, in addition to sharing similar experiences of racism, social media enable *Negro* women to have active voice in Brazilian society. Within that, they organise themselves in several virtual communities aimed at empowering them and resisting to Brazilian racism both online and offline.

7.3.1   Single case study

The context of this case study encompasses a post made by a mother of a twelve-years-old girl who was verbally abused in school by some of her fellow pupils. They had made use of insults such as 'ape, dirty Black, kinky hair' among other expressions. The mother explains, in a lengthy and detailed account on Facebook, that the girl did not receive any type of appropriate support by the school and the principal made the girl apologize before the fellow pupils. According to the mother, the principal did that because she understood that the case was more an annoyance to the school than a serious issue. Amongst the dozens of comments posted on Facebook, some of the most relevant comprise the following.

Comment #1:   Only I know what I have gone through. Those were hard times. I was one of the very few *Negro* girls in my school and, in addition, overweight. My mom had two jobs, and she struggled to provide me with the best educational opportunities possible within her reach. Since she is lighter-skinned than me, when she picked me up in school, my fellow pupils used to mock of me saying that my master had come to take me. At school plays, the teachers always assigned me the roles of house cleaner, cook and maid. This type of discrimination hurts and nothing takes it out of my memories. (0053-EC-F; 2015; 35 'likes'; 0104-PA-E-SP)

Comment #2:   When I had her age, I faced exactly the same experiences, and my fellow pupils called me several names. At a certain point, the school principal said that she was fed up with that type of story and I was blamed instead. I missed the interest to attend school but my mom pressured both the school and the city council's educational board. Ultimately, the principal was replaced and I was transferred to another class. (0062-MI-F; 2015; five 'likes'; 0104-PA-E-SP)

Comment #3:   Only those who have already gone through this road are capable of fully understanding how much it hurts. It may look trivial, but after repeatedly listening that you have bad hair, for example, you internalise and give credit to this type of statement. (0850-NMR-F; 2014; two 'likes'; 0104-PA-E-SP)

The posts reveal the construction of a discourse conveying the message: 'I know how much it hurts because I have also been wounded the same way'. Differently from the previous two categories of counter-racist discourses analysed, we do not find discursive elements aimed at deconstructing racist ideologies. What can be observed is an attempt to convey empathy with the victims and supporting them. In fact, it is also interesting to observe that there is an overlap with

the discussion around internalised racism developed in the previous Section 7.1. The same way that *Negro* women are taught, since childhood, to dislike their Afro hairstyle, **Comment #1** to **Comment #3** reveal that lived experiences of racism also took place in their childhood. Consequently, their accounts evidence, first, that lived experiences of racism in Brazil display recurrent patterns across different generations. This is argued because the users are adult women revealing that they have experienced similar circumstances in their own childhood. Second, giving this repetition across different generations, they contribute to unveil the naturalisation of these practices over time. Namely, they continue to happen the same way that these adult women have experienced in the past, suggesting that people naturally replicate them to date. Moreover, they also reveal that such experiences are capable of leaving enduring marks on the people subject of racism in Brazil. Finally, this type of account and other expressions of solidarity, bring to the surface that posting racist discourses on Facebook may be target towards a specific person, but the potential impact is not restricted to that person in particular. It can reverberate and affect several others as well.

Within this reverberation context, one of my interviewees said that when she reads about cases of racism on Facebook, she also feels attacked. She says, "The user is not directly attacking me since he does not know me. However, he is offending all *Negro* women and, at this moment, we recall all our painful past lived experiences of racism, especially during childhood" (Maria Lúcia da Silva; Amma Psique Institute, São Paulo). In addition, another interviewee said; "I feel like it had been target towards myself. It could have been also towards my daughter or a family member and, as a *Negro* person; we share similar pains before these violent acts. In fact, the attitude is individualised but it reaches the *Negro* community as a whole" (Maurício Pestana; Secretariat for Racial Equality, São Paulo). The interviewees' accounts are interesting because they contribute towards reinforcing the evidence that experiences of racism in Brazil oftentimes start at an early age, leave enduing marks on people and such experiences may be painful to process. In addition, their interpretation of the cases of racism on Facebook is that, on the surface, they are targeted towards a single person. However, underneath, they can potentially affect the racial group. In complement to that, Carone (2003) says that whenever a white person commits any type of fault or mistake, the event is attributed solely to him/her at the individual level. Nevertheless, the author continues, the *Negro* person in the same circumstance represents not only himself/herself but also the racial group, meaning that the fault and mistake are collectively attributed rather than individualised. Therefore, this argument contributes to understand the dynamics behind the perception that the individualised event is amplified towards the racial group.

However, what is the practical relevance of sharing lived experiences of racism and understanding that the verbal abuses may affect a wider audience? These manifestations are important because they may inspire like-minded *Negro* women to gather among themselves and speaking out against racist attitudes. Within this context, Facebook enables the emergence of

several empowering communities that try to confront ingrained Brazilian racism by evidencing the harms that it inflicts on *Negro* people. Examples on this regard encompass the following communities[73]: a) 'I know how it feels like', b) 'That was not a misunderstanding but, in fact, racism', c) 'Black consciousnesses', d) 'Precious Black', e) 'Black & also a scholar', and f) 'Bad is not my hair but your prejudice'. What is also interesting to observe is the fact that several of such communities do not restrict their actions to online environment. They also promote workshops, public lectures, educational and cultural activities and meetings.

7.3.2   Summary

In conclusion, this section has revealed that sharing lived experiences of racism represents a form of expressing solidarity with the victims of racism on Facebook. However, rather than directly confronting the proponents of white supremacy ideologies, they attempt at restoring the women's resilience and creating a sense of community (i.e. you are not alone). In other words, sharing similar lived experiences of racism conveys an embedded symbolic message of aggregation and union established through the common pain. In addition, there is a perception that the individualised verbal abuses may reverberate and reach the racial group. Finally, the positive side effect of this painful circumstance is that it also contributes towards the emergence of connections amongst like-minded *Negro* women on Facebook. Consequently, *Negro* women are able to confront contemporary Brazilian racism in the same arena where it has been taking place, by evidencing that these attitudes can potentially cause harm not only to the target of mockery but to the racial group.

7.4   Call to action: jumping off the Facebook page

Different from the previous counter-racist strategies, this one seems to be more active in the sense that it encourages the victims not to silence before the verbal abuses. In conceptual terms, this strategy is particularly interesting because it represents a reverse movement. Namely, whilst the emergence of social media platforms has enabled the transition of racist discourse from offline to online environment, the call to action goes in the reverse direction. It encourages the victims to 'jump off' the Facebook page and go after their legal and institutional citizens' rights in the offline world.

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[73] It is important to explain that, in convergence with the study's ethical approach safeguarding Facebook users' privacy, these are not the accurate names of the communities. They are, in fact, approximations in order to better illustrate the argument.

7.4.1   Single case study

This case study brings a sample of six posts published by users encouraging different victims of racism on Facebook to take practical actions against the people who posted the derogatory content.

Post #1:   It is imperative to denounce it [to the authorities] rather than stay quiet. (0856-FM-F; 2016; 34 'likes'; 0008-GIMN-E-FP)

Post #2:   I suggest that you save a print screen of the racist post and file a police report because racial injury is crime. It is not possible to put an end on this sort of crime just silencing. These people will keep offending others the same way they have done with you. (0861-SGFF-F; 2016; 27 'likes'; 0002-EED-O-FP)

Post #3:   It is necessary to speak out, disclose the names of the people who engage in racist attitudes. A post like this one can be forgotten after some time if nothing is done. Racism is crime. (0860-VG-F; 2015; 0045-LN-E-SP)

Post #4:   It is not enough reporting the case to Facebook. We know that the corporation is slow to reply to these cases. In addition, soon after the community is terminated [by Facebook], the administrator can create another one even worse than the original. Let us denounce it to the police. Send a message to the following e-mail address xxxxx[74] or report through the following web link xxxxx[75]. (0858-RF-F; 2015; 65 'likes'; 0213-RF-E-SP)

Post #5:   You should not silence. Register a case in the public ministry against the person. Racism is crime. (0052-BP-M; 2015; 44 'likes'; 0104-PA-E-SP)

Post #6:   Facebook campaign helps, but it does not solve the issue. The most appropriate reaction must come with the support of law enforcement actions. (0054-PVS-F; 2015; twenty-two 'likes'; 0104-PA-E-SP)

This sample of posts conveys a quite straightforward message suggesting that the victims should take legal actions against the users. Nevertheless, more importantly, is to understand what is not so visible and apparent in these posts. People who engage in derogatory posts on Facebook strongly believe that online anonymity shield them from being held accountable for their attitudes (see sections 3.3.1 and 5.3.4). Moreover, oftentimes jokers argue that their humour is harmless,

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[74] One more, in order to safeguarding user's privacy, the e-mail address will not be disclosed.

[75] Idem

made for entertainment purpose only and that it should not be taken too seriously. Within that, one of Brazil's most successful TV comedian said that, in the past, "categories such as the ugly, *Negro* and homosexuals, did not get offended [by the jokes] because they knew they were harmless" (Jorge, 2015, p. 12). However, different scholars advocate that the jokes conveyed in the TV comedy programme did offend them. The scholars argue that, in fact, the problem is that they did not have a voice to expressing their discomfort and disagreement (Czech, 2015). Therefore, I argue that 'voice' represents the key element in the embedded discourse in the sample of posts.

Based on this reflection, my understanding is that the call to action posts transcend the practical and legal aspects of denouncing the racial injury. In fact, they are conveying the idea that *Negro* women should no longer remain in silence and feel voiceless before such circumstances. Over the recent past, there has been the implementation of several legal mechanisms in Brazil aimed at giving voice to people subject of different forms of abuse (see section 3.4). Therefore, the posts aim at evidencing this aspect to the victims, and suggesting that silencing may not be their best option. Within that, it can also be enquired what role does silence can, eventually, play for the victims. The explanation is that a common defensive mechanism, learned by *Negro* people since childhood, is ignoring racist insults and avoiding open confrontations. The idea behind this strategy is that by ignoring the insults, the subjects of mockery is not providing additional fuel to the person and, eventually, at a certain point, he/she will naturally realise that his/her attitude does not find echo and quit doing that. However, the increasing trend of cases of racism on Facebook in Brazil reveals that, not necessarily, this strategy has been effective enough. Furthermore, Twine (1998, p. 143) says that she found in Rio de Janeiro that "conflict avoidance is a preferred strategy for managing racism among Afro-Brazilians of all classes". Nevertheless, the author continues, the side effect is the maintenance of white supremacy and 'racial democracy'.

Nevertheless, there is an important critical analysis to be done with regard to speaking out about racism in Brazil. In the first place, it is possible to observe that there is a considerable degree of lack of confidence in the effectiveness of the legal system (see section 3.4). Namely, sometimes, the victims do choose to silence not only as a defensive mechanism, but because they consider that the outcome may not be satisfactory enough, in comparison to the energy dedicated to pushing the matter forward, and/or that it may take a long time for something to happen. Second, it is also possible to observe an interesting interplay between social class position and voice power. Overall, *Negro* people in Brazil are less powerful than the predominantly white dominant elite. However, concerning the context of cases of racism on Facebook, it comes to the surface a relevant differentiation amongst the victims. Namely, for affluent and well-known *Negro* people, is more feasible that their voices be heard, than for underprivileged *Negro* people.

Exploring the 42 cases of racism on Facebook identified in the secondary data, two interesting illustrative examples emerge to support the argumentation just developed. Both of them involve *Negro* women however belonging to different social class. The first one comprises an

ordinary citizen (C.F.G., female, twenty-years-old, 2015) that went to a police station to file a report after being racially insulted on Facebook. However, she was persuaded by the police officer not to follow this path because, according to him, it would not lead into an investigation and her case was nothing more than a water drop in the ocean. In contrast, a prominent figure subject of racist insults, equally on Facebook (M.J.C., female, 37 years old, 2015), also went to a police station to file a report. Nevertheless, in a matter of few months, the police had already made arrests and pressed charges against the suspects. Consequently, the argument is that overall, *Negro* people are not as voiceless as they used to be in the past concerning speaking out against racist attitudes since there are several legal mechanisms at their disposal. However, that does not necessarily mean that their voices are evenly heard and/or given the appropriate credit. There is still a considerable chance that their differentiated social class positions may interfere in the process either positively (in case of well-off people) or negatively/limited (when he/she belongs to underprivileged social strata).

7.5   Combating racism in Brazil

There is a vast literature addressing anti-racism practices in Brazil including, for example, Gonzalez and Hasenbalg (1982), Guimarães (1995), d'Adesky (1997), Twine (1998), Carneiro (2003), Domingues (2007), Santos (2009b), Nacked (2012) and Trotta and Santos (2012). This list, without the ambition to be exhaustive on the topic, contributes to reveal some of the most relevant milestones regarding the evolution of the anti-racism movements in Brazil over time. Within that, the relevant question is; how does the current anti-racism on social media differ from previous movements? My argument is that social media platforms are empowering *Negro* women to reverberate their voice, convey their renewed political positioning through a discourse praising the symbolic value of Afro hairstyle and their blackness. Furthermore, the data also suggests that these *Negro* women have understood the possibilities that social media platforms afford to them and, within that, they are using the technology to amplify the reach of their voices in ways that in offline context would be more difficult to achieve. With that, they manage to inspire other like-minded *Negro* women and establish empowering communities both online and offline. As with regard the differences with previous movements, I argue that social media enable the decentralisation of the Brazilian anti-racism discourse. It means that the technology offers the possibility for *Negro* women advocate anti-racism narratives independently from any formal *Negro* organisation, conveying their specific needs and particular lived experiences of racism.

7.5.1   Anti-racism movement in Brazil: brief historical journey

According to Solomos and Back (1996), anti-racism can be considered as a form of political reaction from oppressed people and/or social groups. Moreover, the authors also argue that anti-racism practices and initiatives can be shaped and influenced by different social contexts. Within

that, it is interesting to observe that in Brazil; an important anti-racist discourse was shaped in the 1930s influenced by the dominant ideologies in that social context: whitening ideology and 'racial democracy'. However, rather than combating racism, they denied its existence (Guimarães, 1995). Namely, the denial served the purpose to silence the oppressed people and delegitimise their demands. Convergent with that, d'Adesky (1997) also argues that the belief in the gradual whitening of Brazilian population over time as a result of white European immigration, influenced the anti-racism discourse over the first half of the 19th century. Since the dominant elite considered that within a few decades the population would be predominantly white (see sections 2.4.1 and 2.4.2), the ruling elite considered giving room to anti-racism discourse meaningless. In fact, this scenario, has led to a context called 'silent racism'. It means that whilst negative perceptions in relation to *Negro* people are conveyed in Brazilian society through different means (TV, media, textbooks, jokes, etc.), the overall discourse denies racism and says that racists are 'the others' but not 'us' (Ferreira, 2002). Similar argument has been advocated by Bonilla-Silva (2006) where the author says that the denial of racism and racial inequalities in the US, has led to a paradox situation of racism without racists.

However, it does not mean to say that organised *Negro* moment was inexistent during this same period. In fact, according to Domingues (2007), the origins of the organised *Negro* movement dates back to 1889. However, the movement lack political power to have its voice heard and its demands legitimised by the ruling political elite during the 1930-1940s. The author adds, "as a result of this lack of political power, the *Negro* movement remained practically abandoned for several decades, even by the more progressive political forces" (Domingues, 2007). Moreover, the author continues, the first institutional anti-racism initiative took place only in 1951 with the enactment of the anti-discrimination law known as 'Afonso Arinos Law'. The military ruling during 1964-1985 represented an additional obstacle faced by the *Negro* movement. According to Gonzalez and Hasenbalg (1982, p. 30), the strong military repression "demobilised the *Negro* leadership, throwing them into a type of semi-clandestinely political life" and, consequently, anti-racism public discussion was practically banned. The movement was repressed because the dominant ideology, inspired by 'racial democracy', was that racism was not an issue in Brazil. Therefore, according to this view, the leaders of the *Negro* movement were raising a problem that Brazil did not have (Gonzalez and Hasenbalg, 1982; Nacked, 2012; Trotta and Santos, 2012).

Consequently, only in the mid-1980s onwards that *Negro* movement re-emerged in Brazil. This was possible due to the profound changes in the political context such as, for example, the end of the military ruling in 1985 and the enactment of the country's new constitution in 1988 (Carneiro, 2003). Within that, it is also possible to observe that, different from previous historical periods, *Negro* women take a more forefront and active role in the movement (Carneiro, 2003). In addition, Santos (2009b) reveals that during this period there is a surge of NGOs established and led by *Negro* women. Whilst up to 1980 there were only two NGOs established by *Negro* women,

since 1986 there has been over 40. According to Carneiro (2003), the determinant element in this process was the emergence of the feminist movement in Brazil that incorporated a racial dimension on its discourse and agenda. Still according to the author, this approach gave origin to the expression 'Blackening the Feminism' (*Enegrecendo o Feminismo*) that conveys *Negro* women's specific demands within the feminist movement.

7.5.2 A different anti-racism movement empowered by social media

First, it is interesting to observe the strong influence of the whitening ideology and 'racial democracy' in shaping Brazilian racial relations (see section 2.4). While these ideologies have contributed to the development of the project of a 'modern' Brazil (i.e. whitened Eurocentric), they have also silenced opposing voices and undermined their legitimacy. Within that, the literature reveals that, over a long period, the *Negro* movement became powerless and fragmented, and only in the mid-1980s onwards it has re-emerged. Thus, I argue that different from past fragmentations in the *Negro* movement; social media platforms have allowed the agglutination of initiatives. On top of that, the technology has enabled the amplification of *Negro* women's voice, and this aspect composes one of the most relevant differences afforded by social media platforms.

Furthermore, it is also possible to observe a decentralisation process in the current anti-racism movement. Does it mean that formal *Negro* organisations have lost relevance in representing the demands of the racial group? Not really. In fact, it means to say that rather than relying solely in centralised figures or organisations, the technology enables ordinary *Negro* women have their own individual voice heard and convey their specific narratives. Within that, these women speak the same 'language' of other equally oppressed *Negro* women that may experience similar circumstances of racism. Supporting evidence for this argument is found in several Facebook communities named, for example: a) 'I know how it feels like', b) 'That was not a misunderstanding but, in fact, racism', c) 'Black consciousness', d) 'Precious Black', e) 'Black & also a scholar', and f) 'Bad is not my hair but your prejudice'. Consequently, this emerging leadership, enabled by the technology, inspires other women to deconstruct their whitened minds and 'becoming' *Negro* just like them (see sections 7.2 and 7.3).

Finally, another relevant difference is that this decentralisation process is empowering ordinary *Negro* women to gain political independence and conveying a renewed perception of their legitimate Brazilianness. The data does not offer enough support to assert whether their anti-racist discourse grounded on Afro hairstyle has brought structural transformations in Brazil or not. Nevertheless, it may represent an important starting point to future change for two major reasons: 1) it can contribute towards deconstructing the white supremacy ideology that binds like-minded people together in echo chambers; and 2) it may influence the agenda and discourse of the formal organised *Negro* movement, in a bottoms up movement, to pressure for actual structural changes and implementation of social policies by legislators.

Chapter 8:   Conclusions

8.1.1   Introduction

The context of this research has shown that in spite of enduring racial and social inequalities, a considerable proportion of *Negro* Brazilians (representing 50.94 percent of the country's population), have achieved significant upward social mobility within the past four decades. Nevertheless, colonial thinking such as whitening ideology and 'racial democracy' are still strongly ingrained and vivid in the collective mind-set. Such ideologies fuel negative and limited perceptions of *Negro* people, in such a way that their upward social mobility has been regularly undermined and challenged by the dominant elite.

Within that, it can be observed that a particular way to convey such ideologies without sounding blatant racist is through disparagement humour. The practice is not new in Brazilian social context but with the emergence of major and highly popular social media platforms such as Facebook, there has been a surge of cases of construction and dissemination of racialized discourses on social media. There are important previous studies addressing the issue of disparagement humour towards *Negro* Brazilians. However, there is still a gap regarding studies exploring social media as a contemporary arena for the manifestation and reproduction of racist ideologies and its impact on racial relations. Therefore, this study aims at contributing to filling this gap. Thus, this broad context has triggered the following research questions driving the study:

4. What triggers the manifestation of racial bigotry on Facebook in Brazil?

5. What discourses are embedded in racially oriented derogatory jokes and associated comments posted on Facebook?

6. How the counter-racist narratives are constructed, and what they try to convey.

8.1.2   Main findings

There are three groups of major findings revealed in the study: 1) the predominant victims of racism on social media in Brazil; 2) the profile of the proponents of colonial-like white supremacy ideologies; and 3) the long tail of posts.

Victims of online racism

The data revealed that 81 percent of the victims of racism on Facebook are university-educated, middle class, *Negro* women aged 20-35 years. This finding suggests that racism on social media in Brazil is strongly gendered. They have been targeted for three reasons: 1) the increasing number of *Negro* women attending higher education challenges the ingrained belief that they are

'destined' to perform solely domestic work; 2) the proponents of racialized colonial ideologies consider that *Negro* women's qualified exposure threatens Brazil's whitened national identity; and 3) being in reproductive age, their potential motherhood postpones Brazilian whitened modernity.

Proponents of white supremacy

The data reveals that they are predominantly men (65.6 percent), mostly aged twenty years upwards. They also tend to employ harsher vocabulary (especially swear words) than their female counterparts to belittle *Negro* people. Moreover, the technology enables them to disregard any social distance that might exist between them and the victims because in 76.2 percent of the cases they had no previous relationship with their targets. Furthermore, they also nurture a discourse that online anonymity shield them from being held accountable for their attitude. However, the data also reveals that once they are under the spotlight of mainstream media, they take one of the following actions: a) delete the derogatory post; b) delete their account; c) shift their profile status from public to private; or d) claim that the post was meant to be a harmless joke. Finally, with regard their motivation to engage in posting this type of content, their belief in the whitening ideology encompasses the major driving force.

The long tail of posts

Briefly, it means that a particular derogatory post published on a given date, potentially, can keep engaging users (new and recurring) for a few months and even for around three years. The implication of this finding is that this ongoing derogatory conversation attracts like-minded people, amplifying the reach and reverberation of their hateful voice towards a wide audience for a long time.

8.1.3   Main arguments

According to the literature, racist insults against *Negro* people in ordinary social context is not a new phenomenon in Brazil, and neither disparagement humour discourses likewise. The literature reveals that such practices have been part of Brazilian racial relations for a long time. Therefore, what makes racist attitudes on social media different from ordinary offline social context? I argue that the circumstances triggering the racialized discourses and their reverberation capacity, enabled by the technology, comprise the major differences. The literature reveals that what triggers racist insults in ordinary social context are predominantly conflictive situations such as arguments and strong disagreement among people. Nevertheless, the present study has revealed that this pattern is not present on social media. In fact, since on social media, the proponents of white supremacy ideologies disregard offline social conventions, they have no *crise de conscience* in unleashing racialized insults motivated by their colonial-like ideologies. Furthermore, the long tail of posts of derogatory nature reveals the strong reverberation capacity of such discourses. In

ordinary offline social contexts, conflictive situations triggering racialized insults do not engage a multitude of people and neither trigger long-lasting conversations. However, on social media, users are able to reach an increasingly wide audience and keep the derogatory talk for up to three years. On top of that, the technology also enables them to attract like-minded people and amplify the reach of their voice. Ultimately, the implication of this phenomenon is the reinforcement and perpetuation of negative social representations of *Negro* Brazilians.

Thus, the second main argument developed in the present study is that the upward social mobility of *Negro* women is regularly challenged and undermined by the proponents of white supremacy. Fuelled by colonial-like whitening ideology, these people nurture the belief that *Negro* women are not legitimate representatives of Brazilian national 'whitened' national identity. Moreover, the white supremacists also display discourses conveying the understanding that *Negro* women belong to the lower positions of Brazil's social and racial hierarchy. Consequently, their attempts to moving out from such lower positions demands 'exemplary' punishments. In fact, for the white supremacists, the upwardly mobile *Negro* women are 'trespassers' of the borders of their ascribed social spaces of inferiority. Within that, social media platforms have become Brazil's modern-day *pelourinho*. Namely, from the perspective of the white supremacists, social media is a sort of public square to perform 'corrective whipping' through derogatory humour discourses aiming at restablishing the 'original' balance.

Finally, the literature reveals that the anti-racism movement in Brazil is not a new practice; in fact, there are studies indicating that the origins of the organised *Negro* movement date back to 1889. Therefore, the relevant question is: How the current anti-racism movement on social media differs from previous practices? I argue that there are three major differences: 1) social media platforms enable ordinary *Negro* women to have their voice heard and amplified, 2) moreover, the technology also enables the decentralisation of the construction of the anti-racism discourse, and 3) social media is empowering ordinary *Negro* women to gain greater political independence. However, do these differences imply that the formal organised *Negro* movement is losing relevance in Brazil? Not really. My argument is that the technology enables ordinary *Negro* women to speak their mind freely, share lived experiences of racism and form a network of like-minded people. In this process, they establish new grass-root empowering communities aiming at deconstructing white supremacy discourses. Within that, the study reveals that praising the natural Afro hairstyle comprises a strong element in their discourse, embodying more than an aesthetic choice. In fact, it represents their political positioning in favour of a renewed perception of Brazilian blackness to deconstruct 'whitened' ideals.

8.1.4   Limitations and suggestions for future studies

Even though Facebook is currently the world's prominent social media platform that transcends geographical boundaries, the study has been focused on the Brazilian social context. Namely, not necessarily, the findings revealed here may be found in exactly the same way in different social contexts due to local specificities. However, at the same time that this aspect represents a natural limitation of the research, it also opens the first road towards future studies. Therefore, a possible future investigation could be a cross-cultural study among countries with similar slavery heritage in order to understand how racist ideologies are enacted on Facebook across the different social contexts. Within that, such studies may explore possible overlaps and/or divergent aspects of colonial ideologies shaping racialized and discriminatory discourses on social media platforms.

Although this study revealed that 81 percent of the victims of racism on Facebook in Brazil are *Negro* women aged 20-35 years, this finding cannot be generalised to the whole universe of victims of online racism. The findings were drawn out of a sample of 42 identified and relatively well-documented cases whilst, according to other studies (SAFERNET, 2015), in 2014 there were 11,090 reported cases of racism on Facebook in Brazil. Therefore, as argued in section 5.2.1, these 42 cases represent just a fraction of what happened in this social media platform. However, since this is a qualitative study, this limitation does not represent a hindrance to the critical analysis developed.

Another relevant limitation of the study consisted the challenges faced during the fieldwork trip in Brazil, first due to the unstable political environment in the country at that time that prevented me to having access to national-level policymakers. Even though I managed to interview a couple of state-level and municipal-level policymakers, talking to key informants with a broader view could have added some enriching perspectives and accounts about the phenomenon. In addition, this interaction could have granted me access to other relevant social actors in a snowball effect and expanding the views. The second fieldwork challenge encompassed the denial of several past victims of online racism to be interviewed due to the sensitiveness of the issue for them. There were several attempts to reach several of them but, unfortunately, they were unsuccessful. In the case of prominent public figures, it has proved that gatekeepers do have a considerable level of power and influence towards granting access to the person of interest or not. In fact, it became evident that personal connections encompasses an important element to make things happen. Moreover, in the case of future studies within Brazilian social context, I suggest expanding the geographical distribution of the interviews beyond São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro and encompassing

other regions. It was part of the original research design of this study to carry out fieldwork interviews in the Northeastern city of Salvador[76] however; the key informants contacted cancelled the appointments due to other emerging commitments. Therefore, carrying out interviews in Bahia and/or in the Southern states of Santa Catarina and Rio Grande do Sul[77], for example, can add valuable insights with regard to regional perceptions of racial relations possibly influenced by their respective ethnic origin.

It is also relevant to address that an important aspect that needs to be explored in dedicated future studies encompasses the social impact in peoples' life due to the derogatory discourses on Facebook. It is still unknown, for instance, to which extent, being subject of a series of strong derogatory posts, can bring implications to their lives such as: a) impact in their level of self-esteem; b) affect their sense of belonging; and c) interfere with their ethnic identity. Exploring these dimensions can add an invaluable contribution towards the broadening of the understanding of the social implications of this phenomenon in greater depth. Moreover, it can also provide well-grounded evidence for further discussions and to supporting the possible implementation of social policies to tackling the phenomenon.

Finally, the last limitation lays in the fact that the Facebook data collected did not allow me to draw an extensive demographic profile of the proponents of white supremacy ideologies. In the context of the present study, the explanation for this limitation is that the focus was to work solely with publicly available data spontaneously generated by the users. In other words, it means that the researcher did not provide any type of stimulus for the users manifest their thoughts on Facebook. They have done that naturally on their own. Therefore, in order to have access to detailed information of each and every user identified in the dozens of Facebook URLs, it would demand to obtain written consent from all of them (in this case, 13,595 unique users). Nevertheless, the last suggestion for future study consists in developing a research design encompassing an online participatory study that could be done setting up different Facebook communities (empowering and derogatory). Participating in the debates enacted in such communities could allow the researcher examine how the conversation evolves in real-time, who would be the participants and how they construct their discourses within this context. To a certain extent, this experimental study would allow the researcher observing the racists and counter-racist discourses unfolding in real-time and drawing different inferences out of this dynamic.

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[76] Salvador, capital of Bahia state, is considered the country's blackest city due to its high proportion of self-declared *Negro* population. (Source: http://agenciabrasil.ebc.com.br/geral/noticia/2016-03/os-467-anos-de-salvador-cidade-mais-negra-fora-da-africa - Accessed on 04/10/2017)

[77] Brazil's Southern region has been the highly influenced by European immigration in the early years of the 20th century mainly by people coming from Germany and Italy and also from Poland, Ukraine and Russia in relatively smaller proportion. (Source: http://regiao-sul.info/ - Accessed on 04/10/2027)

Chapter 8

In conclusion, as it is normal in social science qualitative studies, despite the methodological rigour employed in the present study, much of the argumentation developed remain exploratory. Consequently, this is the reason why future studies are always important to expand the current knowledge about different social phenomena. Nevertheless, I understand that despite the discussed limitations, the findings brought by the present study provide a considerable baseline towards the expansion of the boundaries of knowledge about online racism in Brazil, whilst the inevitable 'shadows' may be filled by future studies.

Appendices

Appendix A   Brazil's Ethnic Composition
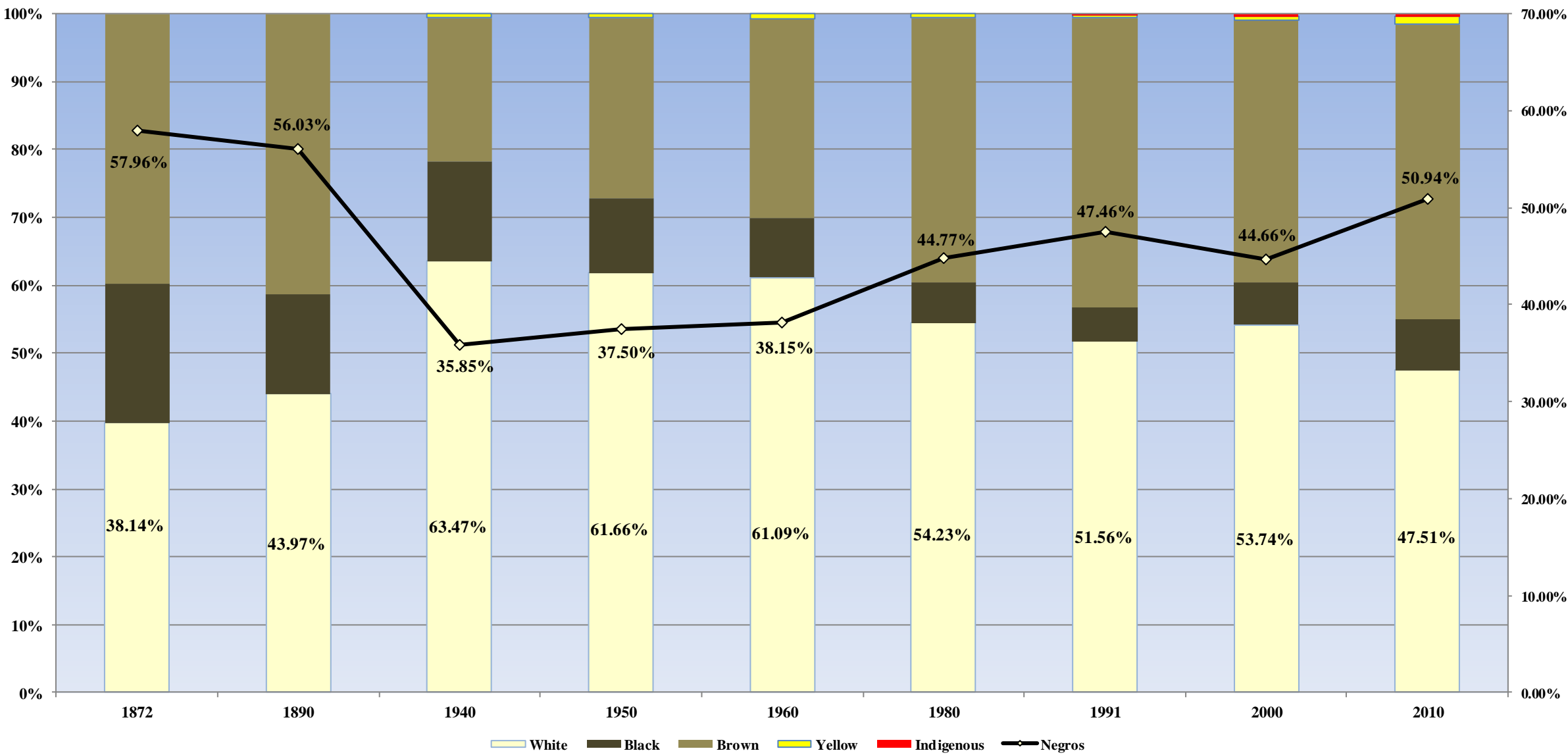
Year	1872	1890	1940	1950	1960	1980	1991	2000	2010
White	38.14%	43.97%	63.47%	61.66%	61.09%	54.23%	51.56%	53.74%	47.51%
Black	19.68%	14.63%	14.64%	10.96%	8.71%	5.92%	5.01%	6.21%	7.52%
Brown	38.28%	41.40%	21.21%	26.54%	29.44%	38.85%	42.45%	38.45%	43.42%
Yellow	---	---	0.59%	0.63%	0.69%	0.56%	0.43%	0.45%	1.09%
Indigenous	---	---	---	---	---	---	0.20%	0.43%	0.43%
Negros	57.96%	56.03%	35.85%	37.50%	38.15%	44.77%	47.46%	44.66%	50.94%
Country's Population	9,930,478	14,333,915	41,236,315	51,944,397	70,191,370	119,011,052	146,521,661	173,448,346	195,497,797

Source: the author, based on IBGE (1956; 2010; 2011b; 2011a; 2013)

Appendix B Selection of relevant milestones in Brazil's history

Pre-Colonial Period	Colonial Period	Imperial Period	Republican Period						
			Old Republic	Vargas Era	Populist Period	Military Dictatorship (1964 - 1985)		New Republic (since 1985)	
1500 - 1530	1530 - 1822	1822 - 1889	1889 - 1930	1930 - 1945	1945 - 1964	64 65 66 67 68 69 70 71 72 73 74 75 76 77 78 79 80 81 82 83 84 85		86 87 88 89 90 91 92 93 94 95 96 97 98 99 00 01 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18	

Presidents:
Brazil's 'discovery' by Portuguese Pedro Álvares Cabral (1500) | Independence from Portugal (1822) | 25 Presidents | Humberto Castelo Branco | Costa e Silva | Emilio Garrastazu Médici | Ernesto Geisel | João Figueiredo | José Sarney | Fernando Collor | Itamar Franco | Fernando Henrique Cardoso | Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva | Dilma Rousseff / Michel Temer | Michel Temer

Constitutions:
First (1824) | Second (1891) | Third (1934 - 1937) & Fourth (1937 - 1946) | Fifth (1946 - 1967) | Sixth (1967 - 1988) | Seventh (since 1988)

Prevailing denominations:
Slavery Period (1530 - 1888) ca. 4.5 million African individuals | Coloured Men | Negro | Black (1889 - 1964) | USP School of Sociology: Florestan Fernandes | Fernando Henrique | Otavio Ianni (1965 - 1970's) | Negro | Afro-Descendant | Afro-Brazilian (since 1978)

Historical events / books / milestones:
- Slaves Runaway Community 'Quilombo dos Palmares' (ca. 1590 - 1710)
- First Universal Race Congress in London - Joao Baptista de Lacerda - 'White Brazil within 100 years' (1911)
- Gilberto Freyre's *Casa Grande & Senzala | The Masters & Slaves* (1933)
- Unesco Project (1952)
- First Black newspapers and magazines: *O menelik* (1915) | *A Rua* (1916) | *O Alfinete* (1918) | *A Liberdade* (1919) | *A Sentinela* (1920) | *O Getulino* (1924)
- Sergio Buarque de Holanda's *Roots of Brazil* (1936)
- USP School of Sociology: Florestan Fernandes | Fernando Henrique | Otavio Ianni (1965 - 1970's)
- Comic TV Show: *'Os Trapalhões'* (1966 - 1997)
- First Afro Museum at Universidade Federal da Bahia - UFBA (1970)
- Dagobberto José da Fonseca's - "*A piada: discurso sutil da exclusão*" (1994)
- Darcy Ribeiro's - "*The Brazilian People*" (1995)
- *Raça Brasil Magazine* (1996)
- Grotera's report: Black middle class of 7 million people (1997)
- Centenary of Emancipation of Slaves (1998)
- Joel Zito de Araújo's - "*A negação do Brasil*" (2000)
- UN World Conference in Racism - Durban (2001)
- Establishment of Faculdade Zumbi dos Palmares in São Paulo (2000)
- According to the IBGE 10.2% of young people in universities are Black (2001)
- Affirmative action implemented at "*Instituto Rio Branco*" (2002)
- Teaching of African history in schools (2003)
- Implementation of first Affirmative Actions (2003)
- Secretary for the Promotion of Racial Equality (2003)
- Establishment of Orkut (2004)
- Establishement of Facebook (2004)
- Prime time soap opera with a Black female character in the main role (2004)
- President Lula apologises for the slavery of the African people in Senegal (2005)
- Only 2.3% of Negro female models at SP Fasion Week raises protests (2008)
- 120th Anniversary of the Emancipation of slaves (2008)
- Statute of Racial Equality (2010)
- According to the IBGE: Negro individuals account for 50.94% of the population (2010)
- According to the IBGE 35.6% of young people in universities are Black (2011)
- Reported cases of racism on Facebook: 2,038 (2011)
- Sworn the first Negro individuals as the Supreme Court President (2012)
- Facebook overtakes Orkut in Brazil (2012)
- Reported cases of racism on Facebook: 11,090 (2014)
- Orkut is discontinued (2014)
- 130th Anniversary of the Emancipation of Slaves (2018)

Proportion of Negro (Black + Brown) individuals in the population:
57.96% (1872) | 47.03% (1890) | 35.85% (1940) | 68.5% (1950) | 38.15% (1960) | 44.7% (1980) | 47.46% (1991) | 44.66% (2000) | 50.94% (2010)

Legend:
- Constitutions
- Historical events
- Influential and relevant Books & Publications
- Presidents
- Prevailing denomination adopted by the black movement
- Proportion of *Negro* (Black + Brown) individuals in the population
- Relevant milestones
- Sample of relevant Social Media events

Appendix C   Sample of common derogatory jokes

#	**Original version in Portuguese**	**Closest English Translation[78]**
1	*O que brilha mais no preto?* *As algemas, quando ele não tem uma faca em punho para assaltar o banco.*	What shines most in a Black guy? The handcuffs, when he is not holding a knife to rob the bank.
2	*O que acontece se um preto cair sobre um monte de merda?* *Aumenta o monte.*	What happens if a Black falls on a stack of shit? It increases the lot.
3	*Um preto e um branco se jogam de um prédio. Quem chegou primeiro ao chão?* *O branco, porque o preto parou para roubar os apartamentos.*	A Black and a white guy jump off a building. Who lands first? The white guy, because the Black stopped on the way to steal the apartments.
4	*Por que é que a cigana não lê a mão de um preto?* *Porque preto não tem futuro*	Why the fortune teller does not read the palm of a Black guy? Because Black has no future.
5	*Qual a diferença entre um preto e o câncer?* *O câncer evolui.*	What is the difference between a Black guy and the cancer? The cancer evolves.
6	*Quando é que o preto vai para a escola?* *Quando ela está em construção.*	When does a Black go to School? When it is under construction.
7	*Por que é que preto gosta de boxe?* *Porque tem um assalto a cada três minutos.*	Why does Black like boxing? Because there is one round[79] at every three minutes
8	*Por que o volante do carro de preto é pequeno?*	Why the steering wheel of the car of a Black guy is small?

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[78] Similarly to Guimarães (2003, p. 138), the translations provided here "are meant to give the reader a rough idea of meaning" of the expressions, sentences and words given that their accurate meaning sometimes depends on the social context where they are used and that may vary considerably between Brazil and an English speaking country (and vice-versa).

[79] In Portuguese, 'round' is translated as 'assault' what, in this particular case, it can be interpreted as robbery.

#	Original version in Portuguese	Closest English Translation[78]
	Pra ele poder dirigir algemado.	So that he can drive handcuffed.
9	*O que é Band-Aid de preto?* *Fita isolante.*	What is a *Band-Aid* for Blacks? Black tape.
10	*Quando é que negro é gente?* *Quando batem na porta do banheiro e ele responde "tem gente".*	When Black is considered someone? When someone else knocks on the bathroom door and he says from inside "there's someone in here".
11	*Quando que o negro é bonito?* *Quando ele chega atrasado no trabalho e o chefe fala: bonito né ...*	In which circumstance a Black guy is beautiful? When he gets late to work and the boss says: very pretty hum.
12	*O que são 10 negros na Lua?* *São 10 negros menos na Terra.*	What do you call 10 Blacks on the Moon? 10 Blacks less on Earth
13	*O que são 1,000 negros na Lua?* *São 1,000 negros menos na Terra.*	What do you call 1,000 Blacks on the Moon? 1,000 Blacks less on Earth.
14	*O que são 10,000,000 na Lua?* *Um eclipse total.*	What do you call 10,000,000 Blacks on the Moon? A total eclipse.
15	*O que são 1 bilhão de negros na Lua?* *Paz na Terra!*	What do you call 1 billion Blacks on the Moon? World peace!
16	*O negro caiu na lama e saiu andando. Daí veio um garoto e disse: Tio! Tá derretendo!*	The Black guy fell in the mud and walked away. Then came a boy and said: man, you are melting!
17	*Por que é que o caixão dos negros tem furinhos?* *Para os vermes saírem para vomitar.*	Why does the coffin of Black have small holes on it? To allow the worms to come out to vomit.
18	*Por que é que os negros só comem chocolate branco no cinema?* *Pra não morder os dedos.*	Why do the Blacks only eat white chocolate in the cinema? To avoid biting their own finger.
19	*Por que é que Deus fez o mundo redondo?*	Why God has made the Earth round?

#	Original version in Portuguese	Closest English Translation[78]
	Para os negros não cagarem nos cantos.	To avoid Blacks to shit in the corners.
20	*Quando é que os negros andam de carro?* *Quando vão presos.*	When Blacks are driven by car? When they are being arrested.
21	*Qual a diferença entre uma lata de merda e um negro?* *A lata.*	What is the difference between a tin full of shit and a Black? The tin.
22	*O que é uma Kombi com 5 negros caindo de um precipício?* *Um desperdício, pois na Kombi cabem 15.*	What is a van with 5 Blacks falling from a cliff? A great waste because a van can carry up to 15 Blacks.
23	*Como é que se faz asfalto na África?* *Um monte de negros deita no chão, e o rolo compressor passa por cima deles.*	How do you make asphalt in Africa? A bunch of Blacks lay on the ground and the steamroller goes over them.
24	*Quando é que o negro sobe na vida?* *Quando seu barraco explode.*	When does a Black ascend socially? When his *favela* shack explodes.
25	*Por que o Kinder Ovo é branco por dentro e preto por fora?* *Porque se fosse preto por dentro roubava a surpresa.*	Why is the *Kinder Egg* white inside and black outside? Because if it was black inside it would steal the gift.
26	*Por que é que mosca não pousa em preto?* *Porque tem nojo.*	Why flies do not land on Black? Because it is disgusting.
27	*Quando é que um preto come carne?* *Quando morde a língua.*	When does a Black eat meat? When he bites his own tongue.
28	*Por que é que preto gosta de ser crente?* *Para poder chamar branco de irmão.*	Why does Black like to become an evangelical? Because this way he can call the white guy his brother.
29	*Por que é que preto não erra?* *Porque errar é humano*	Why does Black do not commit mistakes? Because to fail is human.
30	*O que significa um preto andando de*	What does it mean a Black riding a bicycle

Appendix C

#	Original version in Portuguese	Closest English Translation[78]
	bicicleta com um centavo na mão? *Nada, porque bicicleta não é meio de transporte, um centavo não é dinheiro e preto não é gente.*	with a penny in his hand? Absolutely nothing, because bicycle is not a means of transportation, a penny is no money and Black is not a person.
31	*Quando é que preto toma banho?* *Quando chove.*	When does Black take a shower? When it rains.
32	*Por que é que preto não pode ficar parado em esquina?* *Porque preto parado é suspeito.*	Why does Black cannot stand still on street corners? Because a Black guy standing still is a suspect.
33	*Por que é que preto não pode correr?* *Porque preto correndo é ladrão.*	Why Black cannot run? Because a Black guy on the run is a thief.
34	*Um cachorro entra na igreja e mija em frente ao altar. Qual é a cor do cachorro?* *Branco, porque se fosse preto teria cagado.*	A dog enters the church and pisses in front of the altar. What colour is the dog? White, because if it were black it would have made shit.
35	*Quando é que preto aparece na TV?* *Quando mata alguém, quando está sendo procurado pela polícia, quando é pra dar vexame ou quando é para pedir exame de DNA de graça.*	When does a Black appear on TV? When he has killed someone, when he is being chased by the police, to embarrass himself or to ask for free paternity DNA test.

Source: the author, based on Clube (2003); Pretos (2009); Gazolla (2011); Preto (2015); Reocities (2015)

Appendix D   Complete set of keywords

#	Keyword		Brought relevant result	
	Portuguese	**Closest English translation [80]**	**Yes**	**No**
1	*100% branco*	100% white	✓	
2	*A minha empregada preta*	My black maid	✓	
3	*Branco raça pura*	White pure race		✓
4	*Branco raça superior*	White superior race	✓	
5	*Branco sim*	Yes, white		✓
6	*Branco superior*	White superior		✓
7	*Cabelo de Bombril*	Steel sponge hair	✓	
8	*Cabelo duro*	Hard hair	✓	
9	*Cabelo vassoura de bruxa*	Witch broom hair	✓	
10	*Coisa de preto*	Black stuff	✓	
11	*Como é que se faz asfalto na África?*	How do you make asphalt in Africa?	✓	
12	*Escurinho*	Light dark		✓
13	*Galinha de Angola*	Black hem		✓
14	*Já é preto e ainda por cima ...*	You are already a black and on top of that …	✓	
15	*Macaco*	Monkey		✓
16	*Não confio em preto*	I do not trust blacks		✓
17	*Nega do cabelo ruim*	Bad hair nigger	✓	✓
18	*Negra do cabelo ruim*	Bad hair negro (female)	✓	
19	*Nega do couro sambado*	Bitch nigger		✓

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[80] Similarly to Guimarães (2003, p. 138), the translations provided here "are meant to give the reader a rough idea of meaning" of the expressions, sentences and words given that their accurate meaning sometimes depends on the social context where they are used and that may vary considerably between Brazil and an English speaking country (and vice-versa).

#	Keyword		Brought relevant result	
	Portuguese	**Closest English translation [80]**	**Yes**	**No**
20	*Nega filha da puta*	Nigger son of a bitch (female)	✓	
21	*Nega rodada*	Bitch nigga	✓	
22	*Nega vadia*	Bitch nigga	✓	
23	*Nego do cabelo ruim*	Bad hair nigger (male)	✓	
24	*Negra filha da puta*	Nigger son of a bitch (female)	✓	
25	*Negro africano legítimo*	Ligetimate African black man	✓	
26	*Negro aproveitador*	Black scum	✓	
27	*Negro azul*	Darker then black		✓
28	*Negro bastardo*	Bastard nigger		✓
29	*Negro da senzala*	Slave house negro	✓	
30	*Negro filho da puta*	Negro son of a bitch	✓	
31	*Negro tiziu*	Dark black	✓	
32	*Negro urubu*	Black vulture		✓
33	*O negro caiu na lama e saiu andando.*	The black fell in the mud and walks away.	✓	
34	*O que acontece se um preto cair sobre um monte de merda?*	What happens if a black falls on a stack of shit?	✓	
35	*O que brilha mais no preto?*	What shines most in a black?	✓	
36	*O que é Band-Aid de preto?*	What is a *Band-Aid* for blacks?	✓	
37	*O que é uma Kombi com 5 negros caindo de um precipício?*	What is a van with 5 blacks falling from an abyss?	✓	
38	*O que são 1 bilhão de negros na Lua?*	What are 1 billion blacks on the Moon?	✓	
39	*O que são 1,000 negros na Lua?*	What are 1,000 blacks on the Moon?	✓	
40	*O que são 10 negros na Lua?*	What are 10 blacks on the Moon?	✓	

#	Keyword		Brought relevant result	
	Portuguese	**Closest English translation** [80]	**Yes**	**No**
41	*O que são 10,000,000 na Lua?*	What are 10,000,000 blacks on the Moon?	✓	
42	*O que significa um preto andando de bicicleta com um centavo na mão?*	What does it mean a black riding a bicycle with a penny in his/her hand?	✓	
43	*O racismo começa quando ...*	Racism starts when …	✓	
44	*Odeio preto*	I hate blacks	✓	
45	*Onde você comprou esta escrava?*	Where did you buy this slave?		✓
46	*Orgulho de ser branco*	Proud to be white	✓	
47	*Piada de negão*	Nigga joke	✓	
48	*Piada de nego*	Nigger joke	✓	
49	*Piada de negrão*	Nigga joke	✓	
50	*Piada de negro*	Negro joke	✓	
51	*Piada de neguinho*	Nigger joke	✓	
52	*Piada de preto*	Black joke	✓	
53	*Piada sobre nego*	Joke about black	✓	
54	*Piada sobre negrão*	Joke about nigga	✓	
55	*Piada sobre negrinho*	Joke about nigger	✓	
56	*Piada sobre negro*	Joke about negro	✓	
57	*Piada sobre neguinho*	Joke about nigger	✓	
58	*Piada sobre preto*	Joke about negro	✓	
59	*Piadas de negão*	Nigga jokes	✓	
60	*Piadas de negrinho*	Nigger jokes	✓	
61	*Por que é que a cigana não lê a mão de um preto?*	Why the fortune teller does not read the palm of a black?	✓	
62	*Por que é que Deus fez o mundo redondo?*	Why God has made the Earth round?		✓

Appendix D

#	Keyword		Brought relevant result	
	Portuguese	**Closest English translation** [80]	**Yes**	**No**
63	*Por que é que mosca não pousa em preto?*	Why does fly does not land on black?		✓
64	*Por que é que o caixão dos negros tem furinhos?*	Why does the coffin of black have small holes on it?	✓	
65	*Por que é que os negros só comem chocolate branco no cinema?*	Why do the blacks only eat white chocolates in the cinema?	✓	
66	*Por que é que preto gosta de boxe?*	Why does black like boxing?	✓	
67	*Por que é que preto gosta de ser crente?*	Why does black like to become evangelical?		✓
68	*Por que é que preto não erra?*	Why does black do not make mistakes?	✓	
69	*Por que é que preto não pode correr?*	Why black cannot run?	✓	
70	*Por que é que preto não pode ficar parado em esquina?*	Why does black cannot stand still on street corners?		✓
71	*Por que o Kinder Ovo é branco por dentro e preto por fora?*	Why the *Kinder Egg* is white inside and black outside?	✓	
72	*Por que o volante do carro de preto é pequeno?*	Why the steering wheel of a black's car is small?		✓
73	*Preta do cabelo ruim*	Bad hair black (female)	✓	
74	*Preta fedida*	Smelly black (female)	✓	
75	*Preta filha da puta*	Black son of a bitch (female)	✓	
76	*Preta suja*	Dirty black (female)	✓	
77	*Preta vadia*	Black bitch		✓
78	*Preto analfabeto*	Illiterate black		✓
79	*Preto anarfa*	Illiterate black		✓
80	*Preto azul*	Darker than black		✓
81	*Preto banguela*	Toothless black		✓
82	*Preto burro*	Stupid black		✓

#	Keyword		Brought relevant result	
	Portuguese	**Closest English translation** [80]	**Yes**	**No**
83	*Preto de merda*	Black shit	✓	
84	*Preto desclassificado*	Low class black		✓
85	*Preto desdentado*	Toothless black	✓	
86	*Preto do cabelo ruim*	Bad hair black (male)	✓	
87	*Preto do morro*	Black from the hill		✓
88	*Preto enjoado*	Snobbish black		✓
89	*Preto favelado*	Slummer black		✓
90	*Preto fedido*	Smelly black (male)	✓	
91	*Preto fedorento*	Stinking black (male)	✓	
92	*Preto filho da puta*	Black son of a bitch (male)	✓	
93	*Preto imundo*	Dirty black (male)		✓
94	*Preto ladrão*	Black thief	✓	
95	*Preto macaco*	Black ape/monkey	✓	
96	*Preto maconheiro*	Black weed smoker		✓
97	*Preto maloqueiro*	Black shantytown dweller	✓	
98	*Preto metido*	Uppity black		✓
99	*Preto nojento*	Sickening black	✓	
100	*Preto pilantra*	Creep black		✓
101	*Preto pobre*	Poor black	✓	
102	*Preto porqueira*	Pig-sty black		✓
103	*Preto quando não caga na entrada caga na saída*	If a black does not shit in the beginning he will do that in the end	✓	
104	*Preto quando não faz na entrada faz na saída*	If a black does not get it wrong in the beginning he will get it in the end	✓	

Appendix D

#	Keyword		Brought relevant result	
	Portuguese	**Closest English translation** [80]	**Yes**	**No**
105	*Preto safado*	Low-down black	✓	
106	*Preto sem vergonha*	Shameless black	✓	
107	*Preto só faz merda*	Black only do shit		✓
108	*Preto sujo*	Dirty black	✓	
109	*Preto tição*	Darker black		✓
110	*Preto tiziu*	Darker black		✓
111	*Preto urubu*	Black vulture	✓	
112	*Preto vagabundo*	Black tramp	✓	
113	*Preto vagal*	Black tramp		✓
114	*Princesa Isabel assinou a Lei Áurea a lápis*	Princess Isabel has signed the emancipation of slaves Law with a pencil	✓	
115	*Qual a diferença entre um preto e o câncer?*	What is the difference between a black and cancer?	✓	
116	*Qual a diferença entre uma lata de merda e um negro?*	What is the difference between a tin full of shit and a black?	✓	
117	*Quando é que negro é gente?*	When black is considered someone?	✓	
118	*Quando é que o negro sobe na vida?*	When does a black rise in social life?	✓	
119	*Quando é que o preto vai para a escola?*	When does a black go to School?		✓
120	*Quando é que os negros andam de carro?*	When blacks are driven by car?	✓	
121	*Quando é que preto aparece na TV?*	When does a black appear on TV?		✓
122	*Quando é que preto toma banho?*	When does black have a shower?		✓
123	*Quando é que um preto come carne?*	When does a black eat meat?		✓
124	*Quando que o negro é bonito?*	In which circumstance black is beautiful?	✓	

#	Keyword		Brought relevant result	
	Portuguese	**Closest English translation** [80]	**Yes**	**No**
125	*Sexo & As Negas*	Sex & The Niggas [81]	✓	
126	*Tinha que ser preto*	It had to be black	✓	
127	*Tiziu*	Darker black		✓
128	*Todo preto é macaco*	All black's an ape		✓
129	*Um cachorro entra na igreja e mija em frente ao altar. Qual é a cor do cachorro?*	A dog enters the church and pisses in front of the altar. What colour is the dog?	✓	
130	*Um preto e um branco se jogam de um prédio. Quem chegou primeiro ao chão?*	A black and a white jump off a building. Who got first on the ground?	✓	
131	*Urubu*	Vulture		✓

	Brought relevant result	
Total	**88**	**43**
	67.18%	**32.82%**

Source: the author, based on Fonseca (1994); Clube (2003); Guimarães (2003); Dahia (2008); Pretos (2009); Dahia (2010); Gazolla (2011); Fonseca (2012); Preto (2015); Reocities (2015); Soares (2016a)

[81] This particular keyword was the name of a controversial TV sitcom aired in 2014-2015 that depicted a group of four *Negro* females living in the outskirts of Rio de Janeiro. It was heavily criticised due to the association of sensuality and *Negro* women.

Appendix E Data Protocol Spreadsheet

#	Facebook Community				General Characteristics					Access Status	Content Details			Relevant for the research	Associated Keywords
	Real Name	Given Name	URL	Broad Content Classification	Type of Data	Timeline	Likes	Comments	Shares		PDF File	Number of pages	Date Captured		
1	Withheld to safeguard user's privacy	0001-PR-E-FP	Withheld to safeguard user's privacy	Empowerment	Full Page	2015 - 2016	19,031	---	---	Public	yes	207	28/07/2016	yes	A minha empregada preta
2	Withheld to safeguard user's privacy	0002-EED-O-FP	Withheld to safeguard user's privacy	Other	Full Page	2015 - 2016	119,647	---	---	Public	yes	90	28/07/2016	yes	A minha empregada preta
3	Withheld to safeguard user's privacy	0003-JL-O-SP	Withheld to safeguard user's privacy	Other	Single Post	10/02/2016	397	34	0	Public	yes	3	28/07/2016	yes	Cabelo de Bombril
4	Withheld to safeguard user's privacy	0004-JL-O-FP	Withheld to safeguard user's privacy	Other	Full Page	2015 - 2016	414,993	---	---	Public	no	211	28/07/2016	yes	Cabelo de Bombril
5	Withheld to safeguard user's privacy	0005-JC-O-SP	Withheld to safeguard user's privacy	Other	Single Post	20/03/2015	35	33	43	Public	yes	3	28/07/2016	yes	Cabelo de Bombril
6	Withheld to safeguard user's privacy	0006-CC-O-FP	Withheld to safeguard user's privacy	Other	Full Page	2011	46	---	---	Public	yes	2	28/07/2016	yes	Cabelo de Bombril
7	Withheld to safeguard user's privacy	0007-GCB-D-FP	Withheld to safeguard user's privacy	Derogatory	Full Page	2012	18	---	---	Public	yes	1	28/07/2016	yes	Cabelo de Bombril
8	Withheld to safeguard user's privacy	0008-GIMN-E-FP	Withheld to safeguard user's privacy	Empowerment	Full Page	2010 - 2016	500,454	---	---	Public	yes	254	28/07/2016	yes	Cabelo de Bombril | Negro africano legítimo
9	Withheld to safeguard user's privacy	0009-CM-E-SP	Withheld to safeguard user's privacy	Empowerment	Single Post	23/04/2014	23	1	31	Public	yes	2	28/07/2016	yes	Cabelo de Bombril
10	Withheld to safeguard user's privacy	0010-PJP-O-FP	Withheld to safeguard user's privacy	Other	Single Post	23/04/2016	0	0	0	Public	yes	6	28/07/2016	yes	Cabelo vassoura de bruxa
11	Withheld to safeguard user's privacy	0011-PJP-O-FP	Withheld to safeguard user's privacy	Other	Full Page	2014	274	---	---	Public	yes	6	28/07/2016	yes	Cabelo vassoura de bruxa
12	Withheld to safeguard user's privacy	0012-MNC-E-SP	Withheld to safeguard user's privacy	Empowerment	Single Post	22/04/2014	515	83	368	Public	yes	5	28/07/2016	yes	Cabelo vassoura de bruxa
13	Withheld to safeguard user's privacy	0013-MNC-E-FP	Withheld to safeguard user's privacy	Empowerment	Full Page	2011 - 2015	260,248	---	---	Public	yes	718	28/07/2016	yes	Cabelo vassoura de bruxa
14	Withheld to safeguard user's privacy	0014-VB-E-SP	Withheld to safeguard user's privacy	Empowerment	Single Post	22/04/2014	6	0	0	Public	yes	1	28/07/2016	yes	Cabelo vassoura de bruxa
15	Withheld to safeguard user's privacy	0015-QOM-I-SP	---	Single Post	19/12/2015	---	---	---	Private	no	---	15/08/2016	no	Diferença entre um preto e uma lata de merda
16	Withheld to safeguard user's privacy	0016-GLGL-D-SP	Withheld to safeguard user's privacy	Derogatory	Single Post	17/01/2013	8	21	1	Public	yes	4	15/08/2016	yes	Diferença entre um preto e uma lata de merda | O que acontece se um preto cair sobre um monte de merda
17	Withheld to safeguard user's privacy	0017-GLGL-D-FP	Withheld to safeguard user's privacy	Derogatory	Full Page	2013 - 2015	1,354	---	---	Public	yes	234	15/08/2016	yes	Diferença entre um preto e uma lata de merda
18	Withheld to safeguard user's privacy	0018-C-D-FP	Withheld to safeguard user's privacy	Derogatory	Full Page	2012 - 2016	3,138	---	---	Public	yes	147	17/08/2016	yes	Preto macaco
19	Withheld to safeguard user's privacy	0019-RNCPL-E-FP	Withheld to safeguard user's privacy	Empowerment	Full Page	2013 - 2015	3,154	---	---	Public	yes	47	17/08/2016	yes	Nega do cabelo ruim | Nego do cablo ruim | Preta do cabelo ruim | Preto do cabelo ruim
20	Withheld to safeguard user's privacy	0020-CCC-E-FP	Withheld to safeguard user's privacy	Empowerment	Full Page	2012 - 2016	149,964	---	---	Public	yes	199	17/08/2016	yes	Nega do cabelo ruim
21	Withheld to safeguard user's privacy	0021-CRCCS-E-FP	Withheld to safeguard user's privacy	Empowerment	Full Page	2014 - 2016	174,353	---	---	Public	yes	107	17/08/2016	yes	Nega do cabelo ruim
22	Withheld to safeguard user's privacy	0022-CAB-E-FP	Withheld to safeguard user's privacy	Empowerment	Full Page	2012 - 2016	21,758	---	---	Public	yes	174	17/08/2016	yes	Nega do cabelo ruim
23	Withheld to safeguard user's privacy	0023-CCC-E-FP	Withheld to safeguard user's privacy	Empowerment	Full Page	2013 - 2016	28,174	---	---	Public	yes	136	17/08/2016	yes	Nega do cabelo ruim
24	Withheld to safeguard user's privacy	0024-MNCC-E-FP	Withheld to safeguard user's privacy	Empowerment	Full Page	2014 - 2016	10,883	---	---	Public	yes	173	17/08/2016	yes	Nega do cabelo ruim
25	Withheld to safeguard user's privacy	0025-NVN-E-FP	Withheld to safeguard user's privacy	Empowerment	Full Page	2014 - 2016	36,517	---	---	Public	yes	175	17/08/2016	yes	Nega do cabelo ruim
26	Withheld to safeguard user's privacy	0026-ANZ-E-SP	Withheld to safeguard user's privacy	Empowerment	Single Post	28/08/2013	1,200	155	171	Public	yes	7	17/08/2016	yes	Nega do cabelo ruim
27	Withheld to safeguard user's privacy	0027-ANZ-E-FP	Withheld to safeguard user's privacy	Empowerment	Full Page	2012 - 2016	306,125			Public	yes	218	17/08/2016	yes	Nega do cabelo ruim

P.S.: this view is an extract of the actual spreadsheet

Appendix F   Interview Guide

The Interview Guide was flexible enough to accommodate questions emerged from the dynamic of the conversation in accordance with specific characteristics of each participant. As a starting point it was designed a set of two main questionnaires: 1) Organisations | Policymakers; and 2) Individuals. However, once in the fieldwork, they were customised for each participant but keeping the core questions across the different interviews.

F.1   Organisations | Policymakers

1. Can you describe the main activities conducted by your organisation?

2. What have been the main challenges faced by your organisation with regard to the type of activities you foster/develop?

3. Do you think that racism is considered as a 'commonplace' and 'normalised' attitude in Brazil? Why do you think so?

4. In your point of view, comparing the way the derogatory jokes depict male and female Black people, are there any substantial differences between them? What are they?

5. Do you think that the derogatory jokes about Black people are as harmless and amusing as any other joke and that they should not be taken too seriously?

6. Does the 'anonymity' provided by the computer screen create a sense of impunity for the people who convey racist content on Facebook? Why do you think so?

7. How do you personally react/feel when you hear and/or read about cases of racist comments on Facebook towards somebody?

8. Does is change for you if the case involves a famous Black person or an ordinary citizen? How does it work?

9. What do you think it can be done to combat those practices?

10. Do you think that the laws and regulations currently in place are good enough, but they are not correctly enforced towards the people who engage in virtual racism practices?

11. In your opinion, what triggers racist comments on Facebook, or in other words, what motivation do people have to engage themselves in such practice?

12. In your point of view, what is said (or written) on Facebook does not necessarily mirror what those people really think or believe about Black people in real life?

13. In your point of view, what is the real intention of the people who post derogatory jokes and negative comments about Black people on Facebook?

14. In that case, what type of message they are trying to convey with their comments and derogatory jokes?

15. In your point of view, is there any difference between virtual racism and face-to-face discrimination? How is it like?

16. What role do you think that schools (primary and secondary education) can play towards addressing the phenomenon of virtual racism in Brazil to the young generation?

17. Do you believe or consider that virtual racism can potentially bring consequences in the real world (in offline context) for Facebook users? Why makes you think so?

18. Do you believe that virtual racism practices have anything to do with the level of formal education of the people who engage with them? Why?

19. Similarly to the previous question, do you believe that virtual racism practices have anything to do with the social class of the people who engage with them? Why?

20. In your point of view and/or experience with social networking, how Facebook as a corporation can contribute to the decrease of racist discourses on its platform?

21. I understand that you aware that the United Nations has established the *International Decade of People of African Descent 2015-2024*. How do you see this initiative in relation to the roll of activities and projects fostered by your organisation?

22. Have your organisation officially (and proactively) got in contact with any (or maybe some) person that has been the subject of racism on Facebook in the recent past? Can you please comment on the circumstances?

F.2 Individuals

1. For how long have you been a Facebook user?

2. Do you consider that Facebook gives voice to the people? And how are they making use of it in your opinion?

3. In your opinion, is the internet somewhat a free territory where everything is possible and there are no limits or rules? Why do you think so?

4. Do you think that racism is considered as a 'commonplace' and 'normalised' attitude in Brazil? Why do you think so?

5. In your point of view, comparing the way the derogatory jokes depict male and female Black people, are there any substantial differences between them? What are they?

6. Do you think that the derogatory jokes about Black people are as harmless and amusing as any other joke and that they should not be taken too seriously?

7. Does the 'anonymity' provided by the computer screen create a sense of impunity for the people who convey racist content on Facebook? Why do you think so?

8. How do you personally react/feel when you hear and/or read about cases of racist comments on Facebook towards somebody?

9. What do you think it can be done to combat those practices?

10. Do you think that the laws and regulations currently in place are good enough, but they are not correctly enforced towards the people who engage in virtual racism practices?

11. In your opinion, what triggers racist comments on Facebook, or in other words, what motivation do people have to engage themselves in such practice?

12. In your point of view, what is said (or written) on Facebook does not necessarily mirror what those people really think or believe about Black people in real life?

13. In your point of view, is there any difference between virtual racism and face-to-face discrimination? How is it like?

14. What role do you think that schools (primary and secondary education) can play towards addressing the phenomenon of virtual racism in Brazil to the young generation?

15. Do you believe or consider that virtual racism can potentially bring consequences in the real world (in offline context) for Facebook users? Why makes you think so?

16. Do you believe that virtual racism practices have anything to do with the level of formal education and/or social class of the people who engage with them? Why?

17. What was your main reaction when you realised that you had been the subject of mockery and negative comments on Facebook?

18. In your case, what particular event has triggered the series of racist comments and derogatory jokes in the virtual environment? Please, give some examples.

19. Did you look for some type of institutional support in order to deal with the unexpected situation? For example: a lawyer, file a police report, get in contact with an NGO, etc.

20. In case you have gone after some type of support, how was your demand treated by the institution/organisation?

21. Besides any institutional support, how did your immediate family (parents, siblings, partner, etc.) and very close friends react?

22. How did they support you to overcome the event or deal with it?

23. Did you know before some of the people that made negative comments and jokes about you on Facebook?

24. Do you have any idea of how they managed to post comments on your profile?

25. Have you accessed the profile of some of them in order to get more information about the persons?

26. In case you did access some of the profiles, did you find something unusual or that has called your attention?

27. Before this episode on Facebook, have you ever experienced a situation of blatant racism or prejudice in the virtual environment? How was it?

28. Being the subject of racist mockery and/or negative comments on Facebook may have been an uncomfortable situation for you. Can you please comment about what type of impacts this experience has eventually brought to you?

29. Has this uncomfortable experience affected somehow the way you use Facebook? How was it?

30. Have you taken any type of preventive measure to avoid being exposed to the same type of uncomfortable experience in the future? And what were they?

Appendix G Overview of the slave trade

The Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database
Voyages   Voyages Database   Assessing the Slave Trade   Resources   Educational Materials   About the Project   Language En
Home ▸ Assessing the Slave Trade ▸ Estimates   Sitemap FAQs Demos Glossary Legal

Tables   Timeline   Maps

Time frame
Show data only from 1501 to 1866
The full extent of time covered by estimates is
1501 – 1866.

Change selection   Reset to default

Flag

Embarkation/Disembarkation

Current query
Selected national carriers:
all
Selected embarkation regions:
all
Selected disembarkation regions:
all

Create a link
New query

For purposes of calculation, estimates of
embarked and disembarked slaves in tables, the
timeline, and maps have been rounded to
integers. When users cite any number, they are
advised to round it to the nearest hundred.

EUROPE

MAINLAND
NORTH
AMERICA

SPANISH
CIRCUM-CARIBBEAN

AFRICA

REGION	Africans arriving from Africa	
	Embarked	Disembarked
Bahia	1,736,309	1,550,355
Brazil unspecified	64,063	54,041
Pernambuco	960,475	853,833
South-east Brazil	2,608,572	2,263,914
Totals	5,369,419	4,722,143

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The Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database
Voyages   Voyages Database   Assessing the Slave Trade   Resources   Educational Materials   About the Project   Language En
Home ▸ Assessing the Slave Trade ▸ Estimates   Sitemap FAQs Demos Glossary Legal

Tables   Timeline   Maps

Time frame
Show data only from 1501 to 1866
The full extent of time covered by estimates is
1501 – 1866.

Change selection   Reset to default

Flag

Embarkation/Disembarkation

Current query
Selected national carriers:
all
Selected embarkation regions:
all
Selected disembarkation regions:
all

Create a link
New query

For purposes of calculation, estimates of
embarked and disembarked slaves in tables, the
timeline, and maps have been rounded to
integers. When users cite any number, they are
advised to round it to the nearest hundred.

Timeline: Number of Captives Embarked and Disembarked per Year

Embarked   Disembarked

1	1525 First slave voyage direct from Africa to the Americas	8	1776 American Revolutionary War begins
2	1560 Continuous slave trade from Brazil begins	9	1789 Bourbon reforms open Spanish colonial ports to slaves
3	1641 Sugar exports from Eastern Caribbean begin	10	1791 St Domingue revolution begins
4	1655 English capture Jamaica	11	1808 Abolition of British and US slave trades takes effect
5	1695 Gold discovered in Minas Gerais (Brazil)	12	1830 Anglo-Brazilian anti-slave trade treaty
6	1697 French obtain St Domingue in Treaty of Rywisck	13	1850 Brazil suppresses slave trade
7	1756 Seven years war begins	14	1866 Last reported transatlantic slave voyage arrives in Americas

Download timeline data

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Source: Database (2009)

Appendix H   Sample of colonial imagery

Um Mascate e seu escravo | A peddler and his slave
By Henry Chamberlain, 1822
Source: Chamberlain (1822a); Conrad (1983, p. 119); Chamberlain (2017)

Uma família brasileira | A Brazilian family
By Henry Chamberlain, 1822
Source: Chamberlain (1822b); Estado (2007a); Chamberlain (2017)

Un employé du gouvern servant de chez lui avec familie | A government employee waling with his familuy
By Jean Baptiste Debret
Source: Debret (18239); Estado (2007b)

Retour, a la ville, d'un propriétaire de chakra | The return of a slave owner
By Jean Baptiste Debret
Source: Debret (1839); Estado (2007b);

Appendix I   Triggering events of derogatory posts

#	Coded Name	Genre		Age	Occupation	State	Date	Triggering Event	Offender's Approach	
		Female	Male						Active	Reactive
1	001-AC-M		x	n.a.	Musician	BA	n.a.	Posted a picture on Facebook.	x	
2	002-UN-F	x		16	Student	AL	20/06/2016	She posted a photo of herself in the beach.		x
3	003-ASJR-M		x	57	Policymaker	SP	31/08/2016	He posted a video with a summary of his tenure.		x
4	004-BMMB-F	x		28	Sportswoman	PE	13/08/2016	Nothing in particular.	x	
5	005-CFG-F	x		20	University Student	RJ	21/10/2015	Challenged a post that she considered discriminatory and pejorative.		x
6	006-CV-F	x		38	Actress	SP	30/11/2015	Posted a new photo of herself on her Facebook page.	x	
7	007-CD-F	x		n.a.	Journalist	DF	24/04/2015	Posted a new photo of herself on her Facebook page.	x	
8	008-DOM-F	x		25	Manager	PE	12/09/2015	Posted a new photo of herself on her Facebook page.	x	
9	009-DM-F	x		n.a.	University Student	MS	15/09/2015	Challenged a post that she considered discriminatory and pejorative.		x
10	010-DM-M		x	24		RJ	13/10/2015	Posted a video sharing his experience of being accepted to attend medical school abroad.		x
11	011-ES-F	x		30	Hairdresser	n.a.	n.a.	She posted a message praising natural Afro hair.	x	
12	012-JHSC-M		x	n.a.	Model	GO	17/10/2015	He posted a new picture on his Facebook profile.	x	
13	013-JR-F	x		35	Journalist	SP	21/11/2014	She works in a prominent daily TV news programme.	x	
14	014-JR-F	x		33	Medical Doctor	RJ	29/07/2016	Challenged a post that she considered discriminatory and pejorative.		x
15	015-LB-F	x		70	Singer	SP	27/08/2014	Nothing in particular.	x	
16	016-LM-F	x		25	Denstist	PI	16/04/2016	People do not believe that she is in fact a dentist.		x
17	017-LCOB-F	x		20	University Student	MG	20/01/2016	Nothing in particular.	x	
18	018-MSR-F	x		20	n.a.	BA	15/01/2016	She denied the friend request of a strange male individual.		x
19	019-MDMR-F	x		20	University Student	RJ	17/08/2014	Posted a new photo of herself and her white boyfriend.		x
20	020-MJC-F	x		37	Journalist	SP	02/07/2015	She works in a prominent daily TV news programme.		x
21	021-MP-F	x		18		PA	20/06/2016	She posted a new picture of herself and two other female friends on her Facebook page.		x
22	022-MT-F	x		28	Manager	RJ	15/06/2016	She posted a picture of herself enjoying a vacation trip abroad in a place with snow.		x
23	023-MCC-F	x		22	Singer	RJ	23/08/2016	Nothing in particular.	x	
24	024-MBM-F	x		21	Model	RJ	08/07/2015	It was taken a picture of her Afro hair painted in blue and posted online with mocking commentaries.	x	
25	025-MM-F	x		22	University Student	RJ	07/07/2016	Posted a picture using natural Afro hair and wering a medical doctor's suit.		x
26	026-NG-F	x		n.a.	Anthorpologist	BA	01/05/2016	Nothing in particular.	x	
27	027-NJ-F	x		25	Actress	RJ	01/02/2014	She won a beauty contest.		x
28	028-NN-F	x		37	Singer	RJ	10/06/2012	She was interviwed in a TV talk show.		x
29	029-NCP-F	x		18	University Student	MG	08/08/2012	She refused to date a boy who had proposed her.		x
30	030-PI-M		x	25	Sportsman	RN	16/03/2016	The coach chose him to form the starting line-up in a game.		x
31	031-PP-F	x		37	Singer	RJ	10/06/2012	She was interviwed in a TV talk show.		x
32	032-PG-F	x		42	Singer	RJ	25/07/2016	She posted a new picture of herself and other female friend on her Facebook page.		x
33	033-RS-F	x		20	Sportswoman	RJ	31/07/2012	Lost a competition.		x
34	034-RG-F	x		n.a.	Journalist	DF	11/05/2015	She posted a hoto of her pregnancy on her Facebook page.		x
35	035-RO-M		x	27	University Student	RJ	18/02/2016	He took part in a reality show.		x
36	036-SM-F	x		31	Actress	RS	30/11/2015	She posted a new photo on her profile with her white boyfriend enjoying a vacation trip across Euope.		x
37	037-SS-F	x		n.a.	University Student	SP	11/03/2016	She posted a new picture on her profile with a natural Afro hair.		x
38	038-SMO-M		x	33	n.a.	SP	25/05/2016	Nothing in particular.	x	
39	039-SRA-F	x		27	University Student	PA	11/09/2014	Nothing in particular.	x	
40	040-TJS-F	x		19	Petrol Station Assistant	GO	17/10/2015	She won a beauty contest.		x
41	041-TAJ-F	x		36	Actress	RJ	31/10/2015	She posted a new picture on her profile with a natural Afro hair.		x
42	042-TBV-M		x	n.a.	Elecrtrician	BA	25/03/2016	He challenged a post that he considered discriminatory.		x

| Subtotal | | 34 | 8 | | | | | | 15 | 27 |

| Total | | 42 | | | | | | | 42 | |

| Proportion | | 81% | 19% | | | | | | 35.7% | 64.3% |

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