



EMPOWER

European key Multipliers
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Racism and xenophobia

EMPOWERED:

HIGH SCHOOL TOOLKIT
FOR CHALLENGING
DISCRIMINATION

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by
Ndack Mbaye and Marie Moïse

preface by
Sahra Sparavigna

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Introduction

In the ever-evolving landscape of education, the imperative to cultivate not only academic proficiency but also critical thinking, digital skills, and social consciousness is increasingly paramount. This Toolkit has been specifically designed recognizing this need, addressing the pervasive issues of hate actions. Targeting students aged 11-18, this toolkit serves as a comprehensive resource, aiming to empower educators to instill in their students a deep understanding of intolerance and equip them with the tools to counteract racism in both online and offline realms.

This Toolkit starts with a Glossary that provides an exploration of key terms and concepts. The glossary doesn't offer mere definitions, it provides explanations of terms and concepts relevant to hate actions, the elements that compose them and those that originate them at an individual and collective level. This serves as a foundation for educators and students alike, ensuring a comprehensive understanding of the nuances embedded within these complex issues.

Following the Glossary, the toolkit delves into five distinct teaching activities, each approaching the topic from a different point of view. These activities are designed to engage students actively in their own learning process.

To facilitate seamless integration into the classroom, each activity is accompanied by a series of pedagogical stimuli. These resources aim to provide educators with valuable insights and practical strategies for managing potential challenges that may arise during the implementation of the activities.

The Toolkit, developed for ACRA, is the collaborative effort of Marie Moïse and Ndack Mbaye, researchers on race, racism, and their relations with the history of modern and contemporary institutions, in connection with the Italian publishing house Capovolte.

Preface

"This soil is bad for certain kinds of flowers. Certain seeds it will not nurture, certain fruit it will not bear, and when the land kills of its own volition, we acquiesce and say the victim had no right to live. We're wrong, of course, but it doesn't matter. It's too late".

The Bluest Eye, Toni Morrison

Dear reader,

I am writing you this brief letter, without any claim to comprehensiveness given the complexity and sensitivity of the topic.

The reasons for this choice are many: on the one hand, what I am about to share is the result - for me - of important reflections that took place throughout my life, the result of tears, laughter, quarrels and hugs; on the other hand, because I believe that anti-racist practices need, on the part of those who decide to act on them, constant deconstruction and deep self-work. Therefore, I ask you to open your mind and heart, no matter how intense and constantly evolving this process may be.

I believe that this anti-racist toolkit, for those who have the burden and honour of being in contact with young people, is an essential tool.

Since science has made it clear that there are no races superior to others, forms of racism have become more devious and sinuous over time. However, many, certainly too many, are those who, strong in their privilege and power, justify their racist attitudes with the cultural diversity attributed to the Other.

I choose to write this word with a capital letter, because I think it is important to emphasize the fact that the center of this work is the other, understood as a racialized person, the bearer of instances for too long denied and delegitimized.

Perhaps some of the words used so far may not be very familiar to you, but do not worry, you will have the opportunity to befriend them during the reading of this toolkit.

We are always ready to stand up forcefully and vehemently against episodes of racism that occur in other Countries, but in 2024 we unfortunately find ourselves still hearing phrases like: "I'm not a racist, but..."

And when someone, very often a racialized person, points out to their interlocutor that perhaps that attitude has racist connotations, a controversial mechanism is unleashed for which one feels offended, and one tends to say that the racialized person is hypersensitive and that they see racism everywhere.

This is precisely the reason why I asked you to approach this work with an open mind and heart, going beyond being able to feel judged, or under attack, because this Toolkit is designed precisely to be able to accompany you on this path through ideas for reflection that could naturally become part of your pedagogical approach.

I ask you never to forget that your discomfort, in addition to being natural, is certainly less than the pain of those who are showing you their wounds.

Now that we have gained some confidence, I reveal that I am a Black woman born in the early nineties, and that for a good part of my life I suffered from racial macro and microviolence, and above all the latter left me with a sense of powerlessness and loneliness that I could not explain.

I didn't have the tools to decode what was happening, nor did the people close to me seem to welcome and legitimize my pain.

This created in me a sense of powerlessness and non-membership that led to worrying isolation.

Only when I had the luck and privilege to study these issues, and especially when I had the opportunity to confront other racialized people, did I realize that my feelings were legitimate.

However, I believe that the legitimacy of others' feelings cannot be left to chance, because we cannot yet afford individual suffering as a result of a society unprepared to welcome everyone. How much suffering could be eliminated if we only recognized ourselves as a community ready to welcome otherness?

I tell you two small anecdotes as a point of reflection because the different roles I have inhabited in their occurrence could help you, together with this Toolkit, to understand the great impact that the educator can have on the lives of others.

When I was in third grade, the history teacher, with extreme gentleness and naivety, asked my mother if it was appropriate to talk, with me in the classroom, about the slave trade. Her intention, in some ways even noble, was certainly to protect me. But how can you protect someone from racist violence, without providing them with the tools to place them in their historical process?

For five years, at the end of my university studies, I was lucky enough to work as an educator in a center for the fight against adult discomfort. Some of the users were racialized and, when interacting with the operators of the center, often pointed out that they were victims of racist episodes, which the team of operators was not equipped to deal with. And how I wish I had a clear tool to decode episodes lucidly.

The laboratory activities proposed here are designed to consciously address these critical points.

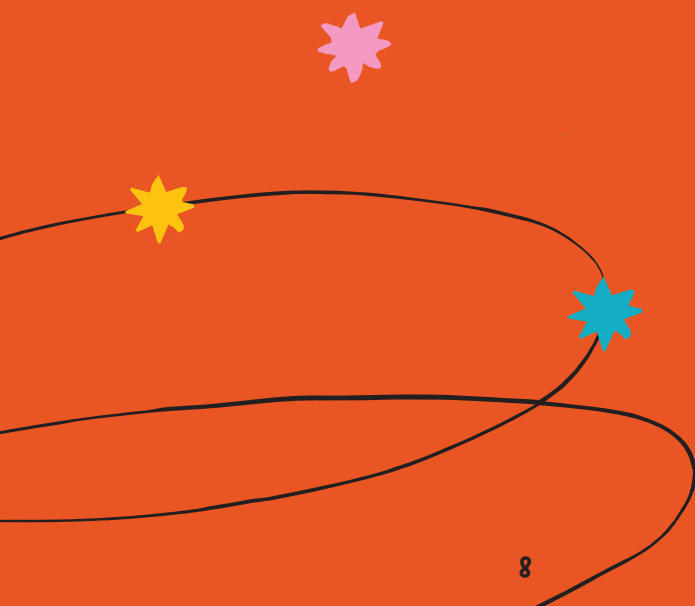
I feel the time is ripe to act on a change. And change can only start from the decolonization of oneself in an honest and open path that leads to a revolution that starting from the individual can, with a domino effect, reach more and more people, more and more distant; the pages that will follow have been specially designed to hold your hand in this process and to help you fully understand the concepts on which it is based.

I want to conclude by inviting you not to be afraid of the word racism. If we do not call things by their name, how can we defeat them; deny them, find excuses or create alternative narratives, it only feeds, reiterates and perpetuates this device of oppression and submission.

We make the soil in which we sow ready to receive all the seeds. It's not too late.

Enjoy the work,
Sahra

Sahra Sparavigna Abdullahi Omar, born in 1991, Neapolitan of Somali origin, anti-racist activist, teacher. She studied Political Science and International Relations at the Oriental University of Naples, completing his studies with a master's degree in Development Sciences and International Cooperation at the Sapienza University of Rome.



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★ Affirmative actions

The concept of “Affirmative actions” refers to policies and initiatives aimed at addressing historical and systemic inequalities by actively promoting and providing opportunities for underrepresented groups. These measures are designed to counteract the effects of past and present discrimination, ensuring fair representation and equal access to education, employment and other opportunities.

Affirmative actions play a crucial role not only in promoting diversity but also in addressing historical injustices through a form of redress. These policies recognize that certain groups have been historically marginalized and aim to rectify past discrimination by providing targeted opportunities for their advancement. In this sense, affirmative actions serve as a **means of compensation**, seeking to rectify systemic inequalities and promote a more equitable society.

It is important to understand that equality does not solely mean treating everyone the same. Instead, the concept of equality within the context of affirmative actions is often viewed through the lens of equity. Equity recognizes that individuals and groups may start from different positions due to historical disadvantages and aims to balance the scales by providing additional support to those who have been historically marginalized. This perspective acknowledges that true equality requires addressing existing disparities and ensuring that all individuals have an equal opportunity to succeed, taking into account the unique challenges faced by different groups, particularly in terms of race and gender. Affirmative actions, therefore, embody a **proactive approach** to achieve not just equal treatment, but equitable outcomes in the pursuit of a more just and inclusive society.



Bias vs. racism

Bias, in its various forms, represents the systematic and often subconscious favoritism or prejudice that can influence decision-making processes. These biases can manifest in different aspects of life, impacting perceptions, judgments, and interactions. It is crucial to acknowledge and address bias, as it can introduce errors and inequalities in various fields, including social interactions, employment, and education. Drawing a distinction between bias and racism, The perspective of the Black psychologist and psychoanalyst Grada Kilomba sheds light on the nuanced nature of discriminatory practices. Kilomba emphasizes that **racism** transcends individual prejudices; **it necessitates the fusion of bias with systemic power.**

As Kilomba points out, racism cannot be reduced to a mere synonym for prejudice or an expression of prejudice. If prejudice is in fact a fundamental component of racist ideology- which works on the construction of difference and its hierarchical articulation – racism is the result of the combination of prejudice and power, i.e. the application of hierarchical difference to a power (historical, political, social, economic) relationship: «And in this sense, racism is white supremacy. Other racial groups can neither be racist nor perform racism, as they do not possess this power». (p. 41).

Blackness

What we perceive as “skin color” is not an objective fact and cannot be reduced to a mere outcome of our ability to perceive colors. This ability is co-constructed within specific linguistic and cultural systems throughout the history of their evolution. As several scholars point out, it is only with the colonization of the Americas through the transatlantic slave trade that the term “Black” is specifically attributed to people deported to the

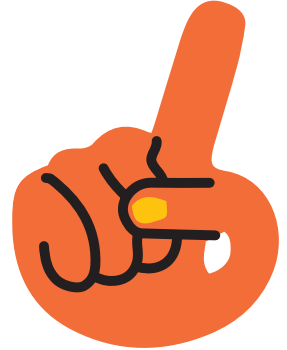
colonies and enslaved, eventually becoming synonymous with “slave”. Gradually, the overlap of these two terms solidifies, making them interchangeable.

However, it is especially with the abolition of slavery that the term “black” acquires its modern racial significance, specifically qualifying the skin color of those classified as “inferior races” compared to bodies recognized as human, namely those assigned the skin color “white”.

Scientific racism has generated actual scientific theories to “naturalize” a hierarchy of humanity, based on a series of anatomical traits, prominently including skin colors arranged on a scale of human value from white to black. It is crucial to bear in mind that **the so-called difference in skin color is not a natural fact but an ideologically constructed difference by racism**. It has penetrated so deeply into our cultural structures that it appears to us today as an objectively existing difference. Careful attention to the language we use is important if we want our words to convey an anti-racist view of society. We must be cautious not to speak of “skin color difference”, once again implying that such a difference exists. Instead, it is important to talk about the **“construction of skin color difference”** and emphasize that this difference was constructed by racism when it produced a pseudo-scientific (racist) discourse about certain anatomical traits, attributing to them a new meaning of “racial markers” and making their existence appear “self-evident” and “unquestionable”. After centuries of racialization of language, anti-racist movements have acted in many languages **to redefine the meaning of the word “Black” from a perspective of liberation**. Often capitalizing the initial letter in this adjective, anti-racist movements have chosen to appropriate the term “Black” to name racialized people and descendants of the African diaspora, asserting their dignity as human beings. Blackness, whether understood as the product of racist ideology or as a category resulting from struggles that have claimed

liberation from racism and slavery, is not in any case a “biological” or “natural” category but a political category that has unfolded throughout history and still shapes cultural structures as well as our perceptual and sensory capabilities today.

Whiteness and Camaraderie



Like blackness, **whiteness is not an objective or natural phenomenon**, nor can it be reduced to a mere “color” of the skin. The ability to perceive colors itself is culturally constructed and profoundly shaped by the history and ideology of race. According to racist ideology, whiteness is implicitly synonymous with being human, while anything non-white is not conceived or perceived as human but rather as something inferior or subhuman.

The perception of whiteness is constructed through the construction of blackness as its antithesis, but not only that. Whiteness is a perception that internalizes through **episodes of everyday racism** that are not recognized as such but rather as “normal” interactions, ways of behaving or speaking, thereby normalizing the racial matrix that legitimizes them. In particular, as pointed out by Grada Kilomba, whiteness is co-constructed in the mutual interaction among white people when the image of a black person is evoked, collectively building, even in a benign or ironic form, the system of negative meanings that implicitly merge with the anatomical traits or cultural practices associated with the evoked image. In this way, the interaction among whites functions as the dynamic in which one implicitly recognizes each other’s legitimacy to belong to the group that has the power to construct blackness as a synonym for subhuman, or to the presumed superior category of “human beings”.

✿ Citizen participation vs Citizenship

The intertwining of ideology and the idealization of the nation has, over time, led to a conflation with the concept of the State. This phenomenon became particularly pronounced in the 1960s when the notion of “citizenship” began to intersect with that of “diversity”, marking the emergence of new social actors endowed with rights. The consequence of this intersection has been a gradual transformation wherein citizenship has become synonymous with nationality. This historical shift, once perhaps meaningful in harnessing sentiments to foster a collective identity that could seamlessly transition subjects into citizens of the Nation-State, has evolved. Today, it imposes a unidirectional relationship between belonging and participation. The implication is that even if one’s ethnic or cultural identity differs from the dominant narrative, mere affiliation with the overarching national identity is deemed sufficient for participation in the affairs of the State.

This construct, while it might have served a purpose in an earlier era, is increasingly viewed as restrictive and potentially exclusionary. It simplifies the intricate tapestry of identities within a nation and perpetuates a model where national belonging is prioritized over the diverse array of individual expressions and affiliations.



In contemporary discourse, there is a growing recognition of the need for a more inclusive understanding of citizenship, one that transcends narrow definitions tied solely to nationality and invites a richer, multifaceted engagement with the concept of belonging in a diverse and interconnected world.

Citizenship extends beyond formal and bureaucratic definitions, embracing a complex concept that goes beyond mere legal documentation. While formal nationality signifies a legal affiliation with a specific nation, **the essence of citizenship can exist independently of official paperwork.** In this broader context, citizenship is not solely a matter of legal recognition; rather, it is a dynamic and nuanced relationship with the social fabric of a state.

Among the various dimensions of social membership, active or passive civic participation emerges as a significant element. Citizenship, then, is not confined to the static confines of a passport or citizenship certificate; it flourishes in the **active engagement and involvement of individuals within the societal framework.** Whether through civic activism, community service, or other participatory actions, individuals

contribute to the collective identity and well-being of the community without necessarily subscribing to a conventional sense of national allegiance. Recognizing citizenship as a multifaceted and participatory concept emphasizes the importance of acknowledging diverse forms of engagement within the complex tapestry of societal membership, irrespective of traditional notions of patriotism or attachment to a specific homeland.



Cultural colonialism and Epistemicide

As Nigerian writer Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie argues, stories are subject to the same logics of the economic and political world: «How they are told, who tells them, when they're told, how many stories are told, are really dependent on power» (Adichie 9:56).

The violence of colonialism, slavery, and racism is so brutally forceful that it is capable of uprooting entire human existences from history. Names of individuals, communities, peoples, cultural practices, cosmologies, religions, languages, and even systems of law, settlements, monuments, and so forth. Boaventura Santos speaks in this regard of “Epistemicide”, **the systematic destruction of knowledge, thought systems, and cultural practices of social groups and communities that have undergone colonization**. Indian philosopher Gayatri Chackravorty Spivak (1982) specifically talks about “epistemic violence” to highlight how colonial interference, in particular, has silenced the memory and discourse of women in colonized countries.

Indeed, as Amílcar Cabral punctually observes, «History teaches us that, in certain circumstances, it is very easy for the foreigner to impose his domination on a people. But it also teaches us that, whatever may be the material aspects of this domination, it can be maintained only by the permanent, organized repression of the cultural life of the people concerned» (National Liberation and Culture).

In this way, the scholar Orlando Patterson describes the production of what he calls “social death”, the historical, existential, and legal condition of those who are deprived of their relationship to time - past, present, and future.



With even greater force, the racial and colonial oppression system has systematically acted to erase from time the memory of resistances carried out by the oppressed against the oppressive system, so that their memory is not transmitted to posterity, avoiding the risk of further insubordination.

While history is dotted with anti-slavery, anti-fascist, anti-racist, and anti-colonial liberation struggles, it is because, in one way or another, these memories have found a way to be transmitted and instill strength and hope from one generation of the oppressed to the next. This is why the preservation and transmission of such memories are of vital importance. The study of the history of racism is not merely something important for one's cultural enrichment but fundamental knowledge to interrupt the impact of racial violence on societies and interpersonal relationships. On one hand, it means disrupting the belief, produced by colonialism itself, that Europe and its history have greater importance than the stories that Europe actively sought to erase or make forgotten. On the other hand, **it involves practicing a new recognition of value for those suppressed stories and those who are their heirs and custodians today** - the sons and daughters of those who, by resisting racial and colonial oppression, managed to ensure the survival of their progeny, and those who still today oppose their social death, asserting the importance of their own lives and histories as the unique key to accessing a future.

Decolonization

To borrow Frantz Fanon's definition from *The Wretched of the Earth*, decolonization is an effect of a “tabula rasa”, a wiping clean of a system of oppression deeply rooted within our bodies, hearts, our capacity to feel, and to be in relation: «The proof of success lies in a whole social structure being changed from the bottom up. The extraordinary importance of this change is that it is willed, called for, demanded. The need for this change exists in its crude state, impetuous and compelling, in the consciousness and in the lives of the men and women who are colonized. But the possibility of this change is equally experienced in the form of a terrifying future in the consciousness of another “species” of men and women: the colonizers». With these words, Fanon, one of the most important critical thinkers of racism and colonialism, still warns us today about two fundamental principles of decolonization.

1. **Decolonization is not a metaphor.** It is not an abstract, intellectual, or merely discursive gesture. It is not a simple synonym for any transformative act; it implies **a specific radical shift in the power relationship**, indicating the definitive annulment of power asymmetries that legitimize the domination of some human beings over others, reducing the latter to a condition of non-humanness. Certainly, when we speak of decolonization, we can and must include a vision of a radical transformation of artistic and cultural spheres, thought structures, language, but all of this must go hand in hand with a tabula rasa – a complete overhaul, not just a rethinking, a starting from scratch of legal, economic, educational, and political institutions.



2. **Decolonization is a process led by a specific subject, the colonized**, to the extent that it signifies their own process of liberation. If carried out by third parties, or rather, whenever it has been carried out by third parties in history, it has not led to liberation but to a new form of subjection to

increasingly less recognizable forms of dominance.

As Fanon argues, even colonizers, those who benefit from colonial structures and power, can play a role in decolonization to the extent that they renounce such power and the benefits derived from exercising their dominant role. However, it does not mean that it is up to colonizers to determine the direction and meaning of a decolonization process. Instead, they are given the opportunity to assume a stance not of opposition to the process but of active support. It is crucial to be aware, as Fanon himself notes, that freeing oneself from a condition of oppression can be an experience both energizing and painful. It becomes possible only if one accepts that this process does not lead to the gates of a perfect world where nothing wrong will ever happen.

On the contrary, **it is about accepting that the struggle and transformation are likely arduous but constitutive parts of human history.** It means accepting, as colonized peoples historically accepted by initiating decolonization processes, that life is “an endless struggle”.

Discrimination

The use of the term “hate” can create a misunderstanding, leading one to believe that the perpetrator must have a strong feeling of hatred towards the victim or the group he or she belongs to in order to be held responsible for a hate crime. This, however, as the OSCE (Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe)¹ reminds us in its guide to prosecute hate crimes, does not correspond to reality: the element that determines the discriminatory nature of a crime is not so much the hatred, but **the process of victim selection**, which must be based on discrimination or prejudice against the group to which the victim belongs. In other words, the discriminating factor lies not so much in the emotion of the offender, but in his choice to target a particular person because of his membership of a socially determined group.

In order to facilitate understanding of the selection process behind hate crimes, indicators known as “**bias indicators**” are often used. These consist of facts and circumstances that may suggest the presence of a hate crime, i.e. a crime committed because of the perpetrator’s prejudice against the victim, resulting from one or more protected characteristics (real or presumed by the perpetrator) that identify the victim. The Odihr, Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights of the OSCE, defines them as: «Objective facts, circumstances, patterns relating to a crime which, alone or in conjunction with other facts or circumstances, suggest that the perpetrator’s actions are motivated, in whole or in part, by some form of prejudice».

1

OSCE is a regional security-oriented intergovernmental organization comprising member states in Europe, North America, and Asia. Its mandate includes issues such as arms control, the promotion of human rights, freedom of the press, and free and fair elections.

The main injury indicators are:

1. **victim/witness perception:** the victim's (or possible witnesses') perception of what happened is an important indicator that should give further impetus in the search for objective elements to determine the possible discriminatory motivation of the crime;
2. **disparaging remarks, gestures, written statements, drawings, symbols and graffiti:** often the perpetrator of a hate crime intends to highlight the motivation of prejudice, non-acceptance or even outright hatred behind the crime (it is no coincidence that hate crimes are also referred to as message crimes);
3. **differences between perpetrator and victim on ethnic, religious or other grounds** (e.g. sexual orientation): these are a significant indicator, especially - but not necessarily - if the victim belongs (or is perceived to belong) to a so-called minority group;
4. **involvement of so-called organised hate groups** (i.e. dedicated to hate crimes or incitement to hate) **or their members:** the perpetrator may not even be structurally affiliated to any such group, but share its ideology and violent methods;
5. **location:** the offence was committed near a place of worship (synagogue, mosque, Christian church) or an establishment predominantly attended by persons at *risk of discrimination* (LGBT persons, migrants);
6. **timing:** the offence took place on the occasion of a particular festivity, religious festival or other event of special significance for a community;
7. **patterns/frequency of previous crimes or incidents:** the incident is similar to others of a similar nature that have occurred in a given period; a certain crime pattern, a seriality, recurs;

8. **nature of the violence:** in hate crimes, the level of violence may be particularly high and is often accompanied by serious physical insults or humiliation, often made public, by the perpetrator himself, via the Web;
9. **lack of other motivations:** sometimes there are no obvious reasons that could justify the commission of the crime: the victim and the suspect do not know each other, any quarrel that may have triggered the attack appears clearly pretextual, there is no economic motive, in such cases, discrimination may be the only plausible motivation.

The same objectivity reserved in investigating the meaning of “hatred”, that is, the subsistence of the matrix of hatred in the act regardless of the meaning that the author subjectively attributes to it in an explicit form, must also be maintained when investigating the racial matrix that animates the conduct, not seeing racism as a purely emotional predisposition towards the other, driven by ignorance and/or fear, but as a system invented, implemented and perpetrated to serve a purpose. And it is precisely this **systematic dimension** that allows hatred, not the other way around.



Ethnicity, Ethnicization

Such an interconnected genealogy of race as a signifier allows us to read its thickly problematized nexus with the concept of ethnicity, the use of which is often accepted, insofar as the nexus with race is not read critically. As Bentouhami (2016) observes, in fact, the concept of ethnicity is a precursor to modern racisms, since it is constructed on the basis of a culturally-based identity implicitly supported by a racial hierarchical differentiation. In fact, **the concept of ethnicity is the basis for the construction of national identity**, which reinforces the very boundaries of ethnic identity as they come to correspond with the boundaries of the nation-state (Balibar and Wallerstein 1988). In the contemporary era, in which race on biological grounds is a no longer accepted idea, ethnic-cultural difference allows for the surreptitious reproduction of the racial matrix, since it is an implicit hierarchical and binary order that establishes ethnic difference: a difference between cultures is presupposed, as between a Self (namely Western Europe), and an Other than Self (the Non Western Europe), in which the boundaries of the Self are established by the construction of the Other as different (Said 1978). The ethnicized other, as constructed in these terms, constitutes the object of a specific feeling of “fear” whose existence is legitimized and normalized as the difference that sustains this feeling is, in turn, naturalized. In this relationship of mutual co-construction between nation and ethnicity, racism emerges in the terms of xenophobia.

To subtract the reading of this process from any sort of naturalization and to claim on a theoretical level, the racial matrix of the process, Ambalavaner Sivanandan, introduces

the key term of *xeno-racism*: «It is a racism that is not just directed at those with darker skins, from the former colonial territories, but at the newer categories of the displaced, the dispossessed and the uprooted, who are beating at western Europe's doors, the Europe that helped to displace them in the first place. It is a racism, that is, that cannot be colour-coded, directed as it is at poor whites as well, and is therefore passed off as xenophobia, a "natural" fear of strangers. But in the way it denigrates and reifies people before segregating and/or expelling them, it is a xenophobia that bears all the marks of the old racism. It is racism in substance, but "xeno" in form. It is a racism that is meted out to impoverished strangers even if they are white. It is **xeno-racism**» (A. Sivanandan, *Catching history on the wing. Race, culture and globalization*, Pluto Press, London 2008. p.168).



Eurocentrism

Eurocentrism is a pervasive ideology that places Europe and its cultural, political, and economic achievements at the center of historical and contemporary narratives, often marginalizing or overlooking contributions from other regions. This worldview, born out of the historical context of European colonialism and imperialism, has deep-seated roots in the belief in European superiority and the notion that European cultures and societies represent the pinnacle of human achievement.

The genesis of Eurocentrism can be traced back to the Age of Exploration and the subsequent colonial expansion. European powers, driven by economic interests and the desire for global dominance, embarked on voyages of discovery, encountering and often subjugating diverse cultures and civilizations. This encounter with non-European societies led to a **hierarchical classification of cultures**, with European values and norms positioned as superior.

It's important to note that Eurocentrism is not limited to the geographical boundaries of the European continent. The term encompasses a broader perspective that extends to certain regions of the Euro-Asian landmass. Despite being part of the Eurasian continent, these areas may find themselves excluded from the Eurocentric narrative due to cultural, historical, or geopolitical considerations.

The Eurocentric worldview has had **far-reaching consequences**, influencing academic discourse, historical narratives, and global power dynamics. It has perpetuated an **imbalanced understanding of history and cultural achievements**, often sidelining the rich contributions of non-European civilizations. Acknowledging and challenging Eurocentrism is crucial for fostering a more inclusive and accurate representation of global history and culture, recognizing the diversity of human experiences beyond the Eurocentric lens.

★ First/Third World vs Global North/South

The expression “Third World” was coined by the French economist and sociologist Alfred Sauvy in a newspaper article in 1952. In this expression, the scholar referred to the most “ignored, exploited, and despised” part in a condition of subalternity, drawing a parallel with the French Third Estate - the popular and bourgeois social strata - before the 1789 revolution. Following the 1955 Bandung Conference, the term “Third World” came to designate members of the Non-Aligned Movement, namely those 120 states that emerged from the global process of decolonization in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. They decided, starting from the conference, not to align with the two powers in conflict during what was termed the Cold War, namely the United States on one side (designated as the First World) and the Soviet Union on the other (Second World).

With the fall of the Soviet bloc, the term “Third World” has persisted, particularly to denote the underdevelopment of formerly colonized countries in relation to the advanced capitalist systems of Western countries. The accumulation of wealth and relative modernization in these Western countries is directly linked to the appropriation of resources and exploitation of lands and populations subjected to colonialism. The new international division of labor that emerged from the 1970s imposed on former colonized countries an adjustment to Western development conditions through what are known as “structural adjustment programs” implemented by the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank.



These programs, by stimulating further processes of expropriation and privatization toward the integration of so-called underdeveloped economies into the free market, have also facilitated migratory processes to advanced capitalist countries. The restructuring of the international division of labor transformed the former into exporting countries and the latter into importers of labor, particularly in the care and social reproduction sectors (Silvia Federici, 2002).

In the decades that followed, migratory flows underwent variations in intensity and quality based on national and transnational regulations that governed them. At the same time, developing economies followed multiple paths of growth and economic crises.

The term “Third World” thus refers to a hierarchy of economic power on a global scale, but it is inaccurate for various interconnected reasons. The political relations that coalesced the “Third World” in the 1950s no longer exist, nor do the economic conditions of the individuals, which have diversified over

time, along with the more heavily trodden migratory paths (e.g., part of Latin America is now counted among the most industrialized powers in the G20, and migratory trajectories from Africa to Europe are much more substantial than those from Latin America or Asia).

Furthermore, the category of the “Third World” tends to suggest an idea of homogeneity in economic, social, and cultural realities that are very diverse. It contributes to creating a racialized thought structure emphasizing an insurmountable difference between “us” and “them”. The implicitly negative connotation of the expression also implies an implicit responsibility of the so-called “Third World” for the conditions of poverty and underdevelopment in the countries within the category. This erases the hidden responsibilities of centuries of colonialism and slavery in producing the global gap between rich and poor areas of the planet.



The category of “underdevelopment” connected to that of the “Third World” is problematic because it imposes the idea of a single possible evolution of today’s poverty conditions, where wealthy areas impose the standards to be reached and the direction to be taken, normalizing and at the same time making less visible the interdependence between contexts of wealth and poverty on a global scale.

This homogenous representation particularly impacts women, who, enclosed in the category of “Third World women”, are relegated to a condition of powerless victims (Mohanty 2003) in relation to an assumed completed female emancipation in the West, to which non-Western women are expected to conform. This legitimizes the idea that non-Western women need to be “liberated” from what is identified as the only obstacle to their emancipation, namely the patriarchal structure of their home societies. Such representations contribute to a portrayal of superiority by contrast of Western societies and to the normalization of the subordinate role that migrant women effectively occupy in these societies (Farris 2017, see under “Care Workers”).

Among the criticisms of the “Third World” category, the sociologist and economist Saskia Sassen (*Expulsions: Brutality and Complexity in the Global Economy*, 2014) proposes the use of the terms “**Global North**” and “**Global South**” to refer not simply to geographical regions but to **political entities connected in a relationship of subordination**. In this framework, “Dirty, Dangerous, and Demanding” (DDD) jobs and “Caring, Cooking and Cleaning” (CCC) jobs are structurally performed in the Global North by people from the Global South. The shift away from a lexicon that blames and conveys a derogatory connotation of poverty conditions follows **a conscious use of language highlighting structural inequalities and the direct correlation between conditions of advantage and disadvantage on a global scale**.



Hate crimes and Hate actions

Hate crimes are violent or discriminatory actions committed against an individual or group on the basis of their membership of a specific social category, such as race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation or gender identity.

Thus, hate crimes are considered in Europe as crimes that aim to attack not only the victim, but also the group to which the victim belongs. Therefore, these crimes are not only harmful to the direct victim, but also represent an attack on cultural diversity and social cohesion.

From a legal perspective, the European Union adopted the Council Framework Decision 2008/913/JHA of 28 November 2008 on combating certain forms and manifestations of racism and xenophobia by means of criminal law. This Framework Decision states that EU Member States must take measures to prevent and suppress hate crimes, including those based on race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation or gender identity. Starting from these premises, an indication that can be followed in carrying out the activities is to refer, in more general terms, to “hate actions”. In fact, maintaining the given reading of the concept of hatred, talking about actions and not only crimes allows us to extend our perspective on the multiplicity of forms that human behavior can possibly take. In fact, hate crimes are crimes characterized by the aggravating circumstance of racial, gender or homophobic hatred, for example, but **the space of discrimination is not only occupied by criminal conduct**. In fact, both in terms of intentionality and level of seriousness, there are other conducts that are equally damaging but do not represent a criminal offense: this may be the case of racist, sexist or homophobic actions carried out without the conscious intention of carrying out an act of violence or discrimination, but also of racist sexist or homophobic actions that are not considered criminal offenses due to their slightness.

Intersectionality

The term “intersectionality” refers to the reading of structural domination in terms of a **multiplicity and simultaneity of interconnected systems of oppression, gender/sexuality, race and class**. Coined by Black feminist Kimberle Crenshaw in 1989, this interpretive model is opposed as much to monist options (the reading of only one fundamental type of domination relationship from which the others would derive) as it is to additive options (the identification of oppressed subjects on the basis of the sum of the oppressions they suffer). In contrast, in Combahee’s *Statement* (1977), the intertwined and reciprocal action of oppressions makes their disjointed, let alone hierarchical, analysis impossible. The successful theoretical debate around intersectionality has expanded the reading of simultaneous interconnections to include other forms of oppression such as ableism, ageism, and fatphobia.

In this context it seems to us of particular relevance to read in international terms the common genealogy, and the co-construction of gender and race relations.

Historically, in fact, racialization is accomplished through a hypersexualization or de-sexualization of the colonized-racialized other. Alleged racial inferiority is corroborated by the construction of an alleged sexuality that is deviant by excess or defect (Stuart Hall 1996) from a sexual norm that thus comes to be constructed as implicitly white. On this basis the hierarchical differentiation between human and subhuman is a sexualized and gendered differentiation.



In Maria Lugones' words:
«From this point of
view, colonized people
became males and
females. Males became
nothuman-as-not-men,
and colonized females
became not-human-as-not-
women» (Lugones 2010).

If Maria Lugones defines it in terms of *coloniality of gender* (Lugones 2010), Philomena Essed proposes the concept of *gendered racism* (Essed 1991) to understand racism structurally constructed by gender roles and vice versa.

The construction of white women as good wives and mothers, whose natural predisposition to domestic and care work is presumed to be synonymous with white femininity, is historically produced as in Angela Davis' words, the embodied reproduction of the presumed "superior race" (Davis 1981). Specularly, non-white femininity comes to coincide with the idea of a sub-womanhood incapable of assuming the maternal task and therefore assigned to the dirtiest and most wearisome tasks of care work, under conditions of slavery in the past and overexploitation in the present.

Reading racism as a gendered notion allows one to read the functioning of interlocking systems of oppression (Combahee River Collective 1977). Sara Farris conceptualizes it in social and economic terms of *sexualization of the labor market* to read the structural assignment of non-Western women in the West to the most exploited and least economically and symbolically valued care work (Farris 2017).

Microaggressions

Among these various forms of discrimination, microaggressions are actions characterized by **subtle actions** manifested through comments, behavior or attitudes that may seem harmless but in reality **communicate a message of inferiority or dehumanization towards a group or person**.

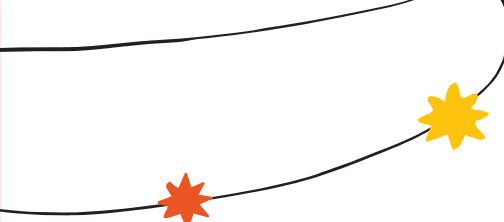
Microaggressions are not considered crimes under European hate crime legislation, but are still a form of discrimination that can have negative consequences on the mental and physical health of victims.

The fact that they are not prosecuted, however, rather than immediately suggesting the failure of institutions, should make us reflect on the fact that it is neither possible nor desirable for the criminal prosecution to focus on every possible human action. The risk is, firstly, that of a penal norm losing its characteristics of generality and abstractness that make it applicable to several specific cases, but also the risk of believing that only the threat of a sanction can shape human behavior and relations.

For this reason, as fundamental as it remains to educate legal and judicial practitioners to detect microaggressions, it is also crucial to get unaccustomed to justicialist and legalitarian demands due to the urgency of the instances and to recognise the role of the other social factors involved: among these, the educational one.

Structural, institutional and everyday racism

On the basis of this historical and philosophical framework, Grada Kilomba distinguishes three dimensions of contemporary racism: a) structural racism, b) institutional racism and c) everyday racism.



a) **Structural racism.** It indicates the forms of systemic exclusion of racialised people from economic, social and political structures, and the related generalized condition of disadvantage.

b) **Institutional racism.** It indicates the spill-over of racism to a functioning principle of political, social and cultural institutions, which establishes unequal treatment as a model for structuring and regulating educational systems, the labour market, criminal justice, services, etc. Citizenship, migratory status and the relative residence permit are today the main devices of institutional racialisation, whose combined action spills over into the production of differential access to the welfare state and entitlement, into horizontal educational segregation (students without citizenship, or with a migratory background are structurally segregated in technical-professional training courses, and they are oriented towards less qualified professions) and vertical segregation (in Italy, for example, the school drop-out rate in the population of students without citizenship is 35.4% against a national average of 13.1%)². Concerning school, it is also worthy of note the *eurocentrism* of school curricula, which contributes to the construction of the social identity of the subjects undergoing training, by renewing the principle of natal alienation, and neglecting or invisibilising the legacies of students with racialised backgrounds.

²

https://www.miur.gov.it/documents/20182/0/NOTIZIARIO_Stranieri_2021+%281%29.pdf/150d451a-45d2-e26f-9512-338a98c7bb1e?t=1659103036663

c) Everyday racism. It indicates the racial matrix that permeates everyday social behaviour, particularly within inter-individual relations at the level of language, speech, images, gestures and looks.




Structural and institutional racism are fundamental premises for understanding everyday racism and avoiding its reduction:

1) to the mere most striking and visible forms, based on high degrees of physical violence. If the actions of hatred, most classically recognised as such, belong to such a definition, it is important, in this research framework, to grasp the links between visible and submerged elements of the process of racialisation.

2) to a mere individual moral disposition, which only the individual has the power to admit or not (“I am racist” / “I am not racist”). **Subtracting racism from a moral reading also becomes crucial** from the perspective of a non-moralising intervention in the reading of its embodied expressions. Indeed, by branding the perpetrator of racist behavior as the perpetrator of a morally reprehensible behavior, one runs the risk of individualizing the dynamic (endorsing the so-called “rotten apple” paradigm). Thus it would invisibilize all the factors of social, cultural and institutional co-responsibility, as well as the elements of historical determination of such behavior.

The experience of racism

The experience of racism, referring to the quadripartition proposed by Paul Mecheril 2003, can take the form of an act referred directly to 1) a person, 2) to persons close to him/her, or 3) to persons perceived as his/her representatives, or 4) members of his/her own group (real or perceived as such according to the belief of the aggressor). With particular reference to linguistic experiences, Mecheril also distinguishes



between primary and secondary experiences. The first group includes the transmission of explicitly racist messages, whose damaging character is clear both in intentions and effects. The second group includes those experiences in which the thematisation of primary experiences is posed as a problem and thus effectively denied. *The experience of the disavowal of experience* reinforces the consequences of the act, and its premises, in a structure of action, as Mecheril observes echoing Ferreira (2003), whose difficult identification is a constitutive and integral part of the phenomenon itself and its reproduction.

In the dynamics of the **everyday racist episode** Kilomba identifies three elements that define the experience as traumatic: 1) the violent shock 2) the separation 3) the timelessness.

1. Violent shock is peculiar to an unexpected experience that due to its violence, intrusiveness and intensity, despite the structural nature of racism as a phenomenon, cannot be integrated into mental structures, insofar as it interrupts one's sense of security.
2. Exposure to daily racism deprives the individual of his/her connection to society, damaging the exposed subject's sense of belonging to a community dimension and thus reiterating the dehumanizing constitutive principle of social death by natal alienation.
3. The re-actualisation of a past order of subjugation in the present defines the foundational **timelessness** of racism, which determines a **coexistence of the past in the present and vice versa**, bringing into the single episode not only the accumulation of experiences in the course of the individual biographical trajectory, but the legacy of a centuries-old memory that, in often unconscious forms, has been transmitted for centuries, from one generation of racialized subjects to the next.

Everyday racist episodes, as Kilomba emphasizes, do not only involve those who act and suffer the racist act. In fact, the episode always takes place in front of what the scholar calls the “**white audience**”, which tends to assume a static behaviour of passive and silent observers. According to Kilomba, this represents common sense from a white racial perspective. The triangular constellation that is thus created is at the origin of the isolation of the person made the object of the racist act. The perpetrator of the racial aggression, in fact, acts on the basis of a sense of belonging to the same social group as the audience, namely whiteness. The relationship of the aggressor to the white audience, in this sense, is to be understood as an immanent material relationship, but also as a symbolic and transcendent one. What in fact underscores its function in the scene is that the racist action is triggered by the conscious or unconscious certainty that the aggressor’s group membership, i.e. the white audience, will give consent to the action itself. The episode’s scene therefore becomes a scene precisely because it takes place under the eyes of an interested observer (Kilomba 2008, p.84). The *white* audience, as Kilomba observes, is created together with the racialized group, even before the direct triangulation with the racialized subject and the aggressor. This triangulation in fact takes shape precedently, in symbolic forms, in situations in which, in the absence of the direct object of aggression, the racialized victim is linguistically evoked in the form of the object of aggression, mockery, denigrating acts.



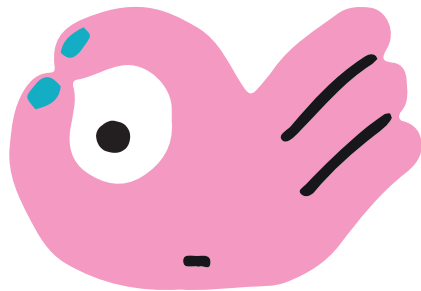
Newsworthiness and Cherry-picking

Newsworthiness and cherry-picking are two interconnected aspects of media coverage that significantly influence the shaping of **public perception**. Newsworthiness refers to the criteria that determine whether a story is considered relevant, interesting, or important enough to be covered by the media. In selecting news stories, media often prioritize those fitting the current organizational timeframe and having a broad impact. Clarity is crucial, favoring stories with reduced ambiguity. Additionally, cultural affinity and alignment with pre-existing mental images significantly contribute to a story's perceived newsworthiness, as they resonate more with the audience's interests and expectations.

Cherry-picking, on the other hand, involves selecting specific details or events to construct a narrative, potentially distorting the overall context of a story. In the realm of news reporting, the intersection of these factors can impact the portrayal of events and contribute to the perpetuation of certain biases. In the context of discrimination, newsworthiness and cherry-picking can play a pivotal role in shaping narratives that either challenge or reinforce stereotypes. Discriminatory incidents, when covered by the media, may be subject to cherry-picking - selectively emphasizing details that align with prevailing biases or sensationalizing aspects of the story. This **selective framing can perpetuate harmful stereotypes** and contribute to a distorted understanding of events. Moreover, the criteria for newsworthiness may inadvertently marginalize or underreport incidents of discrimination, further influencing public perceptions by downplaying the prevalence and impact of discriminatory practices.

* Positioning and Point of view

Racism has to be understood as a power relationship affecting all individuals and social groups. As a matter of fact, individuals and social groups are to be read in the framework of structural social relationships, namely in a position of power (whiteness) or in a subordinate position (Blackness or other forms of racialisation). The politics of positioning (Rich 1984) plays a fundamental role in framing the subjective lived experience of power relations, assuming subjects of power relations as *epistemic subjects*, whose capacity to produce knowledge is always anchored in the social position they embody. We refer to this paradigm in terms of *standpoint epistemology* and of *situated knowledge* (Collins 1991, Haraway 1988). Under these epistemological premises, racialized subjects are to be understood as key figures for the conceptualization of racialization itself (Hill Collins 1991). Research figures, that is the subjects of scientific production, are also implicated in structural power relationship. More specifically, they hold a strategic position of power within structural race relationships, since producing knowledge is a power condition and race requires no knowledge be produced about its functioning, in order to function and reproduce itself. Therefore, **positioning research subjects in terms of gender, race and class is a fundamental theoretical and methodological action** because it allows power asymmetries traversing all the setting components relations to become visible - not only power asymmetries relating targeted research subjects, but also the relationships between researchers and the targeted subjects themselves.

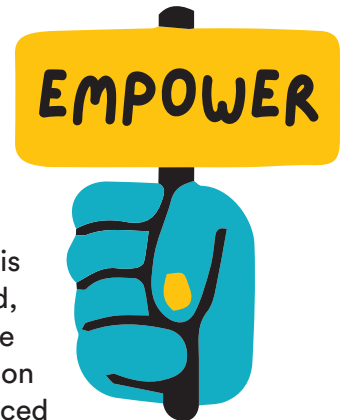


Thus it is crucial to clearly express whether all the involved subjects belong to the same or to antagonistic social groups in terms of gender, race and class. That is at stake both in collecting and in interpreting research data.

Structural power relations cross relationships between victimized subjects, witnesses and authors of hate actions and their specific standpoint, in epistemic terms, is at stake.

In fact, when we face with the presence of a subject that could be define as the “victim” of a hate action, a twofold effort of analysis is required. First, it is crucial to focus on the individual who experienced victimization, granting him/her the power to define the epistemological limits of his/her own experience. Second, it is very important to avoid a *secondary victimization* dynamic, in which the researcher or other subjects involved in the research setting intervene in the elaboration of the “victim”’s lived experience, subordinating it to their own power to validate or invalidate it.

Similarly, a great attention must be paid to the way in which the personal and experiential elements are formulated by the victimized subject, in order no to silence and reduce her/him to a mere instrumental role subordinated to the cognitive and perceptive capacity of the researcher, which is inevitably situated, and therefore conditioned, by his/her own positioning with respect to the phenomenon. Instead, focusing the research on the epistemic value of the subject who has faced the hate action, by anchoring the research frame to his/her own experience and standpoint, means to ground the research in a best practice orienting the identification of all subsequent ones. In other words, giving centrality to the lived experience of the victimized subject, that is in the harm that has been suffered, means acknowledging its strategic importance in defining an horizon for its *reparation*.



If the victimized subject becomes the protagonist of a reparation process, that permits to effectively transform the victimization experience and to eliminate the risks of a secondary victimization. The epistemological gesture by which centrality is accorded to the lived experience of being harmed, is in fact the first necessary gesture of support in response to acts of hatred and episodes of everyday racism (Kilomba 2008).

Positions of subalternity within relationships of structural oppression do not correspond to conditions of inaction and passivity. On the contrary, reading racism in terms of a structural relationship allows one to read social subjects actions on the basis of counterposing interests placed in direct antagonism. Secondly, it permits to frame every social action within the asymmetrical distribution of power at the two poles of the social relationship. The conceptualisation of subalternity as a static condition of inability to act is not a neutral construction, but it results from the application of *the racial matrix of intelligibility*, which impacts racialized subjects' agency by making it unintelligible (Butler 2004). Simultaneously, the racial matrix of intelligibility reduces racialized subjects' agency to a sub-human notion of act, namely to a violent, aggressive, hyper-erotic, uncivilized, or submissive inclination.

Therefore, a critical reading of the racial matrix of intelligibility implies a critical understanding of the category of "victim", and the passivity and staticity substantiating its meaning. On the contrary, beyond those assumptions, it is crucial to grasp the "victim"'s experience starting from her/his very capacity to act and therefore to resist, that is to strategically oppose the relationship of domination conveyed by the action of racial hatred. In order to account for a subject that, by virtue of his/her own subaltern structural condition, who is anything but passive and inactive, we propose to go beyond the definition of "victim" by adopting instead the term "victimized subject".

In fact, the term “subject” immediately refers to the subject’s nature as agent, while the term “victimized” goes beyond the static crystallization of the victim and focuses on the process of subjection underlying it, which the victimized subject always confronts with his or her own strategic agency.

Privilege and white fragility

The term privilege is used to define the position of power within a structural relationship of gender, race and class oppression. Privilege consists in economic, political power, historically accumulated by the social subjects, which is reflected in the **power to speak, to be heard and to see one’s own speech validated, as well as the contents conveyed by it**. Specularly, privilege also includes the **power to validate subaltern speech and the discourse conveyed**.

As brilliantly observed by the feminist writer bell hooks³ in *Feminism Is for Everybody*, privilege also constitutes a specific psychological condition, one that hooks defines as a psychological dependence on the ability to exert oppression. Reclaiming a position of privilege, in this sense, means engaging with the world while holding onto a sense of self, an idea of self-esteem based on the possession of things and people, and therefore the prerogative to benefit from their exploitation or the direct appropriation of their ability to generate resources, energy, and wealth.

³

bell hooks, aka Gloria Jean Watkins, was an American writer, activist and feminist. The pseudonym, that the writer wanted to adopt in lowercase (to make sure - she said - that people focused on what she wrote and not on who she was), comes from that of the maternal great-grandmother, Bell Blair Hooks.

Cultures of domination, as hooks writes, «attack self-esteem, replacing it with a notion that we derive our sense of being from dominion over another» (hooks 2000, p.70). Like any condition of dependence, its resolution is not immediate, nor can it arise from the mere will to overcome it. Therefore, deep work is required, involving the entire sphere of emotions that emerge in the attempt to break the dependence. These emotions have been thematized in various ways, such as “**white anxiety**” (Laura Callanan), “**white narcissism**” (Fanon), “**white ego defense mechanisms**” (Paul Gilroy, 2004). Drawing on the reflections of these authors, Grada Kilomba speaks of “anxious fear” (2008), naming the concern that grips a person in a position of privilege when confronted with the explicit voices of those who name the disparities in conditions and opportunities between oppressed and privileged individuals: «There is an apprehensive fear that if the colonial subject speaks, the colonizer will have to listen. She/he would be forced into an uncomfortable confrontation with “Other” truths» (Kilomba 2008, p.19).

Kilomba has coined the concept of “White Fragility” to define the difficulty that white people face in discussing racism, that is, in recognizing the advantages they derive from such a structural power asymmetry. The most common reaction stemming from white fragility is that of assuming a defensive posture and avoiding or denying the racist determination of a behaviour or speech. This often takes the form of arguments emphasizing the non-racist intentions of the perpetrator of the behaviour or speech in question. For this reason, it is important to always keep in mind that racism, as a systemic phenomenon, does not correspond to the mere intentions of individuals who incorporate it. On the contrary, it often involves mechanisms that transcend the individual intentions of those who benefit from such a power structure.

Therefore, denying one's own participation in a racially based social system only reaffirms the solidity of the structure and strengthens the asymmetries of privilege and oppression. Denying one's privilege is, in fact, a fundamental condition for maintaining such a state.

The Egyptian feminist Mona Eltahawy (2019) more specifically names the feeling of discomfort that arises from the experience of having one's privilege named - an experience that, in fact, opens up the possibility of embarking on a path to free oneself from it. It is essential to consider this discomfort not as a condition to be resolved and extinguished but to be accepted and traversed to resolve the dependence relationship. In this sense, **discomfort**, when viewed from a perspective of individual and political transformation, **constitutes a necessary albeit unpleasant experience**. It guides the privileged individual toward liberation from the role of oppressor that one must assume if accepting the privilege. In Eltahawy's own words: «Are you uncomfortable? Good. You should be. Discomfort is a reminder that privilege is being questioned, and this revolutionary moment is one in which we must defy, disobey, and disrupt [systems of oppression] everywhere» (Eltahawy 2019, p.8).

Race, Racism

The deep history of slavery reverberates in contemporary social structures (James 1938). Contemporary principles of social and international division of labour are informed by implicit racial criteria, resulting in a segregation of racialised subjects into specific work sector. The so-called DDD jobs (“Dirty, Dangerous and Demanding”) and CCC jobs (“Caring, Cooking and Cleaning”) are the “unskilled” occupations to which racialised subjects are structurally assigned in western

societies (Farris 2017) and they are imbued with what Grada Kilomba refers to as “plantation memories”, that is, the acting out in the present of the colonial past of racial oppression, humiliation, dehumanisation. In the devalorization of these occupational sectors, and in the conditions of exploitation that characterize them, it is possible to read against the light the re-actualisation of the principles of instrumentality, dispensability, marking of bodies, and native alienation of plantocratic memory, which oriented the historical transition from slavery to wage labour (Moulier-Boutang 1998).

Within this framework, the collective historical trauma of slavery, colonisation and persecution is “re-enacted” through episodes of everyday racism. In the relationship between a present that re-enacts the past and vice versa, a past that re-enacts in the present the racial and colonial order, the distinction between past and present temporality collapses (Kilomba 2008).

The rearticulation of the hierarchical relationship between freedom and slavery in terms of superior and inferior races permeates the written and unwritten norms of contemporary Western societies. Moreover, the shift from a XIX and XX century biologically-based racism to a contemporary culturally-based racism allows racism today to perpetrate itself through its own negation on the discursive level, fuelling a normalisation of ethno-cultural hierarchical differentiations. Those differentiations implicitly inform much of the social (and therefore racial) organization of labour, as well as the legal framework regulating border regimes, citizenship and a more general racially-based differential access to rights.

In this frame, we assume **racism** as a **historically determined phenomenon**, intertwined with the stratified history of the notion of *human*. Since modernity, that notion was historically articulated via the opposition to the notion of *non-human* as *sub-human*, that is by imposing an ideological and social hierarchy of the human (Lugones 2010).

The conceptual production of this differentiation is inscribed in the long history of slavery and colonialism, as long as they were elevated to forms of structural, social and political organization. In other words, racism is an outcome of the **process of globalization and rationalization of a radical appropriation of lands and bodies**, by exploiting them to the point of **complete exhaustion of their vital capacity**. If the expropriation of land were historically justified on the basis of the notion of *terra nullius* (no one's land) underlying the idea of an appropriable land (C. W. Mills 1997), the way millions of human lives were reduced to a condition of “social death” (Patterson 1982) stems from the practice of enslavement.

The colonial plantation system was based on the production of socially death existences, that is slavery as an existential condition by birth. The modern notion of “slave” shaped the matrix for the production of the modern, and specifically racial, notion of *sub-human*. In fact, the modern notion of slave incorporates the following principles which, even after the formal abolition of slavery, have been rearticulated in the modern processes of racialisation, both on a material and symbolic level. The principles are as following: principle of instrumentality, markability, dispensability, native alienation (Patterson 1982).

- **Principle of instrumentality.** The slave's body is not considered as featuring autonomous faculties, but it is reduced to an instrument of the master's agency, that is, an extension of his own body. In the slave's body, in this sense, the master alienates his own corporeity, namely the experience of physical wear and tear, by claiming for himself to be the mind that instructs the body and enjoins it to action.

- **Principle of markability.** The instrumentality of the slave body is in direct correlation with its conceptualisation as a *tabula rasa*, whose meaning is determined from the outside, through an operation of *marking*. In other words, the sub-humanity of the slave body is the distinctive trait of a body which has been reduced to a system of bodily marks (skin, hair, hands, mouth, etc.). The system of marks binds together a biological and a moral meaning. The principle of marking is accompanied by a rationalization of the violence which is inherent in the act.
- **Principle of dispensability of bodies.** The figure of the slave is associated with the idea of a body that can be worn out until its vital, physical and psychological forces are completely exhausted, no needing to provide for their regeneration. The constitutively dispensable body is always replaceable by a body of equal value, that equally destined to exhaustion. In this sense, inferiorized bodies within the hierarchy of the human are exposed by design to a premature death.
- **Principle of natal alienation.** The sub-human conditions of existence are based on the principle of a constitutive denial of human ties, at the level of all temporalities - past, present and future. In other words, it is impossible for the sub-human (ideologically transformed into a constitutive incapacity) to hold genealogy, or a kinship in the present time or even the possibility of generating lineage. This principle, however, is inscribed in a paradox: the sub-humanity of the slave, precisely because it is determined by birth, is a hereditary trait transferred from mother to child: the slave mother gives birth to slave children, but at the same time cannot be legally recognised as a mother, but reduced to a “reproductive machine” (Davis 1981, Vergès 2019).

The genealogy of race as a modern category is deeply intertwined with the history of colonialism and the colonial system of slave exploitation, as far as it doesn't end in such entanglement. With the globalization of the transatlantic slave trade at the end of 1600 plantation colonies became an actual laboratory of experimentation and production of modernity's social structures and system of thinking. As a matter of fact, the creation of a class society of European free masters and African enslaved people laid the groundwork for production of modern racial conceptualisation. Effectively, under these circumstances the association between African origin and a status of inferiority progressively led to the production of the modern notion of Blackness as marked by a racial meaning, so becoming an implicit referent for other historical trajectories of racialisation.

If the slave plantation system rests on a differentiation on a legal basis (the hierarchy of the human that distinguishes between free and slaves is upheld by law), the abolition of slavery progressively leads to a transposition on a biological basis of the hierarchical difference, that is, an inferiority sanctioned no longer by law but by nature (Benthouami 2016). As a matter of fact, it was only after the abolition of slavery (1830-1848) that the modern notion of race was constructed (Arthur de Gobineau's Essay on the Inequality of human Races is dated 1852).

Since the second half of XIX century the presumed biological and physical inferiority has started to be claimed once the juridical inferiority (that is slavery) was no more admitted. Thus, sub-human conditions of existence formerly granted by slavery were renewed, through a process of naturalization.



The pre-modern roots of race and the multiple racisms

The hierarchical notion of humanity is rooted in the hierarchical construction of differences on an ethnic and religious basis in Europe during the centuries preceding American colonization. What is more, those hierarchical differentiations pre-existed the transatlantic slave trade and shaped it. In this regard, it is important to point out that the word “slave” itself derives etymologically from the word “Slavic”, and can be traced back to the massive enslavement of populations of Slavic origin in pre-modern Europe, which contributed to their ethnically-based inferiorization process. Similarly, one of the oldest marks of blackness can be traced back to the term “Moor”, which for a long time was employed in Catholic Europe in order to define and inferiorize Mediterranean peoples of the North African and Middle Eastern on the basis of their Muslim religious confession. Similarly, Jewish people has been inferiorized on the basis of their religion since pre-modernity.

The authoritarian regimes of the Nazi-fascist era also affected the racial stigmatization, not only of Jewish people, but also of Roma and Sinti populations. The colonization of the Asian continent contributed to further produce racial bodily marks, such as the shape of eyes or the voice verbalizing idioms not belonging to the Indo-European language family.

Anti-Semitism, Islamophobia, anti-Gypsyism, and Sinophobia are therefore to be considered as **further expressions of racist ideology** alongside what is more typically to be identified as anti-Black racism. Race in its manifold historical and geographical trajectories is thus to be understood, in Stuart Hall’s words, as a “floating signifier” (Hall 1997), a notion whose meaning is never static, but perennially articulated according to historical conditions.

In light of its historical roots, therefore, it is important to recognize a **multiple and interconnected genealogy of race**, from which multiple forms of racism have historically emerged.

Racism as a discursive regime

As Grada Kilomba (2008) notes, racism has to be understood as a discursive regime. Its functioning is based on the production of what the author calls “**chains of meanings**”: words and images that by association become equivalent through a psychic and cognitive process of *displacement* of meanings one onto the other, producing what Hill Collins (1991) calls “controlling images” and Fanon (1952) describes in terms of an imposed “livery” woven “with a thousand details, anecdotes, stories”. Sewn onto bodies, the chains of equivalents produce what Fanon calls the *epidermalization of inferiority* (*ibid.*). The Fanonian and Black feminist categories converge in understanding racialisation as an *erotic* process, namely an ambivalent process of **hyper-sexualisation or de-sexualisation of the sub-human**, as opposed to the normative (white) categories of virility and femininity. Kilomba exemplifies this by unravelling the process of displacement that produces Black femininity, as an erotic and animal dimension, articulated through a chain of associations: «Black woman - Black Venus - savage Black - human savage - savage animal - animal».

More specifically, Kilomba distinguishes **five dynamics underlying the process of racialisation** by articulating what Guillaumin identifies as the process of naturalization of race. These are: 1) **Infantilisation** (the construction of the racialised subject as the personification of the dependent); 2) **Primitivization** (personification of the incivilized); 3) **Decivilisation** (personification of violence and menace); 4) **Animalization** (personification of bestiality, as the primary element of the non-human dimension); 5) **Eroticization** (personification of hypertrophic sexuality).

In synthesis, **racism** is to be understood as a **historically determined phenomenon**, discursively produced, as well as an **economic and ideological system subjected to rationalization**.



It has also to be understood as a not homogeneous but multifaceted category, that is a **floating signifier**, affecting perceptive and cognitive capacities. If scientific racism characterized the production of racist ideology between the mid-nineteenth and mid-twentieth centuries, the historical-contemporary framework from the post-World War II period onwards in which contemporary understanding of racism is inscribed, is what Goldberg theorises in terms of “racial evaporation”, i.e. the reality of a discursively produced regime, which continues to be discursively produced, but without the need to explicitly summon a racial lexicon, all the more so of a biological nature. With the end of the Second World War and the political distancing of Europe from XX century openly racist authoritarian regimes, theories of scientific racism and their linguistic apparatus were dismissed. This did not, however, lead to the end of racist ideology but rather to its rearticulation in less explicit terms anchored in a culturally based production of racial difference (Bentouhami 2016, Farris 2017).

The repercussions of this shift are also to be found in an institutionalization of what Hawthorne and Piccolo (2016) refer to as “anti-racism without race”: it consists of

a critique of racism by sacrificing the mobilization of a critical conceptual apparatus based on the notion of race. What results is a “race-ingnorant” intervention to racism based on the impossibility of naming race as a social and structural relationship, thus reducing antiracist critique to an ethical-moral and voluntarist-individual approach.





Race-ignorance

As Frantz Fanon's work demonstrates, race shapes the relation of the self to its own perceptive capacity. Race, in this sense, is to be understood, in Judith Butler's words (1990), as a *matrix of intelligibility*, which demarcates the boundary line between what can and cannot be perceived. It also provides the code for the interpretation of perception itself. Elsa Dorlin speaks in this regard of a *racial schematisation of perceptions* (2017), to point out how race not only acts as a perceptions' matrix of intelligibility, but goes even deeper into what it means to perceive, understanding this human capacity as historically and racially determined. On these theoretical premises, it is then possible to understand the concept of *race ignorance*. The term defines an **epistemological attitude of neutrality, whether intentional or unconscious, with regard to the impact of race in a given reading of reality**, on a macro or micro-systemic level. This presumed neutrality, in fact, translates into a selective **inability to "see" race**, that is, to explicitly problematise the power relations that race sustains and brings into play. Often this ignorance coincides with a gaze that is incapable of self-reflexivity, and thus cannot read the epistemic source of discourse as racially situated. In these terms, the alleged coincidence of whiteness with the epistemic norm, and its presumed universality, is ratified.

Racialization

Race was progressively rationalised and legitimised through the production of a scientific discourse. Race and racial superiority/inferiority was fixed as an objective and incontrovertible datum. In this way racial difference, and the system of bodily marks that underpins it (the so-called “skin colour difference”, is produced as a self-evident given). Race in this sense, and the perceptual system that race informs and shapes, loses its understanding as a historically determined category and acts precisely through its naturalisation by de-radicalisation.

Colette Guillaumin speaks of racist ideology as a discursive system produced through a process of “bio-social syncretism” in which «the unfolding of the process is not investigated, the law is not sought. [Race] proceeds by juxtaposition and justification. The real is endowed with meaning before it is described, and every description is subordinated to this meaning. Clothed with the character of evidence, it eludes demonstration, since it presents itself as an illustration of a fact that is already certain» (Guillaumin, p.25). In this sense, the use of expressions such as “skin colour difference”, presented as a self-evident fact, is normalised at the expense of its understanding as a historically determined process, i.e. as the “construction of skin colour difference”.

The notion of *racialisation*

Introduced by Frantz Fanon (1952) in the critical debate on race, this term is intended to delineate **the historical, social and perceptual process that produces race and the system of bodily marks that reverse it**. In this sense, Blackness is not to be understood as an objective datum of perception, but as a datum historically determined by racialisation, in the miscrea in which the very perception of Blackness is inscribed

in the system of symbolic singifications associated with it by the racial hierarchy: bestiality, malignity, violence, eroticism, incivility, moral and intellectual inferiority.

The sociologist Du Bois introduces the term “color line”, precisely to attribute to colour the character of a socially and culturally constructed category, whose boundaries are not fixed and stable, but historically subject to constant re-signification.

Structural violence

In our context, there is the establishment of a system in which the weight and relevance of bodies and their experiences is not the same for everyone and in which, at the same time, racial imbalance is realized by using only certain types of these bodies to shape the pattern of perceptibility of the structural violence that is unleashed.

Structural violence, theorized by sociologist Johan Galtung, is a complex and pervasive phenomenon that affects multiple aspects of society. It is a form of violence that does not necessarily act through the use of physical force, but through the structures and institutions that rule social life. In this framework, **systemic racism is a form of structural violence that creates racial inequalities** in laws, public policies and institutions.

Indeed, we can say that systemic racism is the **sum of policies, practices, representations and interactions that produce and reproduce inequalities between racial groups** and, if we read this in a framework of structural violence, we come to understand its power to influence the perception of threat and the response to it.



Being aware of what and how much is able to act on the ways of perceiving and opposing a racist action is particularly relevant for the purposes of this investigation, especially with the intention of dealing with potentially unresolved young people, questioned on the issue in a context that is not to be considered pacified even in the absence of evident clashes.

Victimization **(Secondary v.)**

Structural violence and its influence on the perception of and response to a threat may therefore have implications in the definition and identification of victims in hate crimes. In a context of structural violence, the concept of victim can be much more complex than one might think.

In fact, in such a context, witnesses and aggressors could also be considered victims, as structural violence itself can be considered the main “aggressor” and true perpetrator of hate crimes.

This wider definition of victim, however, could be controversial and problematic, since it could imply that the personal responsibility of the aggressors is minimized or denied, but it is useful to us as much as it does not alienate us from the care and consideration to be reserved for those who have suffered violence, centralizing their experience but maintaining an approach of social co-responsibility (between perpetrator, institutions and the socio-cultural substratum in which the action manifests itself. In other words, the implicit audience Kilomba spoke of) in which those who “do wrong” should not be exclusively pointed at as rotten apples. If it were only a matter of rotten apples, it would be enough to throw them out of the basket, but years of securitarian and justicialist policies have shown us that retributive theories of punishment have never brought the expected results in terms of recidivism and social justice.



Introduction to Activities

PEDAGOGICAL STIMULI

*Each activity is designed for a duration
of about two and a half hours*



The activities proposed in this toolkit are designed to promote the personal engagement of young people with the theme of racism and structural discrimination. The pedagogical objectives are structured on three levels, involving critical thinking skills and actions:

- 1 Exercise critical reflection:** Equip participants with tools to critically interpret knowledge, with specific attention to the content of “traditional” educational offerings and mainstream media production. The aim is to provide instruments to intercept and deconstruct biases that shape the construction of dominant representations.
- 2 Motivate cognitive exploration:** Stimulate an active research spirit aimed at identifying resources and information that may be lacking in the educational and cultural materials offered by educational and cultural institutions, as well as mainstream media.
- 3 Encourage firsthand experimentation with alternative relational models:** Engage in exercises and moments of collective experience processing through various workshop activities, fostering the consolidation and incorporation of new self-reflective skills in relation to one’s relational sphere. This involves investigating and working on relationships within peer groups as well as relationships between young people and their reference educational figures.

For these goals to be achieved, it is crucial for the educational figures conducting these paths to confront the challenges that this type of work may entail. In this regard, “pedagogical stimuli” are proposed here, intended as in-depth work and reflection for educational figures, preliminary to the conduction of the activities.

While the glossary provides detailed theoretical exploration, **pedagogical stimuli** are designed to guide educational figures through a self-reflective and self-inquiry process. The objective of these stimuli is to first bring educational figures closer to the relational and value models of an anti-racist nature that the workshop activities aim to convey. It is essential to recognize that the confrontation with certain questions does not necessarily lead to the development of definitive solutions but rather cultivates a **culture of open and constant inquiry**, conceived here as an effective tool for preventing discrimination. This involves thinking of open and constant spaces for shared discussion and questioning of relational models biased by internalized norms of discrimination and oppression as a relational alternative in itself.

Each workshop activity focuses on a specific area of intervention, both in terms of social/relational contexts and educational spheres. The common thread connecting them is the daily and direct relationship of young people with these areas, from media to history books, from interactions with peers to the relationship with school as a formative and educational space. The workshop format allows firsthand experimentation with alternative forms of engaging with these areas, promoting creative and transformative agency, stimulating cooperation, openness to dialogue, and rewarding curiosity. Once again, the idea is to facilitate a transformative path involving both educational figures and young people in formation, giving them the opportunity, through each activity, to experience both their own ability to transform and deconstruct their sense of self in relation to their socialization contexts and the transformative and deconstructive capacities of those guiding this process.

For its relevance and effectiveness, the proposed activities and pedagogical stimuli particularly refer to the work of **Djamila Ribeiro** and **Grada Kilomba**, two racialized scholars united by a strong experimentation with languages that has allowed them to disseminate their research on racism to a diverse audience in terms of age and cultural capital. Each of the workshops proposed here corresponds to a chapter from Ribeiro's *Pequeno Manual Antirracista* [Short Anti-Racist Guide] and excerpts from Kilomba's *Plantation Memories*⁴. Their texts, as will emerge from reading and especially from the completion of the workshops, intertwine both the theoretical references provided in the glossary and the content articulated as pedagogical stimuli.

4

The original books: Djamila Ribeiro, *Pequeno Manual Antirracista* (2019), Companhia das Letras, Rio de Janeiro, Brasil; Grada Kilomba, *Plantation Memories: Episodes of Everyday Racism* (2008), Unrast Verlag, Berlin, Germany.



Activity 1: MISSING PAPERS



MATERIALS NEEDED:

- political world map without the names of the states.
 - encyclopedia;
- textbooks (especially history and philosophy),
- notebooks for notes

WORKSHOP - STEP 1

1. Blank countries world map (the equator line being previously highlighted, as the demarcation line between global North and South): write down the names of the countries you know.
2. Discussion: why do we know more about a certain part of the world?
3. Find the name of a country that has not been written down by the students.
4. Let's fill out the **identity card** of that country (using Wikipedia as a reference):
 - a. Capital city
 - b. Does it have an independence date?
 - c. If yes, from whom? Name of the colonizing country
 - d. Cultural figures from that country, one man and one woman:
 - e. name of a cultural/literary work by them and what it is about
5. Search in school textbooks of literature, history, philosophy for authors/figures from that country.
6. Are there any? If yes, fill out the d) and e) sections of the ID card.
7. If not, search for them and fill out the d) and e) sections of the ID card.
8. Debate: why some areas of the world are not included in school textbooks; why are some countries considered more important than others? Is it an unbiased judgment? Who decides what is important to study? Why should I care about the history of another country? (understanding migratory phenomena, historical complexity, reworking power imbalances).

WORKSHOP - **STEP 2** (OPTIONAL)

1. Following the debate, identify a living author, a professor, a publishing house, a cultural association, or a documentation center to interview.
2. Drawing on the insights from the debate, prepare an interview grid to acquire the missing knowledge, based on the curiosity expressed by the students. It is suggested to delve into an episode or a figure from the history of resistance struggles against colonization, civil disobedience, or the independence process with the interviewee.

**GLO
SSA
RY**



- Eurocentrism
- Decolonization
- Cultural colonialism and Epistemicide
- First/Third World vs. Global North/South



STIMULI FOR PEDAGOGICAL REFLECTION AND INTERVENTION

How to pay attention and valorize the role of students with Global Southern migratory backgrounds?

The lack of shared knowledge about the history of racially marginalized communities does not have the same effect on all young people, even though educational offerings are directed at the class as a whole. From the perspective of racialized people, or those with a migratory/racialized background this lack can constitute a permanent experience of removal or marginalization affecting the construction of an integrated sense of self. The marginalized history of individuals who have historically experienced racialization renews, in the present, the legitimacy of racialization.

The fact that this legitimacy is reproduced in the educational context fuels not only the risks of racial victimization but also of secondary victimization, as the global removal of marginalized histories risks exposing marginalized young people to new experiences of negation by educational figures and institutions. This workshop, focusing on the valorization of marginalized stories, is designed as an opportunity to highlight the knowledge that racially marginalized students may prove to be custodians of, or rather to recognize the existence of situated knowledge and value the specific positions from which embodied knowledge about suppressed experiences and history can be produced. In other words, through this activity, it is possible to rethink the primary sources of knowledge, recognizing textbooks as productions of (white, western) situated knowledge and appreciating the possibility of integrating such perspectives through the embodied knowledge that students with migratory or racially marginalized backgrounds may possess. What does it mean to value those who hold such knowledge? Firstly, it is important to pose this question to the young people themselves, evaluating on a case-by-case basis whether recognizing their epistemic advantage within the workshop can be a rewarding experience or not. Secondly, the pedagogical goal is not to focus on the embodied *history of oppression* but rather on the embodied history of the *ability to react and resist oppression*. In the former case, the risk is to renew a victimization paradigm, while in the latter, it is to *acknowledge agency* as a fundamental element in the construction of one's self-esteem and sense of self.

Deconstructing curricula's eurocentrism - Step 1: Figures from European History/Culture with a Global Southern background

The historical relationship between Europe and the concept of "blackness" has often been oversimplified, predominantly viewed through the lens of colonization and slavery. This limited perspective can overshadow the nuanced and complex intersections of European history with diverse global influences. Defining "blackness" universally across historical contexts proves challenging, as the understanding of race has evolved over time. Nevertheless, undertaking such an analysis is crucial, as it allows for a broader interrogation of the relationships and narratives that have shaped the contours of present-day contexts often permeated by Eurocentrism.

Recognizing the multifaceted and intricate nature of these historical connections is essential for dismantling oversimplified narratives and embracing a more comprehensive understanding of the diverse threads that contribute to the tapestry of European history and culture.

- ★ **St. Augustine of Hippo (354-430 AD):** Born in 354 AD in Thagaste (modern-day Algeria), St. Augustine remains one of the most influential figures in European intellectual history. His profound theological writings, including *Confessions* and *The City of God*, have had a lasting impact on Western philosophy and Christian theology.
- ★ **Alessandro de' Medici (1510-1537):** Alessandro de' Medici, also known as Alessandro di Lorenzo de' Medici, was an Italian statesman of African descent who became the Duke of Florence in the XVI century. His prominence challenges conventional perceptions of European nobility during the Renaissance.
- ★ **Alexandre Dumas (1802-1870):** Alexandre Dumas, the celebrated French writer of the XIX century, was of mixed-race descent with roots in Haiti. He is best known for his historical novels such as *The Three Musketeers* and *The Count of Monte Cristo*, which continue to captivate readers worldwide.
- ★ **Alexander Pushkin (1799-1837):** Alexander Pushkin, often considered the father of Russian literature, had African ancestry through his great-grandfather, Abram Gannibal. This Afro-Russian heritage underscores the diverse roots of influential figures in European cultural history, contributing to the rich literary tradition of Russia.
- ★ **Cleopatra (69-30 BC):** Cleopatra, the last Pharaoh of Ancient Egypt, is a controversial figure regarding her lineage. While her family's origins are debated, some historical evidence suggests a potential mixed heritage of Greek and African descent. Cleopatra's rule and relationship with prominent Romans, such as Julius Caesar and Mark Antony, remain pivotal episodes in European and Mediterranean history.
- ★ **Jesus Christ:** The question of Jesus Christ's ethnicity and heritage is a matter of theological and historical debate. While the New Testament does not explicitly describe his physical appearance, various interpretations and scholarly perspectives suggest a Middle Eastern and Semitic background.

Deconstructing curricula's eurocentrism - Step 2: historical/cultural figures from the Global South

Teachers are tasked with finding (preferably translated) authors, publishing houses, university professors specialized on the chosen countries for the activity Workshop 1, as well as places where useful materials are accessible: libraries, archives, cultural and documentation centers).

References: Djamila Ribeiro, *Pequeno Manual Antiracista*, chapter “Leia autores negros” [“Read Black Authors”], pp. 63-66.

The signs of erasure of Black production are evident. It is rare for course bibliographies to mention women or Black individuals; even rarer is the mention of the production of Black women, whose presence in academic and intellectual discourse is notably absent. During the four years of university pursuing a degree in Philosophy, I was not recommended to read any white female authors, let alone a Black one [...].

The importance of studying works by Black authors is not based on an essentialist view, nor on the idea that they should be read solely because they are written by Black individuals. The point is that it is unrealistic to think that in a society like ours, where the majority is Black, only one group should dominate the formulation of knowledge. How can one believe that Black people are not capable of understanding the world? This is what writer Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie warns us about when she speaks of the danger of a single story. Social privilege translates into epistemic privilege, which needs to be confronted so that history is not told solely from the perspective of those in power. It is dangerous for a society when people are unaware of the history of the communities that have built it.

To write this brief manual, I drew inspiration from texts and books by various Black intellectual figures, whom I cite with respect, and their works are listed in the references at the end of this book.

Read the works of: Abdias do Nascimento, Adilson Moreira, Alessandra Devulsky, Angela Davis, Audre Lorde, bell hooks, Carla Akotirene, Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, Cida Bento, Conceição Evaristo, Elisa Lucinda, Grada Kilomba, Joel Zito Araújo, Joice Berth, Juliana Borges, Kabengele Munanga, Lélia Gonzalez, Letícia Carolina Pereira do Nascimento, Luciana Boiteux, Michelle Alexander, Neusa Santos Sousa, Rodney William Eugênio, Silvio Almeida, Sueli Carneiro. But there are many others, such as Clóvis Moura, Fernanda Felisberto, Nilma Lino Gomes. It is impossible for me to mention all of them, just as those I am not yet familiar with.



Activity 2:

MEDIA AWARENESS



MATERIALS NEEDED:

- various newspapers with different editorial lines
- notebooks for notes

WORKSHOP

1. Divide the class into as many groups as there are newspapers available (previously purchased by the teacher), choosing the same issue for each group.
2. The teacher identifies a news item where the theme of racial otherness plays a role (e.g., Blackness, immigration, white supremacy).
3. Each group looks for the news in their newspaper and notes:
 - a. *If the news is reported and with what emphasis.*
 - b. *Why the recorded episode is considered a news*
 - c. *What are the keywords used to describe the racial belonging of the subjects and critically analyze them.*
 - d. *Which aspects of the news are highlighted in the headline and subheading, what are the key-terms.*
 - e. *Who are the actors involved, whose perspective is presented?*
 - f. *Whose first-person statements are reported?*
 - g. *With whom do I empathize?*
 - h. *What do you think is the journalist's point of view? How do you deduce it from the words used?*
 - i. *Each group attempts to rewrite the article, working on the identified crucial points.*
 - j. *Each group imagine to rewrite the article, assigning the opposite racial belonging to the actors. Answer the questions: Is it plausible? Would the fact still be considered a news?*



- Newsworthiness and Cherry-picking
- Positioning and Point of view
- Blackness
- Whiteness and Camaraderie
- Race, Racism
- Ethnicity, Ethnicization
- Bias vs. Racism



STIMULI FOR PEDAGOGICAL REFLECTION AND INTERVENTION

When teachers tend to take a neutral stance to avoid being accused of being “political”: pedagogical stimulus on the importance of teaching critical thinking.

In the realm of education, the cultivation of critical thinking skills is a cornerstone for empowering students to navigate the complexities of an ever-evolving world. Despite the profound impact it can have on intellectual growth, critical thinking is sometimes overlooked or underemphasized in classrooms. One reason for this neglect may stem from the fear of being perceived as “political” by educators. However, bell hooks, in her seminal work *Teaching to Transgress*, challenges the notion of neutrality in teaching, advocating for a pedagogical approach that embraces critical thinking as a tool for liberation.

The desire to maintain a neutral stance in the classroom often stems from a genuine intent to create an inclusive and non-confrontational learning environment. However, hooks argues that this apparent neutrality can inadvertently perpetuate the status quo and suppress the development of critical consciousness among students. By avoiding discussions that might be perceived as “political”, educators risk depriving students of the opportunity to engage with diverse perspectives and question established norms.



Hooks contends that teaching should go beyond the transmission of information and should instead strive for **transformative education**. Critical thinking, in this context, becomes a powerful instrument for liberation. By encouraging students to critically examine societal structures, power dynamics, and prevailing ideologies, educators can equip them with the tools needed to challenge oppressive systems. Critical thinking, then, becomes an act of resistance against conformity and a catalyst for social change.

Drawing inspiration from *Teaching to Transgress*, educators can integrate hooks' pedagogical insights into their teaching practices. The book encourages instructors to create inclusive, participatory classrooms where students feel empowered to express their thoughts and challenge conventional wisdom. Through dialogue and open discourse, students can develop critical thinking skills that extend beyond the classroom and into their everyday lives.

To foster critical thinking, educators can design curriculum and learning experiences that encourage students to analyse, question, and synthesize information. This involves exposing students to diverse perspectives, encouraging them to think beyond binary frameworks, and promoting active engagement with course material. Rather than presenting information as static and unassailable, educators can invite students to deconstruct and critically evaluate the knowledge presented.

An integral aspect of teaching critical thinking is acknowledging and addressing power dynamics within the classroom. hooks emphasizes the importance of creating a space where students feel safe to voice dissenting opinions, fostering an environment where intellectual curiosity is valued over conformity. By doing so, educators help students recognize the influence of power structures on knowledge production and distribution.

How do we propose teachers navigate students marked by racist, sexist, and homophobic thinking?

Navigating students marked by racist, sexist, and homophobic thinking during critical thinking activities requires a multifaceted approach that combines theoretical understanding with practical strategies. The theoretical foundation for addressing such biases lies in recognizing that education is not value-neutral; it plays a crucial

role in shaping perspectives. bell hooks, in *Teaching to Transgress*, emphasizes the need to confront and challenge oppressive ideologies within the educational system. Therefore, teachers must actively engage with instances of biased thinking rather than dismiss or avoid them.

Theoretical Framework: To confront biased thinking, teachers can draw upon critical pedagogy, incorporating Paulo Freire’s concept of “conscientization”, which involves raising awareness about oppressive systems. Acknowledging the intersectionality of identity, as proposed by Kimberlé Crenshaw, becomes crucial in understanding the interconnected nature of racism, sexism, and homophobia. Additionally, incorporating Critical Race Theory (CRT) principles helps educators recognize and address systemic issues embedded in educational practices.

PRACTICAL STRATEGIES:

- 1. Open Dialogue and Safe Spaces:** Establish a classroom environment where open dialogue is encouraged. Create safe spaces for students to express their thoughts and feelings without fear of judgment. This allows educators to understand the root of biased thinking and challenge these perspectives through respectful discourse.
- 2. Inclusive Curriculum:** Integrate diverse voices and perspectives into the curriculum. Ensure that readings, discussions, and activities represent a broad range of experiences, including those marginalized by racism, sexism, and homophobia. This helps disrupt stereotypes and challenges biased thinking at its source.
- 3. Critical Reflection:** Implement reflective exercises that prompt students to critically examine their own beliefs and biases. Encourage them to question the origins of their perspectives and consider alternative viewpoints. This self-reflection fosters personal growth and opens avenues for transformative learning.
- 4. Counter-Narratives:** Introduce counter-narratives that challenge stereotypical or prejudiced beliefs. Use literature, documentaries, or guest speakers to present stories that offer alternative perspectives, fostering empathy and broadening students’ understanding of diverse experiences.



5. **Community Engagement:** Connect classroom learning to real-world issues. Engage students in community projects or awareness campaigns that address social justice concerns. This practical application of critical thinking encourages students to consider the impact of their thoughts and actions on a larger societal scale.
6. **Cultivate Empathy:** Develop empathy through role-playing exercises or case studies that explore the experiences of individuals affected by racism, sexism, or homophobia. This immersive approach can bridge the gap between intellectual understanding and emotional connection, fostering a deeper commitment to critical thinking.
7. **Individualized Support:** Recognize that confronting biased thinking can be challenging for both students and educators. Provide individualized support, whether through one-on-one discussions, counseling resources, or additional educational materials, to help students navigate their evolving perspectives.

By combining these theoretical insights with practical strategies, educators can create an inclusive and transformative learning environment. The goal is not only to challenge biased thinking but to empower students to critically engage with the world, fostering a commitment to equity, social justice, and the ongoing pursuit of knowledge.

It is equally important to approach these situations with sensitivity and patience. Rather than resorting to punitive measures, consider engaging students in constructive conversations about the impact of their beliefs. Encouraging self-reflection can be a powerful tool, helping students recognize the roots of their biases and promoting personal growth.

In sustaining this approach, it remains crucial to prioritize the well-being of individuals who may feel targeted by hateful language. It is essential to create a supportive environment that alleviates them of any pedagogical duty toward the person exhibiting biased behavior at that moment. Ensuring the emotional safety of those affected is paramount, and educators must be vigilant in addressing any incidents promptly and decisively.

Nevertheless, the importance lies not only in protection but also in fostering understanding.

While those subjected to discriminatory language should not bear the burden of educating their peers, involving them in discussions about the impact of such behaviors can contribute to a comprehensive understanding of the issues at hand. This collaborative approach helps build empathy and collective responsibility within the classroom community.

References: Djamila Ribeiro, *Pequeno Manual Antiracista (Short Anti-Racist Guide)*, chapter “Informe-se sobre o racismo” (“Get informed on Racism”) pp. 21-22

“

We should not be afraid of the words “white”, “black”, “racism”, “racist”. To say that certain attitudes are racist is only one way of framing them and defining their meaning and consequences. The word cannot be a taboo, since racism is in us and in the people we love.

More serious is not recognizing and not fighting oppression. We come to the following crucial question: what, concretely, each of us has done and can do for the anti-racist struggle?

Making self-consciousness – questioning oneself, understanding one’s own social place and doubting everything that seems “natural” – is the first step to take to avoid reproducing this type of violence, which prefers some people and oppresses others.

”





Activity 3:

HATE SPEECH AT SCHOOL



RECOGNISING IT, DEALING WITH IT AND PREVENTING IT

MATERIALS NEEDED:

- post-it
- A4 sheets
- a box
- a billboard
- board

WORKSHOP

1. Icebreaker activity⁵: an activity aimed at introducing focus group participants and creating a minimum sense of group cohesiveness.
2. Distribute some post-it notes and a pen to each participant. In the first card, ask them to answer the question: "What do *hate crimes* mean for you? Can you give an example?". The answers are then attached to the blackboard, trying to group them by type.

5

The following is a proposal for the icebreaker activity.

It is suggested that focus group participants be arranged in a circle and that they take it in turns to say their name and name something they are good at.

As far as icebreaking is concerned, however, the following is suggested:

Arrange the chairs in a circle, leaving one more than the number of participants.

Read out a list of statements and ask those who agree with what has been said to change their seat to another chair. Those who disagree remain in their seats while those who want to abstain get up, turn around and sit down again. Here is a possible list of statements that can be used:

- *all people are of equal value;*
- *talking about feelings is not something men do;*
- *a husband must not earn less than his wife;*
- *immigrants work hard because they have to;*
- *whoever arrives in this country must adapt to the regulations in force;*
- *racism is a matter of ignorance*
- *it is only fair that those born in this country should have more opportunities than those from outside;*
- *already in childhood, girls are better at cooking and boys are better at mechanics;*
- *the school calendar should respect all religious holidays.*

3. Open a discussion starting from the given answers and ask to answer the further question:
 - a. What does the term *hate* mean in the concept of *hate crime*? 15”
 - b. How are the targets of hate crimes identified? 5”
 - c. Have you ever heard of *bias indicators*?

→ Collect an initial round of answers, then provides the correct definition by writing the main bias indicators on the blackboard (See **GLOSSARY**).

4. Give each student a post-it note, asking them to write their name on it and place it, on the board, under the question “Do you feel racialised?” Near the three possible answers: “yes”/”no”/”I don’t know what that means”.

Disclaimer: some non-racialized people may define themselves as racialised. Leave people free to answer according to their own feelings without intervening to correct the answer, and without providing any prior definition of racialisation.

5. Drawing on the answers, divide the participants into 3 corresponding subgroups of discussion. Give each subgroup three A4 sheets of paper on which the following questions are illustrated:
 - a. What do you think racialisation is?
 - b. At school or in other contexts, have you ever participated in discussions on what racism is (e.g., lectures, trainings, workshops, discussions with peers, student collectives, other educational activities)?
 - c. Tell what a possible racialisation incident you witnessed, possibly at school.

Ask the subgroups to collect the answers on the back of the sheets.

6. Each sub-group reports its discussion and the definition it has given to the concept of racialisation.
7. Explain why we talk about racialisation when addressing the topic of hate crimes. Introduce the distinction between hate crimes and hate actions, recalling that racialisation relates to the first as much as to the second.



8. Discussion around an episode of racialisation chosen from among those raised in point 6:
 - a. Detection of bias indicators framing the victimized subject
 - b. Who were the witnesses?
 - c. Following the hate action, were there any reactions or any form of intervention? Yes, no? Who? Was there any intervention in defense or offense? By whom? By the victim, the perpetrator, other witnesses or authority figures (e.g. police, school president, etc.)? in what way and why?
 - d. Who was the aggressor? in what relation of power is he positioned to the victim.
 - e. Do you think different actions could have taken place? (what could the victim or witnesses have done?) 10"
9. Distribute three post-it notes:
 - Two to be placed in a box for anonymous answers:
 - a. one to provide an opportunity to write down and anonymously communicate other episodes
 - b. one to respond to the question "what do you expect from your socio-educational reality now?".
 - One to be stuck to a poster of conclusions:
 - c. "What did you discover today/what was most useful?".

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- **Hate crimes and Hate actions**
- **Intersectionality**
- **Privilege and White fragility**
- **Race-ignorance**
- **Structural violence**

STIMULI FOR PEDAGOGICAL REFLECTION AND INTERVENTION

A non punitive approach to hate actions

Acknowledging the role of the educational context does not mean, as has often been the case, relegating racism to an eclipse of reason that can be overcome through the rhetoric of anti-racist pedagogies as set up by institutions incapable of naming the concept of race, but rather giving oneself the opportunity **to promote a view that is not afraid to address the premises of racism** and to take positions that do not necessarily refer to the guilt of a few, but necessarily to the responsibility of all parties involved.

It is in this way that, according to the theoretical premises, restorative justice should also work, i.e. that form of conflict resolution that focuses on repairing the harm caused by the offense, rather than only punishing the offender. **Restorative justice** is applied to hate crimes in order to provide a more adequate response to the needs of the victims and the communities involved by bringing the parties together. The result, on society, is cultural and based on co-responsibility and not, solely, that of deterrence typical of punitive justice.

How to tailor the intervention considering gender and race variables within the classroom group

1. Modulate the action according to the gender and class factors involved, particularly those affecting racialized people.
2. Consider the role that belonging to a community with a racialized background can play at the intersection with the class conditions of the community in question. Such membership may in fact condition the emergence of research data, as racialized people, by virtue of their subaltern position, may be less likely to be exposed in racially mixed contexts.
3. Take into consideration the documental situation of racialized persons (does he/she have citizenship?) as these factors can also impact on the degree of awareness of rights and the practical possibility of exposure



4. Ask and detect whether racialised people are comfortable speaking in a racially mixed context, i.e. exposing incidents of racialisation in front of people who are not necessarily racialised
5. Detect how gender dynamics are involved in the relationship between participants, bearing in mind that the presence of men could inhibit or overpower or condition the speech of women. Find out how gender dynamics intervene in relation to the hate action analyzed (n.b. even if the hate incident occurs between two men, gender factors should also be analyzed there too)
6. Pay attention to the circumstance that people who are subjected to hate actions might have the perpetrators or witnesses of the hate actions in front of them during the focus group
7. Formulate the questions taking care not to imply any form of trauma resolution: persons subjected to hate actions may still be in a “processing” phase.
8. Clarify that each person is free to share what he or she feels, knowing that what emerges will be protected by being anonymous, and that there is no obligation to share anything, while also guaranteeing the possibility of temporarily stepping away from the discussion space if needed.
9. Build the preconditions for a relationship of mutual trust: also ensure that each person’s experience will be recognised and cannot be invalidated (this is not a public process aimed at settling guilt in an absolute and definitive manner, so keep a relativist approach).
10. Build relationships of trust: propose a context of confrontation based on active listening and absence of judgment.
11. Build a sense of group (see below: team building). Observe the behavior of individual participants during the activity to intercept possible tensions, be careful not to subordinate individual needs to the performance of the group activity.
12. Note how often individuals identified by racialization/gender/ subordinated role are silenced, interrupted, and/or invalidated in their narratives.

References: Djamila Ribeiro, *Pequeno Manual Antiracista (Short Anti-Racist Guide)*, chapter “Perceba o racismo internalizado em você” (“Discover the Racism You’ve Internalized”), pp. 37-39.



As we have seen, most people acknowledge the presence of racism in Brazil, but almost no one considers themselves racist. On the contrary, the initial reaction of many individuals is to emphatically reject the hypothesis of having racist attitudes: “Of course not, I have Black friends too”, “How could I be racist if I have hired a Black person?”, “Racist? I have never mocked a Black person!”.

However, once we understand racism as a system that structures society, these responses reveal themselves as empty. It is impossible not to be racist if one has grown up in a racist society. It is something within us that we must constantly fight against.

It is evident that there are those who are openly racist and express hostility towards various vulnerable social groups in various forms. However, it should be noted that racism is so ingrained in our society that many times it goes unnoticed.

An example is the absence of Black individuals in the film industry – there is racism there as well. What about when, upon hearing a racist joke, people laugh or remain silent instead of reprimanding the person who made it? Silence is complicit in violence.

Often, white individuals do not consider what racism is; they live their lives without their colour prompting them to reflect on this condition. That’s why the fight against racism is a long and painful process. As Audre Lorde says, we must kill the oppressor within us, and this does not happen merely by proclaiming oneself as anti-racist: we must confront ourselves.





Activity 4:

EVERYDAY RACISM



WORKSHOP

Starting from Grada Kilomba's text *Plantation Memories: Episodes of Everyday Racism*:

1. Reading the narrative from Chapter 4, pp. 52-53

GENDERED RACISM - « (...) WOULD YOU LIKE TO CLEAN OUR HOUSE?» - CONNECTING "RACE" AND GENDER



«(...) would you like to clean our house?»

When I was about twelve or thirteen years old, I went to the doctor because I had the flu. After the consultation, as I was turning toward the door, he suddenly called me back. He had been looking at me, he said, and had had an idea. He and his wife and two children, who were around eighteen and twenty-one years old, were going on holiday. They had rented a house in the South of Portugal, somewhere in Algarve, and he was thinking that I could come with them. He proposed that I cook their daily meals, clean their house and eventually wash their clothes: "It's not much" he said "some shorts, sometimes a T-shirt, and, of course, our underwear!". Between these tasks, he explained, I would have enough free time for myself. I could go to the beach, "and do whatever you want," he insisted. He had African masks decorating the other side of the office, I must have looked at them. "They are from Guinea Bissau!", he said. "I was working there... as a doctor!" I looked at him, silent. I do not actually remember if I was able to say anything. I don't think I was. But I do recall leaving the office in a state of dizziness and vomiting some streets further, before arriving home. I was up against something unreasoned.

In this scenario, the young girl is not seen as a child, but rather as a servant. The man transformed our doctor/patient relationship into a master/servant relationship: from patient I turn into the Black servant, just like him from doctor turns into a symbolic white master, a double construction, both outside and inside. In these binary constructions the dimension of power between the oppositions are twice inverted. It is not only a question of “Black patient, white doctor”, or “female patient, male doctor”, but of “Black female patient, white male doctor” - power double for one another and “play across the structures of otherness, complicating its politics” (Hall 1992: 256). It seems that we are stuck in a theoretical dilemma: is this racism or sexism?

One could place the problem of underestimation in the context of gender, since I – a girl – was being asked to become the domestic worker of an adult male, after a medical consultation. This scene, however, takes place within the realm of both racial and gender differences, for the doctor is not just male; he is a white male and I am not only a girl, but a Black girl.

This encounter reveals how ‘race’ and gender are inseparable. ‘Race’ can neither be separated from gender nor gender from ‘race’. The experience involves both because racist constructions are based on gender roles and vice-versa, and gender has an impact on the construction of ‘race’ and the experience of racism. The myth of the disposable Black woman, the infantilized.

Black man, the oppressed Muslim woman, the aggressive Muslim man, as well as the myth of the emancipated white woman or the liberal white man, are examples of how gender and ‘race’ constructions interact.

Analytically it is difficult to determine in detail the specific impact of either ‘race’ or gender because they are always interlocked. But what would happen if we would change the ‘race’ and gender of the characters? What if this scenario had comprised a white man and a white girl? Would he have asked her to serve him and his family? Would he have looked upon the white girl as a servant? Or rather as a child?

And if the accent were on gender, then how come the wife, a female like me, could ‘own’ me as a servant and not be a servant herself? If as females we are equals, how is it that she could become my virtual mistress and I the figurative slave? How much would her absenteeism play an active role in my servitude? What about the daughter, who is referred to during the proposal, how is it that she is older but protected as a child while the Black girl is much younger, but exploited as an adult? Is it not that the emancipation of both the white wife and white daughter comes at the expense of the Black girl, who is asked to serve them for free?



2. Text comprehension exercise.
3. Debate, addressing the following questions:

What would have happened if the doctor had been a Black male? Would he have asked a white girl, his patient, to become his servant for the holidays? Would he have asked her to cook, wash clothes for him and his family while they were playing on the beach? Conversely, if the doctor had been a Black woman, would she have asked a white girl to work for her and her family? Would she have insisted that the white girl join her family to serve them? Could such a colonial fantasy come true in the office of a Black female doctor?

Defining microaggressions:

1. Identifying everyday words constituting microaggressions.
2. Activities to bring out lived experiences and visualize emotions triggered by microaggressions.
3. Planning an interactive way to associate a feeling experienced by the microaggression agent and by the victimized subject, using a visual device representing the spectrum of human emotions (e.g., Plutchik's Wheel of Emotions).
4. Imagine reparative actions.
5. Imagine how to disarm forms of complicity (e.g., forum theatre on active or passive complicity reactions to microaggressions).



- **Microaggressions**
- **Privilege and white fragility**
- **Discrimination**
- **Victimization (Secondary v.)**
- **Whiteness and Camaraderie**

STIMULI FOR PEDAGOGICAL REFLECTION AND INTERVENTION

How to address the temptation to dismiss the racial nature of microaggressions or discriminatory behaviour in general

Analyzing racial microaggressions is by no means straightforward. On one hand, it involves cognitive work that often confronts us with the lack of necessary categories to understand the phenomenon. On the other hand, it implies an activation, often unconscious, of one's own psychic sphere. Even when analyzing cases that do not directly involve us, it is difficult not to project part of our own experience onto the situation, especially if there is a conscious or unconscious identification with the perpetrator of the microaggression.

Emotionally, it can be challenging to accept projecting oneself into the role of someone causing harm to another person.

As observed by Robin DiAngelo, real perpetrators of microaggressions or those who unconsciously identify with them tend to refuse being represented as such, often assuming a defensive posture. The initial reaction when someone shares their experience of microaggression is to deny that it is genuinely an act of harm (see the glossary entries on **privilege and white fragility**). Specifically, according to DiAngelo, when this happens, the possible reactions include avoidance, denial, justification, victim role reversal, and refusal to learn.

1) Avoidance - In these cases, even without realizing it, there is an unconscious temptation to evade the conversation about the experience by shifting the discussion to other topics, making it effectively impossible to address the issue.

2) Denial - Even when one agrees to discuss the matter, there might be an inclination to alter the framing of the experience, denying its racial nature. Common comments of this nature may start with phrases like “this is not racism” or “racism is not involved here”. This often occurs because the reasoning proposed seeks to interpret the intentions of the person responsible for the aggression.

3) Justification - By focusing the analysis on the aggressor's intentions, it is common to formulate considerations aimed at justifying the act, advancing an often a priori interpretation of the gesture as unintentionally damaging and therefore justifiable.

4) Role Reversal - A reading that emphasizes the aggressor's intentions can lead to searching for factors in the victim's behaviour that triggered the aggression, essentially representing the victim as responsible for the harm suffered, thus absolving the aggressor of responsibility. This way, the aggressor might be portrayed as a victim of a situation they found themselves subjected to, and even a victim of unfounded accusations when the experience of aggression is validated.

5) Refusal to Learn - Based on these types of reactions, a rigid closed posture towards the interpretative categories proposed by antiracist thought can develop. This can hinder an open-minded consideration of perspectives that aid in understanding racial microaggressions.

It is crucial to be attentive to these reactions and the interpretative categories involved. The most significant risk (see the glossary entry on **positioning**) is to fuel a mechanism of secondary victimization, impacting the psyche and agency of individuals who have experienced microaggressions. This doubly validates their inability to escape racism and the legitimacy of the aggressors in perpetrating actions harmful to racialized individuals.

Being cautious about these reactions involves practicing **suspending a moral reading of microaggressions**, i.e., a reading oriented toward distinguishing between "good" and "bad" or between good or malicious intentions. Distinguishing between good and bad makes it difficult to proceed in the analysis of microaggression, as there is a risk of stigmatizing and essentializing the positions of the aggressor and the victim. Being a victim of aggression does not define a person as good, just as being an aggressor does not define a person as bad. In addition to focusing the reasoning on the act and not the person, an antiracist perspective requires reflection on who holds the privilege to aggress and who structurally occupies a position susceptible to aggression. Acknowledging and accepting this power dynamic is the first important step toward imagining relinquishing, rejecting, or denying such power.

Similarly, reflecting on the positive or negative intentions of the aggressor constitutes a moral reasoning that is ineffective in understanding microaggressions. It is important to observe that those who commit microaggressions do not necessarily do so with the conscious intention of causing harm, often because they are unaware that the gesture constitutes harm. This is often the case with jokes, ironic use of antiracist language, or seemingly knowledge-oriented questions that invalidate the other person as they stem from implicitly prejudiced readings of the other's identity (e.g., asking a black person in a European country "where are you from?" or "why do you speak the Western language so well?" implicitly assuming that only a white body can truly belong to the European nation and its linguistic community).

Furthermore, any reasoning that places the aggressor, their perspective, or their moral character at the center of the reflection has the effect of invalidating the legitimacy of the victim and their experience from being at the forefront of consideration.

Guidance for teachers to avoid reproducing violence in the interactive activities proposed

It is important to approach the topic of micro-aggressions by acknowledging that the good or malicious intentions of the aggressor are not under discussion. Often, perpetrators of microaggressions are unaware that their actions constitute harm to others.

Instead, **it is crucial to consider the lived experience of the person harmed as fundamental** to becoming aware of gestures that constitute micro-aggressions. Harm is often not objectively detectable but emerges from the subjective viewpoint of the individual experiencing it, provided that this perspective, or the ability of the harmed person to recognize the inflicted harm, is not invalidated a priori.

In an educational context, **it can be very useful to verbalize the emotional state of discomfort that comes with accepting oneself as an aggressor.**

This can be accompanied by a reflection on learning and awareness as processes that can evoke unpleasant emotions, which are no less important than emotions tied to fulfilling experiences.



Simultaneously, exploration of the entire emotional spectrum related to acquiring new knowledge can be encouraged, valuing discomfort as an emotional state linked to the capacity to learn and formulate alternative outcomes to the situation that led to the micro-aggression. The workshop setting can be conducive to reanalyzing experiences of violence, but it is essential to avoid reproducing the dynamics of violence while addressing them. This essentially involves two principles:

1. **Validate the reported testimony and the associated emotional experiences** - Placing the perspective of the individual who has experienced aggression and embodying the subject at the center is the first step in interrupting the mechanism of denial, silencing, and marginalization triggered by the act of aggression in oppressed individuals. To avoid crystallizing the aggrieved person in the position of a “prey” relegated by the aggression, it is crucial to recognize, along with their lived experience, their agency – i.e., all the resources they employed to resist or oppose the invalidating effect of the aggression – and return them to collective reflection in these terms. The capacity to testify to an experience of aggression can be acknowledged in terms of the ability to resist a dynamic of denial. It is essential to resonate with the ways the aggrieved individual intends to reanalyze this experience without forcing speech or assuming the effectiveness of predefined formulas. In this perspective, educators are encouraged to focus on the importance of the emergence of the lived experience rather than its resolution, even though the need for resolution may be felt by the educators receiving reports of aggression. Placing the ability to act of the aggrieved person at the center can mean, for example, encouraging them to express what can be done afterward to mend the wound. This doesn’t necessarily mean compensating for the harm suffered but contemplating possible actions to reaffirm the opportunities and possibilities that the aggrieved person was deprived of due to the micro-aggression.

- 2. Be cautious not to compel individuals who have experienced micro-aggressions to relive the experience or the state of discomfort it generated without their consent** - The tool of “staging” micro-aggressions should be handled with great care. While observing a micro-aggression dynamic in a workshop format can be useful for its reprocessing, what can be instructive is not so much the enactment of the act of violence itself, but what can be done in response to violence, whether by the victim or an observer, to interrupt the invalidating effects of the violence. Once again, focusing on the ability to act and resist rather than on invalidation per se is crucial to interrupt the sense of helplessness triggered by violence in those who experience it.

Elaborating on the role of the microaggressor, emphasizing social co-responsibility

Microaggressions thrive in a context of devaluation and the assumptions made about the individuals targeted, which implies that even unintentional actions can have the power to harm others. The concept of social co-responsibility comes into play when addressing microaggressions. It is not so much about assigning shared blame but recognizing a collective duty to build a system grounded in principles that acknowledge each individual's position and demand justice according to equity rather than a one-size-fits-all equality. Given the existing power imbalances, pursuing a notion of justice based on equity acknowledges that starting from a supposedly neutral standpoint may perpetuate racial and gender privileges. The call for social co-responsibility lies in fostering an environment that actively dismantles microaggressions, promoting awareness, empathy, and a commitment to upholding justice for all.

The concept of collective responsibility extends beyond recognizing shared positive contributions; it also involves understanding the broader context in which negative behaviours, such as hateful conduct, may manifest. While individuals are accountable for their actions, an approach rooted in collective responsibility requires a nuanced understanding of the systemic factors that contribute to such conduct.

In the context of confronting individuals guilty of hateful conduct, it becomes imperative to acknowledge that their actions are often shaped by a complex interplay of societal influences, upbringing, cultural norms, and systemic biases. This recognition doesn't serve as an excuse for harmful behaviour, but rather as a means to understand the intricate web of factors contributing to it.

In considering the nuanced perspective of collective responsibility, several black and feminist authors have contributed valuable insights that shed light on the complex interplay of individual actions within broader societal contexts.

bell hooks, in her work *Teaching to Transgress* emphasizes the transformative power of education and the responsibility educators bear in challenging oppressive systems. She calls for a pedagogy that fosters critical thinking and acknowledges the interconnectedness of personal beliefs with broader societal structures.

Audre Lorde, a prominent black feminist scholar, in her essay *The Master's Tools Will Never Dismantle the Master's House* underscores the importance of understanding the intricate ways in which systems of power operate. Lorde's work encourages a collective examination of the tools and structures that perpetuate discrimination and emphasizes the shared responsibility of dismantling these systems.

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, a contemporary feminist author, in her essay *We Should All Be Feminists*, speaks to the pervasive influence of societal expectations on individual beliefs and behaviours. Her work highlights the collective responsibility to challenge and redefine societal norms that contribute to discriminatory practices.

Moreover, **Kimberlé Crenshaw**'s development of the concept of intersectionality is crucial in this context. Crenshaw's work emphasizes the intersecting nature of various forms of oppression, such as racism, sexism, and homophobia. This framework encourages an understanding of how individuals may be simultaneously impacted by multiple systems of power, reinforcing the importance of a collective effort to dismantle these interconnected structures.



Activity 5:

TRANSFORMING EDUCATIONAL CONTEXTS



WORKSHOP 1: *TEACH YOUR TEACHERS*

1. Students create an interview that they will administer to teachers to:
 - a. *Understand how, starting from their discipline, they can contribute to anti-racist teachings.*
 - b. *Listen to adults sharing an episode of discrimination they witnessed, how they reacted, and how they could have acted differently and with an anti-racist approach.*
 - c. *Highlight best practices in cases of racial discrimination at school.*
2. Open a debate

MATERIALS NEEDED:

- cards
- colored markers, tempera, decorative materials of your choice

WORKSHOP 2: *TRANSFORM YOUR EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENT*

1. Devise grassroots initiatives to support victims of racist actions at school (reporting, listening, support devices).
2. Map the best practices by transcribing each on a card. Divide the class into small working groups to transform each best practice into a slogan or awareness/orientation message for anti-racist relationships/support/deterrence structures, to be displayed in strategic areas of the school.

3. Map spaces and roles within the school that are conducive to promoting an anti-racist culture and safeguarding racialized individuals.
4. Post the created signs in the identified strategic locations.

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- Racialization
- Affirmative actions
- Citizen participation vs. citizenship



STIMULI FOR PEDAGOGICAL REFLECTION AND INTERVENTION

The school environment as a place of active citizenship.

When we work on interactions shaped by racism, it is crucial to observe how these interactions are entangled with the physical spaces in which they take place. **Not only are bodies racialized, but spaces are as well.** This means that their organization and functionality do not occur neutrally but respond to the logics of racial segregation and hierarchy, aiming to consolidate them, not only metaphorically but literally. The fixity of spatial structures reflects and fuels the fixity of social structures. Observing spaces as racialized spaces, therefore, means considering that specific spaces determine specific experiences of racialization, and those experiences shape over time how individuals relate to those spaces and the people who traverse them. Educational spaces, especially those within school and cultural institutions, are not exempt from these mechanisms.

Instead, they should be regarded as one of the primary spatial contexts in which experiences of racialization and its nature as a stabilized social structure are encountered.

The dialectical relationship between social and spatial configurations can also be interpreted in a transformative sense, which is the sense explored and embodied through the proposed workshop activities. Intervening in spaces, changing their configuration, rearranging elements, removing objects or elements particularly implicated in experiences of racism, or introducing new ones connected to anti-racist perspectives, is a fundamental part of the work to alter relationships and interactions in an anti-racist direction. When this type of work is designed and implemented by the educational community experiencing the space in question, what can occur is a transformation of the community itself, aimed at deconstructing the racist automatisms that pervade it. The physical transformation of spaces can also physically help create a visual memory of the collective transformative process and, in a sense, attribute stability to it.

Acting with this approach on a physical space such as a classroom, corridor, or school restroom means addressing the specificity of public space as the prevailing space of racialization, contrasting with the private domestic dimension, which is seen in this perspective as a safer space – offering greater protection from racial aggressions. Reversing the relationship to public space, as a transformable space rather than merely a space of exposure to danger, can determine a significant pedagogical experience. In doing so, one's sense of self can be disarticulated from the representation of the prey exposed to danger and instead linked to one's own creative and transformative capacity. The entire educational community can benefit from this pedagogical significance, as the collective transformation of spaces in an anti-racist direction can be a material experience of alliance with racialized individuals. This constitutes active support for their embodied capacity to define the conditions for an anti-racist transformation - both of themselves and the community - and to personally determine the process.

Pedagogical importance of fostering the development of an anti-racist awareness in educational reference figures.

Guiding a transformative process within a community towards anti-racism places educators in a challenging role, as it involves a transformation in the educators themselves in this direction. Sharing and exposing one's transformative process while pedagogically guiding others can mean revealing a state of temporary discomfort, disorientation, or unease in the face of a change that questions oneself and possibly one's position within the educational community. For instance, if a non-racialized teacher finds themselves in a position of lesser competence regarding racialization compared to a racialized student, it may involve a challenging role reversal, especially if this leads to the emergence of conflicts, both among the students themselves and between the students and the educators.

In this context, reflecting on the words of the pedagogue and scholar bell hooks can be very helpful:



When education is the practice of freedom, students are not the only ones who are asked to share, to confess. Engaged pedagogy does not seek simply to empower students. Any classroom that employs a holistic model of learning will also be a place where teachers grow, and are empowered by the process. That empowerment cannot happen if we refuse to be vulnerable while encouraging students to take risks. Professors who expect students to share confessional narratives but who are themselves unwilling to share are exercising power in a manner that could be coercive. In my classrooms, I do not expect students to take any risks that I would not take, to share in any way that I would not share. When professors bring narratives of their experiences into classroom discussions it eliminates the possibility that we can function as all-knowing, silent interrogators. It is often productive if professors take the first risk, linking confessional narratives to academic discussions so as to show how experience can illuminate and enhance our understanding of academic material.

But most professors must practice being vulnerable in the classroom, being wholly present in mind, body, and spirit. Progressive professors working to transform the curriculum so that it does not reflect biases or reinforce systems of domination are most often the individuals willing to take the risks that engaged pedagogy requires and to make their teaching practices a site of resistance». (p. 21)



In line with bell hooks' approach, we therefore encourage educators **to share their own process of self-questioning from an anti-racist perspective**, so that this process can serve as a positive reference point for students to draw inspiration from for their own initiation. Revealing one's state of vulnerability and the unpleasant emotions that accompany change can be very effective because it can teach students to accept similar conditions in their own transformation process without avoiding them for fear of destructive consequences on their developing identity. Furthermore, establishing a view of adults as entities undergoing transformation and subject to questioning from below (i.e., from those who have not yet reached adulthood) can foster a projection of one's adult self and what is rewarding in such a representation not toward the idea of adulthood as a position from which to exert dominance and control over others, but as a way to face one's vulnerability with serenity. This approach leads to a relationship with others based on cooperation, communication, the expression of one's needs, and mutual enrichment.

It is in this perspective that activities of "role reversal" between learners and educators are proposed here, so that the learner group can experience the educational role as well as the role of those learning to recognize the educational role of others, and their ability to generate transformation in both senses of the relationship. An exercise that we suggest for educators, for example, is to keep a journal about the experiences that this laboratory process can trigger in the educators themselves, so that it can be shared with students at a later stage, after undergoing a processing phase that allows that experience to be communicated.

References: Djamila Ribeiro, *Pequeno Manual Antiracista (Short Anti-Racist Guide)*, chapter "Transforme seu ambiente de trabalho" ("Transform Your Workplace"), pp. 55-59.



The low presence of Black individuals in the workplace, especially in decision-making positions, can leave this space open to racist violence. In a recent case, for example, the Brazilian branch of a North American software company organized a costume party to celebrate the end of the year, offering a prize for the best costume, valued at 3,000 Brazilian reais (approximately 600 euros).

An employee, thinking he was being amusing, chose to portray a racially stereotyped, sexualized Black man, with an exaggerated genital organ, an image that circulated widely in WhatsApp groups at the time. The photo of his costume, which ranked fourth in the competition selection, reached the North American headquarters, leading to the dismissal of the employee. The head of the department had deemed the dismissal “exaggerated”, a statement that also cost him his job. Subsequently, the president of the Brazilian branch defended the two, saying it was a “big joke”. The result: he was also fired. While this episode is significant for its handling and the significant repercussions it had, unfortunately, the aggression itself is just one of the many forms of violence that Black individuals are still exposed to in workplaces today.

International experiences offer examples that can inspire us. In Norway, all national companies allocate 40% of their board seats to women. The proposal came from a minister of industry and a member of the conservative party, Ansgar Gabrielsen, with the following justification: “If we do not think about reparative and equitable policies, we would end up hiring only the men we play golf with on Sundays”. In essence, if we limit ourselves to associating only with people of a certain group or social class, we end up convincing ourselves that only those people have the right abilities for certain positions, relegating other groups to predetermined places, as if they were not capable individuals. This Norwegian politician highlighted the importance of questioning inequalities.

Perhaps it is worth asking: how many talents does Brazil lose every day due to racism? The situation is even more serious for Black women, often relegated to underemployment: how many physicists, biologists, judges, sociologists, etc., are we losing? This scenario could be reversed by policies that compel companies to think and create anti-racist actions [...].

Racism takes on multiple forms in the workplace, necessitating a constant analysis of corporate practices. This is why several companies have sought specialized consultants to review their diversity policies and update them in line with new civilizational frameworks.



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