EDUCATION FOR "ALL"
A social-analysis of the barriers encountered by Afro-Brazilians in the educational system of Rio de Janeiro

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INTRODUCTION

Brazil's black population accounts for the largest number of people stemming from the African diaspora in the Americas. Historically, both internally and externally, Brazil has been recognised as a racial democracy, in that it has been herald and celebrated as — a society that managed to avoid the state — sponsored segregation witnessed in the likes of South Africa and the United States. Despite this dynamic, Brazil has been plagued with racism that continues to disproportionately affect the Afro-Brazilian population. As will be further examined in this paper, racial stratification in Brazil, which has seen the white population occupy superior positions in society. On the contrary, the black population has lived under a cycle of societal disadvantages owing to certain institutionalised racial discriminatory practices. It was not until 2001, following the Durban Conference on Racism and Xenophobia held in South Africa, that Brazil suggested that its notion of 'racial democracy' was not in sync with its reality.

Throughout the country, black Brazilians have become increasingly isolated from social resources, whereas a large portion of their white counterparts (those of European descent) have had greater access to social resources. Of particular importance is the access to resources such as in the field of education where it is common to find that Afro-Brazilians have much lower rates of schooling completion than their white compatriots across all levels. This lack of educational achievement and discrimination have transcended in many other aspects of Afro-Brazilian life, such as in the labour market, where they systematically are placed in low-income jobs. Along with low rates of education and lack of economic resources, many Afro-Brazilians have experienced more discrimination, than any other racial group in Brazil.

Afro-Brazilians are faced with a series of complex issues. Statistics show that blacks and browns compromise the majority of those who are at the bottom of the socio-economic scale, making Brazil a so-called pigmentocracy. Poverty and racial concentrations are conjointly cumulative and reinforcing, inaugurating the creation of underclass communities characterised by, amongst other characteristics and factors, high rates of educational failure. Consequently, The Black Movement, the academic community of public universities and, leftists and centre-leftist political activists, aware of the country's racial inequalities, have pressured for the implementations of affirmative actions. These sectors argue that the ideology of Gilberto Freyre, who characterised Brazil's racial relations as democratic, has crumbled, and a social reform focused on multiculturalism is crucial for the modernisation process of Brazil's society. As a result, the government began sponsoring programmes and policies of racial inequality in the form of affirmative action – quotas – was endorsed as a means to address racial inequality.

Despite overwhelming improvements in educational levels and opportunity during the past three decades, educational disadvantages associated with race still persist in Brazil. To explore this theme, the primary research question to be explored is: What are the barriers encountered by the Afro-Brazilian population when entering higher education? The expectation is to find that Afro-Brazilians not only encounter obstacles to enter higher education due to the lack of good basic level education, but also encounter difficulties to remain within the tertiary educational system itself.

In order to explore the research question, concepts such as the meaning of race, racial discrimination, identity and *negritude* have been examined in the first chapter. The chapter begins with racial theories that help us get an insight into the meaning of race and the construction of the idea, dating back to the eras of slavery and colonialism. Following this, the second concept will be discussed, which encompasses racism and defines racial discrimination within the social context. Essentially the concept of identity is discussed, since it is well known that identity has great significance in both the Latin American context and the Brazilian context itself. Moreover, I will concentrate on the meaning of black identity in order to understand the social inequality suffered by those who identify themselves as black.

The second chapter places the concepts discussed in the first chapter into the Brazilian context. Brazil's unequal history, typified the discrimination suffered by the black population can be explored as well as the socio-political structure that has been imbedded in the country since the first Portuguese settlement. This research paper will reveal the influences of Portuguese colonization of the 1500's, and how their influence created the formation of the 'racial hierarchy' within Brazilian life and culture today, displaying racial inequality in Brazil throughout its history. Lastly, the chapter reviews the rise of an important social movement known as the Black Movement. We also see the Black movement in relation to education, since it is a movement that fights for the rights of black people and their access to equal education

The third and final chapter is the result of a case study period in Rio de Janeiro (November 2017- January 2018). The finding from extensive literary review, as well as the new information gathered from the semi-structured interviews and questioner will be presented in this chapter.

CHAPTER 1
Race and Identity theories

1.1 The Idea of Race

The history of race is one that is inherently complex and multi-faceted, further complicated by the difficulties in defining the term. When scholars examine the idea of race, they not only consider the term in and of itself, or in a vacuum if you will, but rather address it in relation to the ideas of race relations, racial oppression, racial discrimination, and other forms of domination. For most scholars, race is both a socially and historically contingent category of analysis.

In the past, most people believed that they possessed a common identity, an identity that bound them together into groups based on a common language, religion, and culture. It was in the eighteenth century that people began to distinguish themselves from others, along the lines of so called 'biological' distinctions. With the onset of transatlantic travels and new cross-cultural encounters during the late fifteenth century, Europeans began to think anew about their distinctiveness. A new face-to-face contact with new cultures (primarily African and American) forced Europeans to reconsider traditional anthropological and theological conceptions of the world. Slavery and colonialism led Europeans to invent new ways of thinking about non-Europeans in order to justify territorial aggrandizements. Banton recognizes:

> In various European languages, starting in the fifteenth century, the word race was used in an ordinary-language sense in ways that emphasized its vertical dimension of meaning (for example, the 'the race of Abraham'). From the end of the eighteenth century, the word race was additionally used in ways that emphasized its horizontal dimension of meaning, notably as a classificatory category of a pre-Darwinian kind. This gave rise to the doctrine of racial typology (2014: 326).

The term 'race' reappeared in the middle of the eighteenth century, when a Swedish scientist, Carl Linnaeus (1707-1778) incorporated in his *Systema Naturae,* the human being as a category. In his first edition of *Systema Naturae*, Linnaeus subdivided the human species into four varieties based on skin colour and continent: *Europæus Albus* (white European), *Americanus Rubescens* (red American), *Asiaticus Fuscus* (brown Asian) and *Africanus Niger* (black African). In the tenth edition of *Systema Naturae* he further detailed stereotypical characteristics for each variety, based on the concept of the four temperaments from classical antiquity, and changed the description of Asians' skin tone to 'luridus' (yellow). Eventually, both European and Norther American scientists began to formulate the 'idea of race'. The modern idea of race associates cultural and moral

differences with biological, genotypic and phenotypical characteristics, ranking the various human groups.

The 'idea of race' gained traction in the second half of the 19ᵗʰ century, precisely during the period in which European Imperialism strengthened. At the beginning of the 20ᵗʰ century, academics in the United States began to question the so-called idea of race and the different meaning it carried. Although there are various interpretations of the 'idea of race', it is crucial to mention, that the European and Northern American racial theories of the 19ᵗʰ century were the most valued and had huge importance as well as immense influence around the world, as it was these theories that mostly abashed the black race. In this chapter, I will introduce the modern idea of race and what it has implemented over the last centuries. I will then relate this idea to a Latin American myth known as racial democracy and follow by discussing the concepts of racial discrimination and identity.

In highlight of the foregoing, the African-American sociologist, historian, civil right activist, and Pan-Africanist; W.E.B Du Bois began to question the modern idea of race, which had evolved during the 19ᵗʰ century in Europe and United States. According to Appiah "If an isolated person is able to provide us with an understanding of the archaeology of the idea of non-Pan- African race, it's him [Du Bois]" (Appiah, 1997: 53). Although Du Bois recognised clear differences in the physical characteristics such as skin colour, hair and bone between a white and black person, he tended to follow a more socio-historical aspect rather than a biological notion in the discussion of 'race'. Du Bois questioned the 'scientific' notion of race. He believed that the physical differences did not matter but the "differences — as subtle, delicate and elusive, though they may be — have silently but definitely separated men into groups" (Du Bois, 1897, in Appiah, 1997: 54):

> While these subtle forces have generally followed the natural cleavage of common blood, descent and physical peculiarities, they have, at other times, swept across and ignored these. At all times, however, they have divided human beings into races, which, while they perhaps transcend scientific definition, nevertheless, are clearly defined to the eye of the historian and sociologist. If this be true, then the history of the world is the history, not of individuals, but of groups, not of nations, but of races.... What, then, is a race? It is a vast family of human beings, generally of common blood and language, always of common history, traditions and impulses, who are both voluntarily and involuntarily striving together for the accomplishment of certain more or less vividly conceived ideals of life (Ibid.).

The above statement by Du Bois does not rank the different races nor does it demoralize a specific group of people. In addition, such theories of race where not only questioned by black academics such as W.E.B DuBois.

At the beginning of the 20th century in United States, the number of the black and coloured population was growing, which naturally, leant itself to an increase of discussions on the meaning of race and race relations. During a trip to the United States in 1905, Max Weber formulated the belief:

> The conventional connubium is far less impeded by anthropological differences than by the status differences, which means, differences due to socialization and upbringing (Building the widest sense of the word). Mere anthropological differences account for little, except in cases of extreme aesthetic antipathy (2013: 387).

Referring to the importance of status in a society linked with the idea of race Weber declares:

> In the United States, the smallest admixture of Negro blood disqualifies a person unconditionally, whereas very considerable admixture of Indian blood does not. Doubtlessly, it is important that Negroes appear aesthetically even more alien than Indians, but it remains very significant that Negroes were slaves, and hence disqualified in the status hierarchy (2013: 386).

In the same way, the well-known German-American anthropologist Franz Boas, also mentioning the biological aspect of race, argues in 1931:

> If racial antipathy were based on innate human traits this would be expressed in interracial sexual aversion. The free intermingling of slave owners with their female slaves and the resulting striking decrease in the number of full-blood Negroes, the progressive development of a half-blood Indian population and the readiness of intermarriage with Indians when economic advantages may be gained by such means, show clearly that there is no biological feeling for race feeling (1940: 15).

Both Weber and Boas at that time brought to the surface assertions that gave emphasis on social constructions as characteristics of racial relations in the northern American society, contradicting, not only the existing racial theories, they further introduced new ideas about race and culture that ran counter to many reigning dogmas of the time. Boas became specifically popular towards the beginning of the 20th century, as he was seen as an indispensable academic for questioning the idea of race. As George W. Stocking Jr notes, "Boas was a leader of a culture that, by changing the relation of 'culture' to the burden of tradition and the process of human reason transformed the notion into a tool quite different from what it had been before" (1966: 880).

Half a century later, intellectuals such as Fredrick Barth and Stuart Hall and many other authors began to emerge on the racial scene. These authors linked the idea of race with social aspects while Stuart Hall specifically linked the word 'race' to the black population. The term 'race' is generally applied to Afro-Caribbean and the term 'ethnicity' to the Asian. In fact, these terms provide a very rough mapping of these communities. It is

intended that the term 'race' better translates the Afro-Caribbean experience because of the importance of skin colour, an idea derived from biology.

Hall also deepens his argument and states: "Race is a political and social construction. It is a discursive category in which a socio-economic power of exploitation and exclusion is organized around it – that is, racism. Furthermore, as a discursive practise, racism has its own logic" (2003: 69).

Eventually, in the 1970's a theory that linked both race with class and nation came into play. The sociologist Michael Banton, whom suggested that the idea of race was associated to both class and nation. "The modern idea of race, of class, and of nation, arose from the same European milieu and share many points of similarity" (1977: 3). Banton explains:

> In so far as men have believed that it was right to align themselves on the basis of race, class, and nation, or have believed that these would become the major line of division, so these ideas have proved their own justification. But events have not borne out the predictions very closely. Nation has been the most successful of the three (…).
> The idea of class promised an ever-widening patterning of a group alliances based upon common relations to the ownership of the means of production. (…) Social stratification in most industrial countries today is characterized by a continuous distribution of positions along a scale of status. There are occupational communities that show a sense of collectivity identity but across the broad social range class consciousness is a feeble force compared with the consciousness of status differences. The third idea, that of race, promised at first that each racial type would take command of the territory to which it was naturally suited, but this gave place to the belief that the whites had inherited a superiority that would enable them to establish their rule in all the regions of the world (1977: 4).

Of course, in neither the context of class nor race has this prediction been fulfilled. While the attitude of the Anglo-Saxons has been crushed, so the appearance of a biological basis for racial theories has vanished. Furthermore, according to Banton:

> The nineteenth century idea of race has been threaded into the tapestry of world history and has acquired a social and political significance that is largely thought not completely independent of the significance that can be given to the concept of race within biological science (1977: 6).

When discussing the idea of race in Latin America as a whole, especially Brazil, one needs to discuss race in relation with historical, social, cultural, political and economic issues. If one understands the construction of the idea of race during the American colonial period, and specifically in Latin America, as well as the relations and imagery one has of colonialism today, we would look at the work of Quijano. The author firstly articulates the difference between the conqueror and the conquered in relation to the idea of race:

The codification of the differences between conquerors and conquered for the idea of race, that is, a supposedly distinct biological structure that placed some in a natural situation of inferiority in relation to others. This idea was conventional by the conquerors as the main constitutive element, foundational, of the relations of domination that the conquest demanded. On these bases, consequently, the population of America was classified, and later of the world, in this new standard of power (Quijano, 2005: 117).

Quijano persuades the reader to better comprehend the operability of race in the configuration of the patterns of domination and power-knowledge in the colonial process and reconfigured in capitalist globalisation:

One of the fundamental axes of this pattern of power is the social classification of the world population according to the idea of race, a mental construction that expresses the basic experience of colonial domination and which has since permeated the most important dimensions of world power, including its rationality specific: Eurocentrism. (2005: 117).

Quijano (2005) points out that the idea of race, in its modern sense, was not yet known before the discovery of America. He argues that perhaps it originated as a reference to the phenotypic differences between conquerors and conquered, but very early, it was constructed as a reference to acknowledge biological differences between groups of people. Quijano argues that the formation of social relations founded on the idea of race produced new social identities in both Latin and Northern America — Indians, blacks, mestizos — among other groups. Moreover, what was once known as simply geographic identity or origin, for example Spanish, Portuguese or European, have since acquired, a racial connotation in relation to the new identities. As the social relations that were established were dominant, such identities were correlated with corresponding hierarchies, places, and social roles, as if they were constitutive, and therefore with the pattern of domination that was imposed.

In addition, Quijano points out that the later constitution of Europe with a new identity, after having contact with the Americas, and the expansion of European colonialism to the rest of the world led to the elaboration of a Eurocentric perspective of knowledge. With it also came the theoretical elaboration of the idea of race as the naturalization of these colonial relations of domination between Europeans and non-Europeans. This historically meant the re-elaboration and legitimation of the old forms, notions, and practices of superiority and inferiority relations already existing between the dominant and the dominated, even before the colonial exploration of America. The idea of race underwent this complex process and became a powerful instrument of universal social domination, since it came to depend on another equally universal and older one: gender. Phenotypic traits were associated with cultural, mental and sexual issues. In this sense:

Race became the first fundamental criterion for the distribution of the world population in the levels, places and roles in the power structure of the new society. In other words, in the basic mode of universal social classification of the world population (Quijano, 2005: 230).

This historical, political, and sociological immersion brought by Quijano and post-colonial studies, with a focus on the Americas, contributes to the theoretical densification of the analysis of the social construction of the idea of race in Brazil. Generally, we focus on reading the Western European context, on the conceptual migration from the natural sciences to the social sciences and on the configuration of racial theories. The author reveals a deeper dimension of the invention of race, bringing us to the Latin American context and problematizing that, before it even consolidated itself as a concept of science, it was formulated as an idea, a social representation and therefore, a form of social classification imbricated in strategies of colonial power. This notion gradually became an instrument of economic, political, cultural, epistemological and even pedagogical power. The colonial educational and civilizational enterprise was abounding with the idea of race. Quijano also alerts of the existence of a systematic racial division of labour in the Americas and in the world. According to him, "race and division of labour were structurally associated and mutually reinforcing, although neither was necessarily dependent on the other to exist or to transform" (2005: 231).

Along with many other scholars, Stuart Hall emphasizes a connection between race and broader socio-historical factors:

Race is not biology, race is not trans historical, race is not an essence outside of social dynamics and representations, but a social creation, whatever the particular sociological account of those dynamics may be. In his high Althusserian period, race is linked as an interpellating ideology to societies articulated in dominance (Hall, 1996 in Meeks, 2007: 137).

In a later moment, Hall's idea of race is also associated with both language and discourse. Nonetheless, the connection between the idea of race and European imperialism, a world established between the Western world and simply the 'other' remains a common trend throughout his work. Many more scholars, like Hall, saw race as a concept and racism as a practice that emerged in the West, and specifically with European colonialism and domination: the conquest of the Americas, abolition of slavery, imperialism in Africa and Asia, Anglo-Saxon expansion across the United States, and the global expansion of capitalism.

1.2 Racial Discrimination

If we discuss theories of race, it is essential to also discuss theories of racism and racial discrimination. Banton informs us that "the word 'racism' appears to have been

introduced into the English language in the late 1930's, in order to identify the kind of doctrine that, in essence, asserts that race determines culture" (1977: 156). He explains further:

> The word 'racism' and 'racist' were used by people who wished to attack doctrines of inequality and so, within the circles within which they were employed, they acquired strongly pejorative connotations which may help explain the recent attempt to extend their application. The best example is provided by two very influential black spokesmen who wrote By 'racism' we mean the predication of decisions and policies on considerations of race for the purpose of subordinating a racial group and maintaining control over that group (1977: 156).

For Hall, racism begins from a rigorous application of the premise of historical specificity. The manner in which the society is organised by power and a formation as a configuration of unequal positions and relations.

> There have been many different racisms — each historically specific and articulated in a different way within the societies in which they appear. Racism is always historically specific in this way; whatever common features it may appear to share with another similar social phenomenon. Thought it may draw on the cultural and ideological traces which are deposited in a society by previous historical phases, it always assumes specific forms which arise out of present — not the past — conditions and organisation of society (Hall, 1996 in Meek, 2007: 103).

Hall progresses:

> This is a warning against extrapolating a common and universal structure of racism, which remains essentially the same, outside its specific historical location. It is only as the different racisms are historically specified — in their difference — they can be properly understood as a product of historical relations and possess (...) fully validity only for and within those relations (ibid.).

Moreover, Hall continues by arguing that racism exists only in relation to other social relations:

> One must start, then, from the concrete historical 'work' which racism accomplishes under specific historical conditions — as a set of economic, political and ideological practises, of a distinctive kind, concretely articulated with other practices in a social formation. The question is not whether men-in-general make perceptual distinctions between groups with different racial or ethnic characteristics, but rather, what are the specific conditions which make this form of distinction socially pertinent, historically active (Hall, 1996 in Meek, 2007: 104).

So, what can we comprehend by this argument? As Lawrence Grossberg wrote, "we cannot assume that attitudes of racial superiority produced plantation slavery, but rather must begin by understanding that slavery (as a response to historical conditions

and needs) produced particular forms of racism" (2006: 53). Regarding racism in relation to society Banton states:

> Some writers, indeed, identify racism with the history of Western Europe and North America in such a way as to put racism almost on a par with capitalism as a concept. Racism may be regarded as simply the way in which the forces of capitalist development express themselves under particular circumstances. Other writers favour a structural approach and may, for example, regard as racist any society in which racial distinctions are built into the social structure (1977: 157).

Banton goes further and referring to Carmichael and Hamilton as he has in the above statement, he reveals the meaning of institutional racism.

> Institutional racism relies on the active and pervasive operation of anti-black attitudes and practices. A sense of superior group position prevails: whites are "better" than blacks, therefore blacks should be subordinated to whites. This is a racist attitude and it permeates the society, on both the individual and institutional level, covertly and overtly (1977: 157).

James M. Jones illustrates that institutional racism describes how institutional structures and processes organize and promote racial inequity (Jones, 1997), which according to Jones "these effects are suffused throughout the culture via institutional structures, ideological beliefs, and personal everyday actions of people in the culture, and these effects are passed on from generations to generations" (472). For other authors such as MacPherson institutional racism represents "the collective failure of an organization to provide an appropriate and professional service to people because of their colour, culture, or ethnic origin. It can be seen or detected in processes, attitudes and behaviours which amount to discrimination through unwitting prejudice, ignorance, thoughtlessness and racist stereotyping which disadvantage minority ethnic people" (MacPherson, 1999, in Gillborn, 2005: 498). While for authors such as Griffith et al. (2007), institutional racism can be conceptualised at three levels of an organization: the extraorganizational, the intraorganizational, and the individual. At the extraorganizational level, institutional racism explains the reciprocal relationship between organizations and their external environment. At the intraorganizational level, institutional racism operates through an organization's internal climate, policies and procedures. These include the relationships among staff, which are rooted in formal and informal hierarchies and power relationships. Finally, at the individual level, racism operates through staff members' attitudes, beliefs, and behaviours.

Racial discrimination is defined by Blank et al. (2004) in two different ways: (1) differential treatment on the basis of race that disadvantages a racial group and (2) treatment on the basis of inadequately justified factors other than race that disadvantage a racial group (differential effect). Explaining the term further, Blank et al. illustrate:

The first component of our definition of racial discrimination occurs when a member of one racial group is treated less favourably than a similarly situated member of another racial group and suffers adverse or negative consequences. (…) Intentional discrimination of this kind is frequently unlawful under either the Constitution or specific legislative prohibitions, such as those in employment, housing, and education.

The second component of our definition of racial discrimination includes some instances in which treatment based on inadequately justified factors other than race results in adverse racial consequences (…). A process with adverse racial consequences may or may not be considered discrimination under the law, depending on whether there is a sufficiently compelling reason for its use and whether there are alternative processes that would not produce racial disparities (2004: 40).

For Blank et al., discrimination manifests itself in multiple ways that range in form from overt and intentional to subtle and ambiguous, as well as from personal to institutional, whether through statistical discrimination and profiling or organizational processes. Discrimination also operates differently in different domains and may cumulate over time within and across domains. Regardless of which form it takes, discrimination can create barriers to equal treatment and opportunity and can have adverse effects on various outcomes. Clear theories about how discriminatory behaviour may occur are important in order to develop models that help identify and measure discrimination's effects.

Although discrimination is sometimes still practiced openly, it has become increasingly socially undesirable to do so. Consequently, such discrimination as exists today is more likely to take more subtle and complex forms. Subtler forms of discrimination can occur spontaneously and ambiguously and go undetected, particularly at the institutional level. Although legal standards address specific forms of unlawful intentional or statistical discrimination, subtler forms are more difficult to address within the law. Thus, shifts in kinds of discriminatory behaviour have implications for the measurement of discrimination. As we discuss in the next chapter, some types of discrimination may be more difficult to identify and may require collecting new and different data and the further development of new methods of analysis (Blank et al., 2004).

For some the deconstruction of a mentality imposed on to us at an early stage of development is difficult, but essential to overcome the social barrier of racism. For Hall, "deconstruction is a vital move — showing that the binaries are really examples of differences" (Hall, 1996 in Meeks, 2007: 103). However, for Hall the deconstruction is useful to move certain binaries to a level of historical differences but it is not sufficient because:

Language and power are not the same but power intervenes in language (representation) to secure certain effects (…). This does not make deconstruction useless (…) only

necessary but not sufficient. We need ceaselessly to deconstruct the binaries. Only politics can make this critique historically "real in its effects" (ibid.).

Similar to Hall, Boas in a talk he gave before an anthropology class at Barnard said:

> (…) the ability understands the obscure emotional motives that determine our conduct and our way of thinking. I have tried to show you how intimate is the relation between our feeling and our thinking and those fundamental ideals that are instilled into our minds in earliest youth. [Therefore, we must free ourselves from] the fetters that the past imposes on us (1969: 179).

As for other authors, an anti-racist community organizing is key to deconstruct racism. Jones argues in favour for anti-racist community organizing and, in his statement, he recognizes:

> Anti-racist community organizing is an intervention strategy that builds on the core components and principles of community organizing and infuses anti-racism as a core value and belief. Anti-racism is the advocacy of individual conduct, institutional practises and cultural expressions that promote inclusiveness and interdependence and acknowledgment and respect racial differences (Jones, 1997, in Griffith et al., 2007: 384).

Jones argues further:

> Anti-racist organizing seeks to bring people together who are affected by the problem to increase their collective power so they can resolve the problem, and to hold those in power accountable to principles of justice and equality. (…) Anti-racist organizing efforts bring people together to more effectively coordinate and work together, making them more powerful actors in their lives rather than passive objects of decisions made by others (Jones, 2003, in Griffith et al., 2007: 384).

From reading the above statements by Jones, one may become conscious of his belief that those in power are not always just and that the problem of racism is not only individual, but also it is institutional. As Shapiro recognizes, "Anti-racist approaches to organizing assume that cultural and institutional structures have created an unequal system and suggest that the solution is to change the institutions, organizations, and individuals within these context" (Shapiro, 2002 in Griffith et al., 2007: 384). Witting, similar to Shapiro, comments "the community organizing strategy for creating change is to reduce inequities in power relations and address the root causes of social problems" (Witting, 1996, in Griffith et al., 2007: 384).

1.3. Identity Theories

The word 'identity' is a concept that plays a central role in ongoing debates in every subfield of political science. Depending on your social role, one applies a certain type of

identity to themselves. Identity as we now know it derives mainly from the work of psychologist Erik Erikson in the 1950s; dictionary definitions have not caught up, failing to capture the word's current meanings in everyday and social science contexts. The analysis yields the following summary statement. As we use it now, an identity refers to either (a) a social category, defined by membership rules and (alleged) characteristic attributes or expected behaviours, or (b) socially distinguishing features that a person takes a special pride in or views as unchangeable but socially consequential (or (a) and (b) at once). In the latter sense, identity is a modern formulation of dignity, pride, or honour that implicitly links these to social categories. This statement differs from and is more concrete than standard glosses offered by political scientists; I argue in addition that it allows us to better comprehend how identity can help explain political actions and the meaning of claims such as 'identities are socially constructed' (Campbell, 2000).

In comparative politics, identity plays a central role in work on nationalism and ethnic conflict (Horowitz, 1985; Smith, 1991; Deng, 1995; Laitin, 1999). In international relations, the idea of 'state identity' is at the heart of constructivist critiques of realism and analyses of state sovereignty (Wendt, 1992; Biersteker and Weber, 1996). In addition, in political theory, questions of "identity" mark numerous arguments on gender, sexuality, nationality, ethnicity, and culture in relation to liberalism and its alternatives (Young, 1990; Connolly, 199; Taylor, 1989). Fearon in his work remarks that political scientists, unlike recent historians on humanities scholars, linger on the meaning of identities. As a result of Michel Foucault's work, debates on multiculturalism, historical and cultural construction of identities of all types, there has recently been a preoccupation for both literature and cinema students and social historians (1999). 'Identity' in its present incarnation has a double sense. It refers at the same time to social categories and to the sources of an individual's self-respect or dignity. There is no necessary linkage between these things. In ordinary language, at least, one can use identity to refer to personal characteristics or attributes that cannot naturally be expressed in terms of a social category, and in some contexts certain categories can be described as "identities" even though no one sees them as central to their personal identity.

As Gleason (1983) shows, our present sense of 'identity' has evolved in the last forty years, deriving most of all from psychoanalyst Erik Erikson's concept of an 'identity crisis'. Erikson's term "identity crisis" has made it into dictionaries and is defined in one as follows: "the condition of being uncertain of one's feelings about oneself, especially with regard to character, goals, and origins, occurring especially in adolescence as a result of growing up under disruptive, fast-changing conditions" (14). This statement implicitly defines 'identity' as one's feelings about one's self, character, goals, and origins. While much closer to our current meaning than the older meaning discussed above, this is closer still to 'self-image'. As we use it now, "my identity" is not the same thing as my feelings about myself, character, goals, and origins, but rather something about my definition of myself, character, and so on.

1.3.1 Black Identity

Race in Latin America by Peter Wade discusses that since the beginning of the colonialist period, both Africans and local indigenous people were exploited by the Spanish and Portuguese to fulfil labour demands. "African slaves were widespread in the Iberian Americas but tended to concentrate where indigenous peoples suffered the worst decimation and/or were difficult to exploit as labour: the Caribbean islands, Brazil, the circum-Caribbean mainland and some areas of the Pacific littoral of South America" (Wade, in Poole, 2008: 178). Wade discusses that eventually African slaves attained freedom in many areas and a free black population developed. Once sexual relations between Europeans, Africans and indigenous people occurred a "mixed" population, mestizos, were socially recognised as different from their parents and were enumerated using specific categories by colonial censuses. This mixed population became numerically dominant in some areas by the late 18th century. Wade claims that:

> In Iberian colonies, a socially stratified pyramid emerged, with Europeans at the apex, black slaves and indios (indigenous people) at the bottom and an ambiguous and contestable set of intermediate categories in the middle in which ancestry, appearance (including dress), occupation and wealth all influenced social standing. In the Spanish colonies, this was sometimes known as a 'sociedad de castas', a society of 'castes' (or breeds, or stocks) (Wade in Poole, 2008: 179).

This pyramid of white supremacy can still be felt in Latin American societies today. Edward E. Telles in his book, 'Race in another America: the significance of skin colour in Brazil' argues how Brazilians have commonly compared themselves with North Americans, and historically claimed that race relations in the country are more harmonious because Brazil has encouraged the mixture of race instead of segregation. Today, a great number of scholars seek to challenge the national myth of "racial democracy" in aim to demonstrate that race relations are characterised by exclusion rather than inclusion, and of course that in Brazilian as well as other Latin American societies, the fair-skinned continue to be privileged and hold a disproportionate share of wealth and power. Telles argues that:

> As slavery was being abolished throughout the Americas in the nineteenth century, science would validate racial domination by claiming that Caucasians were inheritably superior to none-white people. Prior to that, when race mostly described one's descent rather than a hierarchy of biological types, the subjugation of Indians and Africans proceeded on the basis of moral and religious reasoning rather than scientific (2006: 26).

Telles goes further with his argument and discusses the science of Eugenics in relation with the inferiority of the black population:

In the emerging science of eugenics, which set out to discover "the social uses to which knowledge of heredity could be put in order to achieve the goal of better breeding". Eugenics at the time, viewed blacks as inferior and mulattos as degenerate. Furthermore, eugenicists believed that tropical climates like Brazil's weakened human biological and mental integrity, and therefore the Brazilian population exemplified biological deficiency (ibid.).

It did not take long for eugenic theories to spread it is roots out of Europe. In 1880, Raimundo Nina Rodríguez, a Brazilian professor was one of the firsts to examine the idea of race within science. While he without a doubt shared the idea that the African black was inferior, he had shared a different opinion about the 'mulatto'. Rodríguez encountered difficulties in placing them into one category, therefore he decided to divide the mulatto population into three subcategories; superior, ordinary, and degenerate or socially unstable types. According to Telles; "Rodríguez's uncertain classification of the mulatto may have reflected his own mixed-race identity, as well as the general sentiments of the Brazilian elite, since many of them could be classified as mulatto" (2006: 27). Even if in their own country they could identify themselves as whites, in United States and Europe their status was not so certain. Since most of the elite could have been classified as mulattos: "Mulattos where clearly perceived as distinct from pure-blood blacks and Indians, and there was often an optimistic sense that they were more like whites" (ibid.).

The idea of 'whitening' through miscegenation was debated between scholars at that time. Scholars such as Rodríguez followed the theories of Gobineau, which stated that miscegenation would lead to degeneracy of race inexorably (Araujo Pereira, 2013: 50). However, Rodríguez believed that miscegenation, nonetheless, would create an inferior population due to the presence of "black blood".

(The black race in Brazil) however great their innumerable services to our civilization may have been, however justified sympathies surrounding the revolting abuse of slavery (…) there always needs to be a factor of inferiority in the population. In the trilogy of the intertropical climate inhospitable to whites, which plagues the great extent of the country; of the black man who hardly civilizes himself; of the routine and non-progressive Portuguese, two circumstances give the second salient pre-eminence: the strong hand against the white, which lends him the tropical climate, the vast proportions of the mestizo that, delivering the country to the mestizos will end up depriving the country for a long period of time from the supreme direction of the white race (Nina Rodríguez, 1976, in Araujo Pereira, 2010: 50).[1]

Elites as well as some scholars believed that this 'whitening' of race, in time, would produce a white population. At present, as I have already mentioned, there is still a white supremacy in Latin American countries as well as the rest of the world. However,

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[1] Own translation.

a new term has risen in the last decades. The term 'negritude' has acquired different uses and definitions. According to Domingues:

> negritude became a dynamic concept, which has a political, ideological and cultural character. In the political arena, negritude serves as a subsidy for the action of the organized black movement. In the ideological field, blackness can be understood as the process of acquiring a racial consciousness (2005: 1).

Hall also mentions:

> What is the issue here is the recognition of the extraordinary diversity of subjective positions, social experiences and cultural identities which compose the category 'black'; that is, the recognition that 'black' is essentially a politically and culturally constructed category, which cannot be grounded in a set of fixed trans-cultural or transcendental racial categories and which therefore has no guarantees in nature. What this brings into play is the recognition of the immense diversity and differentiation of the historical and cultural experience of black subjects (1996: 443).

Domingues discusses that the origin of the term comes from Paris, when African students went to universities in Europe, a strong sense of identity arose as they became aware that the western civilization was not as great as it was taught to the colony. Hence, "in this context, a racial conscience was awoken, and therefore the willingness to fight for the right to recover the cultural identity of the black people" (Domingues, 2005: 1). The outcome was a black movement who aimed to change their position in society as "the unspoken and invisible 'other'" (Hall, 1996: 441) and to change the meaning of the word 'black' or 'negro' as something positive rather than negative, as was applied to the word before that time.

> The word négritude in French derives from nègre, a term that in the early twentieth century had a pejorative character, usually used to offend or disqualify the Negro, as opposed to noir, another word to designate black, but that had a respectful sense. The intention of the movement was precisely to reverse the sense of the word négritude to the opposite pole, imposing on it a positive connotation of affirmation and racial eupride. In this perspective, the tactic was to demobilize the enemy in one of its main instruments of racial domination: language. Aimé Césaire himself pointed out that the movement of negritude represented a revolution in language and literature (Domingues, 2005: 2).

In relation to the famous writer, politician and a founder of the négritude movement in Francophone literature, Aimé Césaire, Domingues states:

> According to the Aimé Césaire interpretation, blackness is simply the act of assuming to be black and being aware of a specific identity, history, and culture it carries. Césaire defined negritude in three aspects: identity, fidelity and solidarity. Identity consists in being proud of the racial condition, expressing itself, for example, in the attitude of proudly uttering: I am black! Fidelity is the relationship of indelible bond with the motherland, with the African ancestral heritage. Solidarity is the feeling that

involuntarily unites all the "coloured brothers" of the world; is the feeling of solidarity and the preservation of a common identity (2005: 6).

The French philosopher Jean-Paul Sartre, in his famous text, Black Orpheus of 1948, was one of the earliest intellectuals to conduct an in-depth reflection on the Black Movement. Black Orpheus was written as an introduction to an anthology of black poetry, organised by Leopold Senghor. In the text Sartre recognised the subversive role of the Black Movement at that particular historical moment: either because it denied the cultural values of the white oppressor or because it awoke self-confidence, and racial pride within the black man. Negritude would be a reaction of the Negro to white supremacy, whose prowess was to point to a dialectical progression in race relations. According to Sartre, white racism would be the thesis, blackness its antithesis, a transient principle based on anti-racist racism:

> The final unity, which will bring all the oppressed into the same fight, must be preceded in the colonies, which is why I would call the moment of separation or negativity: this anti-racist racism is the only way capable of leading to the abolition of racial differences (Domingues, 2005: 9).

CHAPTER 2
BRAZIL – A HISTORY OF DISCRIMINATION

2.1   The origins: Portuguese Colonialization & Slavery

The Treaty of Tordesillas was signed in 1494 by both Spain and Portugal as a means to end a growing rivalry over the lands being explored by the two conquistadors. In this treaty, demarcation lines were drawn to separate the various territories. The Tordesillas meridian was located 370 leagues[2] (approximately 2000 km) west of the Cape Verde Islands, off the west coast of Africa. Spain was given exclusive rights to all newly discovered and undiscovered lands in the region west of the line. Portuguese expeditions were to keep to the east of the line. Neither power was to occupy any territory already in the hands of a Christian rule. Six years later, Portugal colonised the area of what is today known as Brazil.[3]

2.1.1 Colonial Society

There exists a contentious debate about what constitutes the meaning of the term 'colonisation'. In antiquity, colonization could have been a way to place demographic order to avoid certain conflicts, such as viewed during the Greek Mediterranean archaic period. In other cases, colonisation of territories served as places of exile or imprisonment, as was the case with the Devil's Island in French Guiana. However, in the context of this paper, the Portuguese colonialization in South America can be identified as mercantile-based occupation of territory.

Before discussing mercantilism in the Portuguese context, it is important to consider what defines mercantilism, particularly if one already assumes that the mercantile logic is the defining feature of the colonial enterprise. Mercantilism is not abstract, but rather empirical thus not homogeneous. Therefore, mercantilism is identified as a set of economic practices adopted by the modern absolutist European States to support the rising expenses of bureaucracy and the Armed Forces. These expenditures did not exist in the feudal model, which outsourced state functions such as justice, security, tax collection, which were commonly used privately by feudal lords in the Middle Ages (Lima de Almeida, 2013).

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[2] A league is a unit of length, which was common in both Europe and the Americas at this period in time.

[3] It is important to note that although the treaty successfully prevented violence between the two Iberian nations, there was a misunderstanding between the two nations as to which lands they could conquer and exactly where the line of division was.

In light of the aforementioned, Portuguese mercantilism engendered the occupation of the American territory by subordinating this occupation to its economic-commercial interests. However, the Portuguese State (at that time being a kingdom of course) was not solely focused on mercantile related interests, as the so-called pre-colonial period provides evidence that the commercial interest of Portugal was not in the Americas but rather in Asia. To this extent, it may be held that the occupation of the Americas was, at first, and primarily, of a geopolitical nature. The objective was to control the Atlantic Ocean, whose route (as it was thought at that time) would circumvent the already existing spice route along the African coast, providing a faster trade route in pursuit of Asian spices, thus the objective was mercantile greed.

Moreover, there also existed religious objectives in the occupation of the Americas. It was intended that priests from Portugal would live with the natives to spread the 'Word of God' as held under the Christian faith. Some argue that the religious sincerity was in general genuine in comparison to the methods and outcomes of the subsequent political manipulation that took place (ibid.), however the religious aspects of colonialism do not fall within the scope of this paper, so analysis of such shall not extend in any great detail beyond this paragraph.

In relation to the colonial society, Ilmar Mattos (1994) created an interesting metaphor to describe the relation of the metropolis with the colony. It involved the image of a coin. The 'colonial coin' has two sides: on one side, there is the interest of the metropolis while on the other side the interest of the settlers. One cannot exist without the other, and not always do they benefit in the same manner. Of course, colonization always benefited the metropolis and/or the settler but almost never the conquered. The Brazilian colonial society was based on a monopolistic hegemonic logic. This means an extremely hierarchical social system that sought above all the interests of the metropole. This monopoly occurred essentially in commerce, as well as in religious order (ibid.).

Moreover, the colonial society was not structured to only profit the metropole but more specifically the white male. The term *pigmentocracy* has been adopted by social scientists in order to describe societies in which social status and wealth are determined by skin colour. We can find pigmentocracies throughout the world, simply characterised by the light-skinned population having the highest social status, followed by brown-skinned occupying the intermediate stature and finally the black-skinned who are at the bottom of the social hierarchy.

In Latin America (similarly so in the Caribbean's), it is common that at the top of the socio-economic hierarchies one finds the light-skinned Europeans[4]. A small number of Japanese and Chinese may be found among the socio-economic elites. In the middle one finds the brown-skinned mestizos of mixed-race European and Native American Indian

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[4] In Latin America they are mainly of Spanish, Portuguese and Italian descent while in the Caribbean they are mostly British or French descent.

descent, as well as the mestizos[5] of mixed-race European and African descent. At the bottom of this hierarchy one may find the darker-skinned Africans and Indigenous people (Lynn, 2008).

The effects of racial hierarchy, which was put into place during the colonial period may still be felt in Latin America today. Peter Wade simply discloses: "whites are at the top; Indians and blacks at the bottom, and positions in the middle are defined by various criteria of status, among which colour and descent are very important" (1997:29). Furthermore, some aspects of Hispanic culture such as beauty ideals or stereotypes about intelligence within the light-skinned, higher social class community are used to legitimize and reinforce the stigmatization of the non-European descendants.

In contrast to other Latin American countries who have characterised themselves as a pigmentocracy, Brazil has denied for decades the existence of racism in the country. However, it is important to state that Brazil is a pigmentocracy. Researches have showed that the racial socio-economic status hierarchy related to skin colour is the same in Brazil as any other Latin American country; "the Brazilian social structure is largely divided along racial lines" (Telles, 2006 :137) and "Afro-Brazilians remained overwhelmingly concentrated in the lowest economic strata and that negative attitudes to dark skin were widespread" (Lovell, 1999: 399).

Pigmentocracies are, for some, the result of discrimination inflicted by Europeans against other races. "The light skinned European and North East Asian peoples have gained political and economic power by historical accident and maintain their dominant position by discrimination against other races to keep them subordinate" (Lynn, 2008: 43). Peter Wade asserts that the low socio-economic status of Africans found in many societies is "explained by saying that slavery put them there and class mechanisms maintained their place" (1997).

2.1.2 Years of Slavery

The Portuguese first made contact with, and declared Brazil part of the Portuguese Empire in 1500. By mid-1500's the sugar plantations began to emerge in Northeast Brazil, and soon after the colonists gained control over the Indigenous population. The Portuguese settlers subjected the local inhabitants to intensive-slave-labour that was required to man the plantation fields. Colonists, as well as religious orders, employed a number of means to subjugate Indigenous groups, however some fled to the interior of the country where little to no exploration was made. Much of the enslaved Indigenous labours who were not fortunate enough to flee began suffering from an influx of new European diseases. The Portuguese crown settled on the idea that the Indians were too

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[5] Even if 'mulato' (in Spanish), 'mulatto' (in Portuguese) is a common term in Latin America I am avoiding to use the word "mulatto" when describing a mixed European and African descent person due to its racist connotation.

fragile for plantation labour and, having been active in the Atlantic slave trade since the 1450s, they began importing African slaves.[6]

Historically, it was circa the 1530's when African slaves were first brought to Brazil for the purpose of expanding the sugar economy. The transfer of enslaved Africans grew around the 1550's when the sugarcane plantations became better organised. As a result of expansion, the sugar plantation system became exclusively dependent on African slave labour. This was the beginning of a long history of slave trade between Brazil and the African continent.[7]

Year after year, the annual import of African slaves to Brazil increased dramatically, ranging from 1,000 a year in the 16th century to a record of 60,000 in 1848 alone (World Bank, 2012). Between the years of 1550-1855, an estimate 4 million African-origin slaves entered Brazilian ports. It was easy to exploit African slaves, as they had no protection from either the church nor the State. The Portuguese and the colonists considered the Africans to be racially inferior, an idea that eventually garnered 'scientific' validation in the 19th century (Fitzgerald et al. 2014).

As the economy of colonial Brazil expanded, so did the number of African slaves. The introduction of slave labour supported the economic success of the colony; therefore, the slave trade became a very profitable enterprise. A range of economic sectors depended on the slave labour. During the 17th century slaves were used for mining expeditions, in the 18th century they were mostly used for cattle raising and during the 19th century slaves were mostly deployed in the coffee plantations.

Work conditions for slaves were inhuman, and as such, the mortality rate was very high. Nevertheless, the demand for slaves was always satisfied due to the constant importation from Africa (ibid: 264). The origins of slaves from within Africa varied. While most were kidnapped and exported from the ports of the western coast of Africa, particularly from Luanda, Angola, some came from as far as Mozambique, on the east coast of Africa.

In his book, *História do Brasil* (2013), João Daniel Lima de Almeida references the historian Ciro Flamarion Cardoso who, through his writings, aimed to dismantle the dichotomy of lord/slave relation, which, it is noteworthy to point out as he had, was more complex than what it seemed. It is important to note that the small number of important lords were not the only ones who owned slaves. Ordinary people owned up to five slaves and in some documented instances, these slaves slept in the master's house. Manumission in Brazil was extremely powerful, like no other place of modern slavery in America. In Brazil, slavery was unique in the sense that, slaves could own slaves.

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[6] During Dutch rule in Brazil, slaves were also brought to the Recife region.
[7] The zone known as the Slave Coast, which spanned the coast from around modern-day Togo to Nigeria, was where Portuguese and Brazilian traders conducted negotiations for slaves.

Furthermore, some slaves were able to buy the freedom of their family members, but could not buy their own freedom- as they were too valuable (usually these slaves were owned by religious orders or were a guarantee for the lord's debts). There were associations created and organised by slaves, true consortiums of freedom, in which slaves would deposit parts of their earnings to eventually buy their own freedom. Once free, some slaves continued depositing money to buy the freedom of others. While enslaved Africans had no rights, in some regions *brecha camponesa*[8] was a 'right' of the slaves. Slaves had the right to cultivate their own food on their own farms on Sundays to maintain a good diet, which, it is noted that this ultimately benefited the lord considering that the slave would live longer therefore serve for a longer period of time (Lima de Almeida, 2013).

In relation to freedom, due to the decreasing revenue from the gold sector in Ouro Preto, Minas Gerais, many lords preferred to liberate their slaves rather than maintaining their expenses, resulting in a big unforeseen group of free men and some slaves who would claim 'free spaces' in the colony or imperial cities. Occasionally, these men would 'intimidate' the white population, however they were heavily policed. Their freedom of movement was heavily restricted as they were prohibited from going out at night without a letter proving their manumission, or in the context of a slave, a letter to prove they were working for their lord (ibid.).

The state took unpleasant measures to uphold the law and maintain order of the black slave population; supressing revolts, destroying '*quilombos*'[9] and disciplining punished slaves by whipping them in public places. It was the function of the state to guarantee and legitimize slavery. Lima de Almeida argues that violence was used to force slaves to adapt to their reality, however, adapting to slavery never is that simple. Although adapting to slavery did not occur easily, there is a certain sense of adaptation in Brazilian society today, which one will explore as this paper progresses. Moreover, the colonial authorities passed a series of racist laws to limit Indigenous and Africans to access certain social positions and professions, and so, forcing the 'freemen' to work at undesirable positions, keeping the black population at the bottom of the social scale. The laws and implementations of the past have had a ripple effect on today's society. As in the past, the black Brazilian is socially and institutionally forced into a position of inferiority.

The Brazilian slave trade ended in 1850. In 1871, '*Lei do ventre livre',* also known as 'Free Womb Law' ended generational transmission of slave status. On May 13th 1888, when the imperial family passed the *Lei Aurea* — also known as the 'Golden Law' — making Brazil the last nation in the Western Hemisphere to abolish slavery. Pressure for

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[8] *Brecha camponesa* was an economic device used during the colonial period in Brazil to, among other things, diversify agricultural production within the colony.

[9] A 'Quilombo' is a community organised by fugitive slaves in colonial Brazil.

abolition of slavery in Brazil is two-fold, arising from both internal and external pressure.

Abolitionists such as André Rebouças, Luís da Gama, Joaquim Nabuco, José do Patrocínio encouraged through writing and activism the liberation of slaves. An important argument made by the abolitionists was that slavery would stop the flow of European immigrants, which was very much desired. Furthermore, lords and elites came to fear the possibility of slave revolts that took place in other parts of the continent. Externally, slavery had become a humiliation for Brazil after its abolition everywhere else in the hemisphere since North American, French and British intellectuals associated the abolition of slavery to progress and modernity (Lima de Almeida, 2014: 266).

Nevertheless, the residual effects of the slavery era would continue to be felt, as Brazil alone received over four times as many slaves as any other American destination. Due to this huge influx of African slaves, today Brazil's African-descended population is larger than the population of most African countries.

2.2 From Whitening Ideal to 'Racial Democracy'

2.2.1 The Whitening Ideal

The transition from colony to state in 1822 ran smoothly and the transaction from slavery also did not involve a political rupture in local values or social structure (Telles, 2006). By the end of the 19th century, during the Empire, just after the abolishment of slavery and the establishment of a republic, there was a necessity to construct a national identity. The construction of the 'Brazilian nation' involved the 'racial question'; in fact, the racial theories of the 19th century had a huge influence in the creation of Brazil's national identity (Araujo Pereira, 2010: 45).

As the colonial aristocratic system remained fairly intact, the Brazilian national identity therefore developed at a slow pace. The ideas of academics in the field of social science and humanities excelled as they abused the Darwinist metaphor "survival of the fittest" and looked to eugenics to create public policies for the formation of the nation (ibid: 46).

Latin American scholars and elites supported mostly the neo-Lamarckian strand of eugenics, which was mostly dominant within the French academic sphere. It mainly argued that genetic deficiencies could be overcome in a single generation. Although the notions brought by neo-Lamarckianism did not last long, it "had enormous implementations for the Brazilian interpretations of race in the ensuring decades" (Telles, 2006: 28). The scholars of this time accepted racist predictions that black and 'mulattos' were inferior, but this inferiority could be easily overcome by miscegenation. While in Europe people believed that the mixing of race would produce degenerate

offspring and they feared mixing could become a threat to the white race, in the United States a barrier between blacks and whites was formed by segregation, which forbade the mixing of the two races. Despite the fact, segregation between the two races existed, Boas argues:

> (since) the plantation system of the south brought to our shores a large Negro population. Considerable mixture between White masters and slave women occurred during the period of slavery, so that the number of pure Negroes was dwindling continually, and the coloured population gradually became lighter (Boas, 1940: 3).

It is important to note, that as early as 1755, the Portuguese king had encouraged his subjects in Brazil to both populate themselves and join with the natives through marriage. During the same period, Sebastião José de Carvalho e Melo rose to power within Portuguese politics, eventually becoming prime minister and first Marquis of Pombal (1756-1777)[10] under the government of Dom José I (1750-1777). During his reign, he went to great strengths to encourage inter-marriages, even though inter-marriages of white Portuguese with blacks and mestizos were not encouraged neither by the Portuguese crown nor by the Catholic Church.[11]

Over a century later, it was still considered 'unacceptable' to mix black and white blood. Nonetheless, the Brazilian elite, similar to the elite of the surrounding countries took a different approach to the 'black problem'. Based on the ideas proposed by eugenics and their own sensitivities to theories about race and tropical degeneracy, using a theory of constructive miscegenation, they proposed the idea of 'blanqueamiento' (in Spanish), 'branqueamento' (in Portuguese) or 'whitening'. Whitening can be contemplated in two ways: the symbolic and biological sense. Symbolically, whitening represents an ideology that emerged from legacies of Spanish and Portuguese colonialism, which historically catered to white dominance in social hierarchies. In the biological sense, whitening is the process of mixing a light-skinned individual with a dark-skinned individual in order to produce lighter-skinned offspring. In relation to this whitening phenomenon Boas states:

> A certain amount of intermingling between White and Indian took place, but in the United States and in Canada this has never occurred to such a degree that it became an important social phenomenon. In Mexico and many parts of Central and South America It is the most typical case of race contact and race mixture (1940: 3).

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[10] Marquis of Pombal's great concern was to modernize the public administration of his country and to maximize the profits derived from colonial exploration, especially in relation to the Brazilian colony. This lead to administrative reforms and the strengthening of the monarchical state constituting a political tendency of the time known as 'enlightened despotism'. One can comprehend the arrival of the enlightened Marquis of Pombal as a result of the economic problems experienced by Portugal at the time, who were suffering from economic dependence on England, the loss of colonial areas, and the fall of gold exploration in Brazil.
[11] The Catholic Church condemned miscegenation in general, meaning that inter-marriages during this period were simply not recognised by the church.

As I have mentioned above, for a great number of scholars, the idea behind whitening derived from European colonialism:

> Spanish notions of limpieza de sangre (cleanliness of blood) also worked in the colonies. In Spain, these ideas had been used from the mid-15th century to discriminate against "New Christians" – Jews and Muslims who had converted to Christianity. New legislation required people to prove the "purity" of their Old Christian genealogy to gain admittance to certain administrative positions. Although this was mainly a religious measure, there was an intense concern with genealogy and the perceived inherited "contamination" that came from Jewish or Muslim "blood" (Poole, 2008). Limpieza de sangre was a manifestation of what Banton calls race as lineage. In the colonies, limpieza de sangre was recast to discriminate also against African and indigenous heritage (Wade in Poole, 2008: 179).

These ideas of 'cleaning' the population continued passed the colonialization period. The Brazilian elites "saw their black and indigenous populations as inferior and their large mestizo populations as a burden" (Wade, in Poole, 2008: 180), they also believed that "it was up to the whiter populations to lead nations into modernity" (ibid). They disputed over the economic and racial benefits of different immigrant group. As they no longer wanted more blacks in the country, a series of immigration policies and laws were established to stop the flow of undesirable people into the country. Asian workers were needed until the elites could immigrate Europeans in sufficient numbers, who were considered at the time as agents of modernity for the nation (Fitzgerald et al., 2014).

Whitening became the major basis for Brazil's immigration policy. To accelerate the process, Brazil sought out and subsidised European immigrants to "improve the quality" of its work force and replace the former workers, this especially occurred in the state of São Paulo. This new supply of labour supplanted the former African slave population in places like São Paulo and at the same time acted as a "civilizing agent" by whitening the Brazilian gene pool. The expectation was that these white settlers would eventually mix with the native population and thus dilute Brazil's black population (Telles, 2006: 29). According to Telles, many Brazilian eugenicists where confident in their affirmations, which stated that the country was 'whitening' with success. "In 1912, João Batista de Lacerda believed that miscegenation would eventually produce whites and predicted that by 2012, the Brazilian population would be 80% white, 3% mixed, 17% Indian, and there would be no more blacks" (ibid.).

Table 1: Table of principal Brazilian laws of immigration selecting by ethnicity.

1890 Federal decree prohibits the entry of "blacks and yellows".[1]

1892 Federal law revokes the 1890 decree.[2]

1921 Federal law prohibits the entry of "undesirables."[3] Secret consular policy excludes U.S. blacks wanting to come to Brazil.[4]

1934 Constitutional nationalities quota system and exclusion of "Gypsies and nomads".[5] Includes a general assimilability clause.[6]

1937 General assimilability criterion dropped.[7] The first of several secret anti-Semitic circulars bans visas for persons of "Semitic origin".[8]

1938 Decree-law implements nationality quotas with administrative discretion to limit or suspend the entry of individuals "from certain races or origins".[9]

1939 Portuguese immigrants exempted from the immigration nationality quota.[10]

1945 Decree promotes nationality quotas with preference for Europeans.[11]

1969 Foreigner's Statute gives preferential treatment to Portuguese immigrants.[12]

1970 Regulation of the 1969 statute includes as an objective the preservation of "the ethnic composition of Brazil".[13]

1980 Foreigner's Statute ends the nationality quotas.[14]

1988 Constitutional preference for naturalization of nationals from Portuguese-speaking countries.[15]

2005 Preferential entry and settlement conditions for citizens of MERCOSUR countries.[16]

[1] Decree no. 528 of June 28, 1890.

[2] Law no. 97 of October 5, 1892.

[3] Decree no. 4247 of January 6, 1921.

[4] See discussion below of the Brazilian American Colonization Syndicate.

[5] Decree no. 24.215 of May 9, 1934.

[6] Federal Constitution of 1934, Art 121, Section 6.

[7] Political Constitution of 1937, Art 151.

[8] Secret Circular no. 1127, "Entrada de estrangeiros no território nacional" of June 7, 1937.

[9] Decree-Law no. 406 of May 4, 1938.

[10] Resolution no. 34 of April 22, 1939 (Conselho de Imigração e Colonização).

[11] Decree no. 7967 of September 18, 1945.

[12] Decree-Law no. 941 of October 13, 1969.

[13] Decree-Law no. 66.689 of June 11, 1970.

[14] Law no. 6.815 of August 19, 1980.

[15] Constitution of 1988 with reforms up to July 12, 2010.

[16] Legislative Decrees nos. 923 and 928, and Decree no. 5.471

Source: FitzGerald & Cook-Martin (2014: 261).

Although eugenicist thought that whitening would occur through both European immigration and 'natural selection' it did not work as planned. As time passed, miscegenation began to be viewed as positive. According to Wade:

In the early decades of the 20th century, some nations began to take a more positive attitude to mixture: mestizaje or mestiçagem (racial and cultural mixture) was the basis for national identity. The mixture of African, indigenous and European peoples was the founding origin myth of the nation. Mestizaje was something to be celebrated as a distinctive feature; indigenous and African people had, it was said, made useful contributions to the cultures of, for example, Mexico or Brazil (Wade in Poole, 2008: 180).

Nonetheless, he argues: "However, mestizaje was still seen by many Latin Americans as a progressive process in which black and Indigenous people would be integrated into a mestizo nation that was moving toward whiteness" (Wade, in Poole, 2008: 181). In other words, the 'positive attitude' towards miscegenation that Wade refers to was a hypocritical and false attitude, since there was a constant hope for the nation to become white.

2.2.2 Understanding Racial Democracy

The heavy influx of European immigration ended around the 1920's. Concerns about miscegenation and Brazil's racial future sprung up once more. Brazilian eugenicists no longer looked to neo-Lamarckianism, but rather focused on the more scientifically Mendelian line of genetics. However, following the events of First World War, the Brazilian eugenics community became critical of the simplicities of Mendelian implementations on race and came to disfavour the concept of race altogether (Telles, 2004: 32).

By the 1930's and 1940's, the overall population and intellectuals of Brazil came to share the idea that many centuries of racial mixing had shaped a nation free from racial conflict. Brazil portrayed a self-image of a country in which citizens of different races and colour lived in peaceful harmony and equally benefited from social mobility. The typical Brazilian was proudly characterised as 'moreno' or 'morena' a brown-skinned mixed-race man or woman (Campos de Sousa et al. 2008).

Karl Von Martius, a German naturalist and biologist formulated the first version of the myth of racial democracy back in 1844 when he won a contest on how to write Brazil's history, sponsored by the Brazilian Institute of Geography and History. Martius extensively travelled the country and had noticeable experience. The account of his travels is still read today to understand the social and economic situation of Brazil at that time. In his essay *Como se deve escrever a história do Brasil*, Martius (1844) suggested that the real history of Brazil was the mixing of its human elements: Indian, European and African. He believed that each of these groups had contributed to history and had a story worthy of studying. Martius states: "The history of Brazil will always be primarily a branch of Portuguese history. However, if Brazilian history is to be complete and to deserve the name history, it can never exclude the roles played by the Ethiopians

and Indian races" (Martius, in Capistrano de Abreu, 1997:18). The work of Martius was relevantly discussed nearly a century later by Gilberto Freyre and other scholars.

Race mixture became a central feature of Brazilian's national identity as a result of the publication of *Casa Grande e Senzala*, known in English as 'The Masters and the Slaves' by Gilberto Freyre (1933), selected by leading academics as Brazil's most influential nonfiction book of the 20th century. The book tells the social history of the slave plantation world of the North-eastern Brazil during the 16th and 17th century. Telles affirms that Freyre "transformed the concept of miscegenation from its former pejorative connotation into a positive national characteristic and the most important symbol of Brazilian culture" (Telles, 2006: 33). Influenced by Franz Boas, (who previously proposed that racial differences are fundamentally cultural and social rather than biological), Freyre proposed a new national ideology. Freyre fully developed, expressed and popularised the idea, which stated Brazil was a racial democracy since Brazil had a "smooth blending of Europeans, Indian, and African peoples and cultures", he argued that Brazil was different to other nations because it was free of racism that effected the rest of the globe (Telles, 2004: 33). The notion that Brazil witnessed over three centuries of slavery was in fact transformed to be viewed as an important aspect of Brazil's emerging national identity. Freyre portrayed, often impressionistic and idiosyncratic in its structure and documentation, provided an insight into the patriarchal planter families relation with their slaves (Skidmore, in Graham, 1990). Freyre described it as a cauldron in which positive interracial mixing and combined differences reduced rivalry and furthermore created 'Brazilians'. By the 1940's Freyre introduced the term 'ethnic democracy' to describe the nation. This term 'ethnic' was introduced to oust the false 'scientific' notion of race that had been implemented and the word 'democracy' carried with it the Spanish implication of brotherhood alternatively to the political institution. Additionally, Freyre defended the Portuguese colonization by arguing that a new civilization in the tropics was a successful accomplishment of the Portuguese (ibid). Freyre would generally focus on discussing miscegenation's effects on diffusing racial differences and the contribution African culture had on the white elite, rather than referring to whitening. Nevertheless, Freyre had a white bias which led to Abdias do Nascimento[12] to blame Freyre's ideology of promoting a crusade against the black population of Brazil, in which white elite intended to wipe out both black people and black culture (ibid).

Freyre's theory dominated Brazil for over half a century, however, by the 1990, thanks to the dissemination and post-modern discourses brought from French and American universities, discussions over racial inequalities expanded beyond the closed social science departments. Academics began to question the melting-pot image of Brazilian culture. The homogeneity of Brazilian culture according to philosopher Marilena Chauí (2001) emphasizes the unity instead of the diversity and was the device used by past

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[12] Abdias Nascimento (1912-2011), African Brazilian scholar and activist who fought for antiracism and founded the Brazilian Black Movement.

domineering regimes. Chauí understands a democratic society as being made up of autonomous social groups, each one possessing distinct characteristics and demands. She maintains that to tackle the racial and social injustice in Brazil, it is important that the state recognizes the different identities and creates policies directed to each one of them, in order to find a way to atone for the oppression caused to these groups in the past.

Other authors such as Bernardino (2002) demanded for 'reparation policies'. These policies aimed to raise awareness of one's racial identity and also mitigate racial inequality. Bernardino does not deny that affirmative actions are intended to adjust problems related to the black population, on the contrary, he believes they are effective for adjusting problems related to the redistribution of economic goods and positions of power in the short to medium term. He argues that without these affirmative policies the change within the Brazilian elite would have been delayed even further. On the other hand, Bernardino suggests the combination of affirmative actions with universalist public policies, such as expanding the access of the Brazilian population to public education.

Moreover, it is important to acknowledge that affirmative actions have overcome some struggles since the proposed implementation of affirmative action policies put forward by militants and scholars had to wait until the evolution of worldwide antiracism and pro-human rights activism in order to be taken into consideration by Brazilian policy-makers. With the intensification of global politics in the mid-1990s, international NGOs as well as the Black Movement pressured the State to create policies to help dismantle racism that had been hidden for so long (Campos de Sousa et al., 2008: 133). Nilma Lino Gomes illustrates:

> Brazil has historically constructed an insidious, ambiguous type of racism, affirmed through its own negation, and which has become a part of the structure of our society. Its main characteristic is the apparent invisibility. This apparent invisibility is even more problematic, because it gives itself away as the myth of racial democracy, a social construction produced in the Brazilian plagues. It is through the narrative of myth, which is extremely conservative - but transfigured into democratic discourse - the equality of races is highlighted. It is, however, a false equality, since it is based on the erasure and homogenization of differences (Gomes, 2017: 51).[13]

Gomes continues:

> Racial democracy speaks of homogenizing and the inferiorization of differences, seen as a "racial melting-pot", as a "hybrid" form of culture, as a "racial fusion" that ultimately crystallizes, naturalizes and sub alternating differences, ethnic groups, and their history. One of the advantages of the Black Movement over the years has been the case of unravel

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[13] Own translation.

this discourse and in doing so, putting Brazilian society face to face with its racism (Ibid).[14]

2.3 The Rise of the Black Movement

The Black Movement has entrenched itself as a key political actor in the discussions around some of the most pressing contemporary issues, such as ethnicity, black identity and affirmative actions. The political involvement of the Movement itself has undergone great progress, ranging from the way national identity is understood among the population, to the way one thinks of anti-racist educational strategies. Therefore, to analyse the educational policies of today and the reinvigoration of identitarian positions and places we must comprehend the history of this important social movement.

2.3.1 The history of the Black Movement

A recent book on the Brazilian market called *O Movimento Negro Educador – Saberes construidas nas lutas por emanicipação* by Nilma Lino Gomes is excellent to understand both the historical and social aspect of the Black Movement. Gomes explains that the Black Movement began as a literary movement with the creation of the *Teatro Experimental do Negro* (**TEN** in Portuguese acronym) 'Black Experimental Theatre' (1944-1968). The theatre, as a result of social inequality, began using black actors and play-writers in order to revive the African heritage. The TEN began teaching their first members, among them: domestic servants, *favela*[15] dwellers with no established occupation, modest civil workers how to read and write. By educating these people, the TEN provided for them a new viewpoint, criteria of their own which enabled them to investigate further about the nation and what it means to be black in Brazil. The TEN also published the newspaper *Quilombo* (1948-1950), a very significant newspaper that aimed to awaken the consciousness and values of the black Brazilian as well as demanding educational rights (Gomes: 2017).

Still, the historical milestone most commonly mentioned by intellectuals is in the late 1970s with the emergence of social movements and anti-racist organizations. The Black Movement articulated in an unprecedented way and founded an organization at national level. On June 18th 1978, the *Movimento Unificado Contra a Discriminação Étnico-Racial* (**MUCDR** in Portuguese acronym)[16] was formed in the city of São Paulo. It was renamed

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[14] Own translation.
[15] 'Slum' is the most common translation for the word 'Favela'; however, there is a difference between a slum and a *favela.* While a slum is viewed as a run-down area of a city characterised by substandard housing, squalor and lacking in tenure security a *favela* is viewed as a low-income community.
[16] Unified Movement Against Ethnic and Racial Discrimination.

in 1979 to *Movimento Negro Unificado* (**MNU** in Portuguese acronym)[17] and still goes by that name today. This establishment was particularly important because of its historical context. Brazil was in the middle of a military dictatorship, which swept the country for two entire decades from 1964 until 1985. Furthermore, MUCDR appeared just after Brazil suffered a "coup inside the coup", the most repressive phase of the authoritarian regime (1968-1976) when the Institutional Act 5 (AI-5) abolished all formal remaining democratic institutions. The national organization put forward a fight against racism, racial discrimination and prejudice with the improvement of two important social factors: education and work (Gomes, 2017). Characterised as a popular and democratic movement, protesting and appealing against social inequalities suffered by the black population was the way in which the Black Movement tried to deconstruct the myth of 'racial democracy'. This became one of the movements' main objective.

Da Silva explains that for the Black Movement, the idea that Brazilian society was considered a society free of racism was a strategy of the elite to hide the inequality between blacks and whites in the country. The Black Movement wanted to discuss the idea of national identity, because if this identity in the past was built through 'racial democracy', the deconstruction of such a myth also promoted the idea of a new national identity (Batista da Silva, n.d.: 2).

By the 1980's, a consciousness and a sense of belonging to the so-called *negritude* (blackness) and *cultura negra* (black culture) established itself in a transnational context of experiences and struggles of the black population. The influence of the North-American Black Movement was crucial at this time in history as it demonstrated the binding of ideals of the Black Movements around the globe. Furthermore, for the Black Movement, the connection to Africa became a key aspect for the new definition of identity, for example, the word *afro* became an adjective for practices and description related to identities (Batista da Silva, n.d.: 4). In regards to education, the Black Movement began to gain some power in this field in the 1980's when they included racial stereotypes in didactic books, as well as developed specific curriculums, with a multiracial and popular focus (Gomes, 2017).

The 1990's were drastic years in which social, political as well as national and international adaptations were taking place all over Latin America. After the debt crisis in the region, countries all over the Latin America started adapting constitutional changes in their neoliberal agendas. The social movements of the country, pressured by the neoliberal policies aimed to establish a democratic state once again. The 90's (also important for the development of the Black Movement) symbolised the intense relation it had with the State. It is also in this period of time in which the Movement reaches its agenda at public level, extending institutional spaces and garnering international support for the fight against racism. On November 20th of 1995, an important march

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[17] Unified Black Movement.

known as *Marcha Nacional Zumbi dos Palmares contra o Racismo, pela Cidadania e a Vida*[18] took place in Brasília, which demanded rights for the black population. As a result of this protest, President of the nation Fernando Henrique Cardoso (1995-2003) recognised publically and officially the existence of racism and racial inequities in Brazil.

2.3.2 The Black Movement – The Educator

Since the beginning, the Black Movement viewed education as a social emancipator capable of changing the social structure of the country. Some scholars say that a key moment for the black Brazilian in relation to education was 1888 (after the abolition of slavery) and 1889 (after Brazil proclaimed itself a Republic), when the transaction from slave to free man occurred. Suddenly, the black population was to be viewed equal to the white population, free to be a citizen with rights. Naturally, this transaction was not as easy as intended. This was an extremely difficult moment for the black population as it was a moment of insertion into a white dominated society. The demand for education increased and became essential, since the slow insertion into public schools, as well as the high illiteracy rates became problematic for the population in the insertion of society and the working world (Domingues, 2008).

The Black Movement fought for free education, as well as the subsidised admission of black students into secondary school or university; institutes where the ethnic-racial relationship was not good due to racial discrimination and poverty. The fight against institutional racism and racism in general based on cultural and educational measures, and viewing of the black image as positive were the main aims of the Black Movement's educational program. The action of the Black Movement is also given in the decisive forums of educational policy. Claimed by black organizations since the early 20th century, the inclusion of blacks in public school appeared as an argumentative resource in the educational debates of the 1940s and 1960s.

Dias (2005), analyses the presence of the discussion of race during the process of the first law of Education Guidelines and Bases, also known as Law 4.024/61. Dias maintains that the inclusion of the term in the legal text appears to be too generic and believes that although it was part of the controversies and debates surrounding the approval of this law, race operated more as an argumentative resource in defence of the Universalist ideals of an education for all. A further analysis of the documents for the process of the legal text, allows us to see that during this period of time the dimension of race was considered parallel to social class, a factor of differentiation within the schooling process. Moreover, it was not explicitly stated whether the black population would be the main recipient of free public schooling. The author also argues that after the establishment of the military dictatorship in 1964 as well as the promulgation of the Law of Guidelines

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[18] Zumbi dos Palmares is an important figure in Brazilian history because of his resistance against slavery. He was the last king of Quilombo dos Palmares (a settlement of Afro-Brazilians who had bought their freedom). Zumbi today is a symbol of anti-slave and anti-colonial resistance.

and Bases of the time (Law 5.692/71); the racial question lost its place in the principles that governed national education (Dias, 2005).

After the dictatorship, the Black Movement began to further emphasis its work on education. It can be said that up until the 1980s, the Black Movements' fight for education was characterised as Universalist. However, the reasserting of public educational policies of Universal character, when they were implemented, did not comprehend nor benefit sufficiently the great mass of black population and so their discourse began to change. It was at this moment that affirmative actions emerged as a possibility and eventually became a radical demand, mainly the quotas procedure.

In 2004, the Secretary of Continuing Education, Literacy and Diversity (**SECAD** by its Portuguese title) was founded within the Ministry of Education. The work of social movements and particularly the Black Movement itself gained visibility in the organisational structure of the ministry due to their advances, limits, tensions and the historical claim to the right for education. It is also very important to note that in 2003 a major request of the Black Movement was transitioned into law. Law 10.639/03 was created, making it obligatory to teach Afro-Brazilian and African history and culture in both private or public, primary and secondary schools. Later adjusted by Law 11.645/08, which included Indigenous education. Furthermore, in 2004 *Diretrizes Curriculares Nacionais para a Educação das Relações Étnico-Raciais e para o Ensino de História e Cultura Afro-Brasileira e Africana[19]* was published in order to regulate the possible alteration of the Law 10.639/03.

Law no. 12.711, sanctioned in August of 2012 by President Dilma Rousseff (2011-2016) provides for social and racial quotas for admission to federal universities and federal institutions of technology and science education. It guarantees the reservation of 50% of enrolments per course and shift in the 59 federal universities and 38 federal institutes of education, science and technology institutes to students coming entirely from public secondary school. The remaining 50% of the vacancies remain for wide competition. The vacancies reserved for quotas (50% of the institution's total) will be subdivided - half for public school students with a gross family income equal to or less than a minimum and a half per capita salary and half for public school students with a higher family income to a minimum wage and a half. In both cases, the minimum percentage corresponding to the sum of blacks, mixed and Indigenous people in the state will also be considered, according to the latest demographic census of the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (**IBGE**). This important law was implemented as a result of the Black Movements request for emancipation. Social movements continue to act as political protagonists of social emancipation and during current hard political times, show the way for those who struggle for social emancipation and democracy.

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[19] National Curricular Guidelines for the Education of Ethnic-Racial Relations and for the Teaching of Afro-Brazilian and African History and Culture.
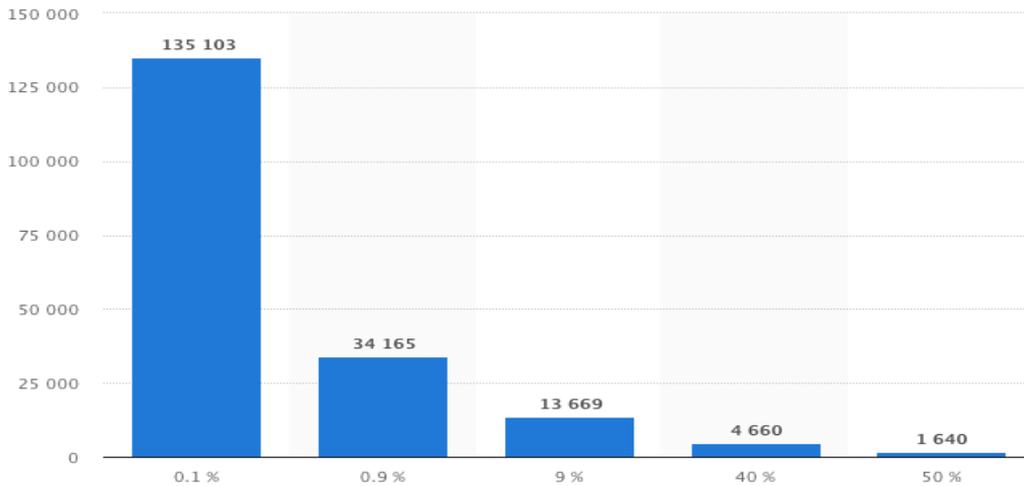
2.4 Education in the Latin American Context

Education in Brazil cannot be discussed without considering the scenario and the context in which it arises, that is, the time and the space in which it is inserted, analysing from the moment of its emergence, up to the current reality, both in the local, regional panorama as global. It is common cause that Latin America is a region of many inequalities in both social and territorial respects. It also includes very diverse national realities not only from an educational and cultural point of view, but also in terms of its general indicators of economic and social development. According to results of the World Bank's study, Latin America is the continent with the highest number of unequal indexes with respect to the following aspects: distribution of income, spending on consumer goods, services, access to health and mainly access to education (Stallivieri, 2007). Although the advances of recent decades have been comparatively remarkable, socioeconomic inequality and poverty continue to characterise the region, whose heterogeneity in levels of development and well-being are very evident (OEI, 2010). That being said, the greatest challenge faced by Latin American countries is the ability to offer learning, research and job opportunities for their individuals in an equitable and balanced manner, in order to ensure the advanced knowledge that supports the development of their economies, since those same countries are becoming protagonists of the global market.

While the reduction of poverty has been moderate in recent decades, there have been difficulties in meeting the millennium goal of halving poverty between 1990 and 2015. This is compounded by the negative impact of the global economic crisis, which although it has not yet been felt in all countries, by keeping the developed economies depressed, can have effects on local economies in the medium term. On the other hand, the persistent inequality in the distribution of income is presented in a homogeneous manner in most of the countries of the region. The problem of inequality has to do, fundamentally, with the distribution of income. In Brazil, high concentration of income occurs in the highest decile of the population making it difficult for the nation to economically grow.

The statistic below shows the gross income distribution among tax payers in Brazil in 2015, based on their declared average monthly income. In 2015, the richest portion of Brazilian personal income taxpayers (0.1%) declared an average gross income of 135,103 Brazilian reals per month. The average gross income declared by half of Brazilian personal income taxpayers in 2015 amounted to 1,640 Brazilian reals per month.

Source: Statista (2018)

Despite this, and thanks in large part to public policy efforts, the region has made enormous progress in improving people's living conditions. Investments in infrastructure, basic health and education services have significantly increased the population's objective welfare indicators. This is reflected positively in the basic health indicators such as the increase in life expectancy at birth, the reduction in infant mortality and child malnutrition rates. Important advances have also been made in respect to access to education, evidenced by the establishment of the "Educational Goals 2012: the education we want for the generation of the Bicentennials".

CHAPTER 3
Education for "all" — The barriers faced by Afro-Brazilians

3.1 Methodology

For the purpose of this chapter, a number of research methods and techniques were employed. The main research for this chapter was achieved during fieldwork, conducted for the duration of November 2017 to January 2018 in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Before departing for Brazil, contacts were already established with the following secondary school educators: Frederico Pagnuzzi (Colegio Pedro II); Aline Menezes (Colégio Pedro II); and Maria Fernanda Muller (Colégio Sion). Upon arrival, I met with Frederico Pagnuzzi and Maria Fernanda Muller. The gathering became a discussion group in which close observation took place as well as participation.

Following this, Maria Fernanda Muller put me in contact with Isabella Trinidade Menenzes and professor Dr. Amilcar Araujo Pereira (Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro), who subsequently passed my contact details on to professor Dr. Rosana Rodrigues Heringer (Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro). A semi-structured interview was conducted for these three candidates.

Moreover, a questioner was completed by approximately 60 students (comprising of males and females of different racial backgrounds) of federal, private and public Universities in Rio de Janeiro. As such, I visited the following tertiary education institutions: Universidade Federal do Estado do Rio de Janeiro (UNIRIO), Universidade Federal Fluminense (UFF), Universidade do Grande Rio (UNIGRANRIO), Universidade Estatal de Rio de Janeiro (UERJ), and Universidade Federal do Estado do Rio de Janeiro (UFRJ).

Furthermore, I attended a seminar at the Faculty Getúlio Vargas hosted by Brazilian black scholars and activists who discussed and debated black affairs in Brazil. With the newly retrieved information from the seminar, more specific literacy research was conducted. Further data was retrieved from official institutes such as the World Bank, PISA, Brazil's Ministry of Education (**MEC**- by its Portuguese acronyms), Fundação Alexandre de Gusmão (**FUNAG**- by its Portuguese acronyms) as well as the Relatório Annual das Desigualdades Raciais, an initiative organised the Faculty of Economics of UFRJ. The publication constitutes an analysis of the evolution of several types of social indicators within the theme of social-racial relations and inequalities.

The information gathered during the fieldwork will be reproduced and analysed in this section.

3.2 The Right to Education

Education was formally perceived as a human right following the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948. Since then, it has been reaffirmed in numerous global human rights treaties, including: The Convention of the Organization of the United Nations for Education, Science and Culture (UNESCO) on the fight against discrimination in the field of education (1960); and, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966). Such treaties establish the right of all children to free and compulsory primary education (including the responsibility to provide basic instruction to people who have not completed primary education); the obligation to develop secondary education, supported by measures that make it accessible to all children; and equitable access to higher education.

The right to an education has come to figure prominently in the ideology of the international community as most governments have come to the realization that the right to education is fundamental in the pursuit of development and social transformation. It has long been recognised that the right to education not only covers access to education, but also the obligation to eliminate discrimination at all levels of the education system, establish minimum standards and improve quality. In addition, education is necessary for the fulfilment of any other civil, political, economic or social rights (UNESCO, 2007).

As mentioned above, education is connected to economic development, and for some scholars such as Lee (2013) it is even more beneficial than economic development as education has "the ability to coordinate with others for mutual social advantages": meaning that through the educational system - children, teenagers and young adults learn not only about themselves but also about the society they are a part of. The United Nations supports this statement and argues that there is much more to education than schooling. The right to education includes children's opportunities to develop themselves and their personalities, which (if done correctly) would make them more likely to contribute to society in a positive manner when they become adults (Lee, 2013). Gomes further argues that the field in which education takes place as a "space of human formation" meaning that it is a space in which different generations, ethnic-racial groups, people of different socioeconomic backgrounds, creeds and religions go through thus education can be recognised as a great leveller of equalizing effect (Gomes, 2017: 25).

Furthermore, the World Bank also agrees that education has the ability to contribute to the overall development of a nation, including political and economic development. According to Lundgren et al., "for each additional year of schooling, wages increase

typically between 10 and 20%" (1992: 20). This increase demonstrates that the returns for education are high. One could go further and argue that it is even higher for girls' education, as research shows that women who have had access to basic education tend to have smaller families that live in healthier conditions, as opposed to the bigger families commonly found amongst non-educated mothers. Due to the social benefits that come with educating girls, the World Bank has stated that "the education of girls may yield a higher rate of return than any form of investment in developing countries" (Lundgren & Wahren, 1992: 20).

Nonetheless, it is important to clarify that education alone cannot develop a country, but "without it, development may prove unsustainable" (Lundgren & Wahren, 1992: 20). However, education has the power to influence access to many other public services, which leads to more inclusion as well as more equality (Lee, 2013). For authors such as Lee, the right to education should be recognised as an equal right to security and political freedom. It is evident that education contributes to development. Providing a good quality education has become a priority worldwide however, the definition of 'good quality' varies from country to country thus the definition is still not clear. In the past, good quality education meant students achieving good grades. Today, the main focus is 'education for all' – meaning access to all thus providing education as a 'public good', which is provided by the government. However, to achieve this ideal situation of education for all, long-term support is constantly needed both nationally and internationally by governments and societies.
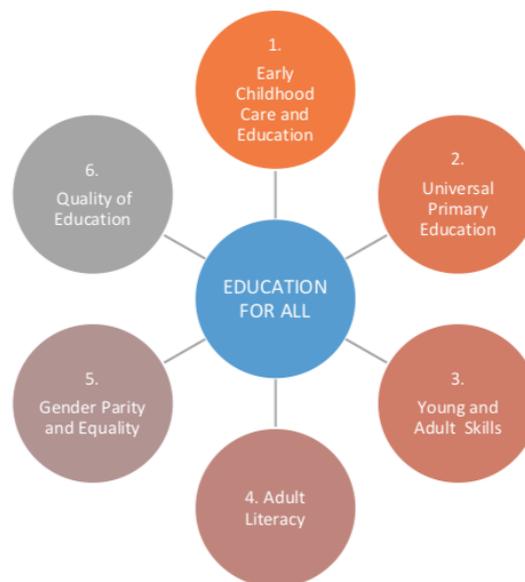
3.2.1 Education for All

Education for All (**EFA**) is a global movement led by United Nation Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (**UNESCO**), aiming to meet the learning needs of all children, youth and adults by the year 2015. EFA was adopted by The Dakar Framework in April 2000 at the World Education Forum in Senegal, Africa, with the goal in mind that all children would receive primary education by 2015. Not all children receive the education they need or want, therefore this goal was put in place to help those children. UNESCO has been mandated to lead the movement and coordinate the international efforts to reach, as its title would suggest Education for all. Governments, development agencies, civil society, non-government organisations and the media are but some of the partners working toward reaching these goals.

The EFA goals also overlap with the global pursuit of the eight Millennium Development Goals (**MDGs**), particularly MDG 2 (universal primary education) and MDG 3 (gender equality in education), by 2015. The EFA goals are as follows:

1. Expanding and improving comprehensive early childhood care and education, especially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children;
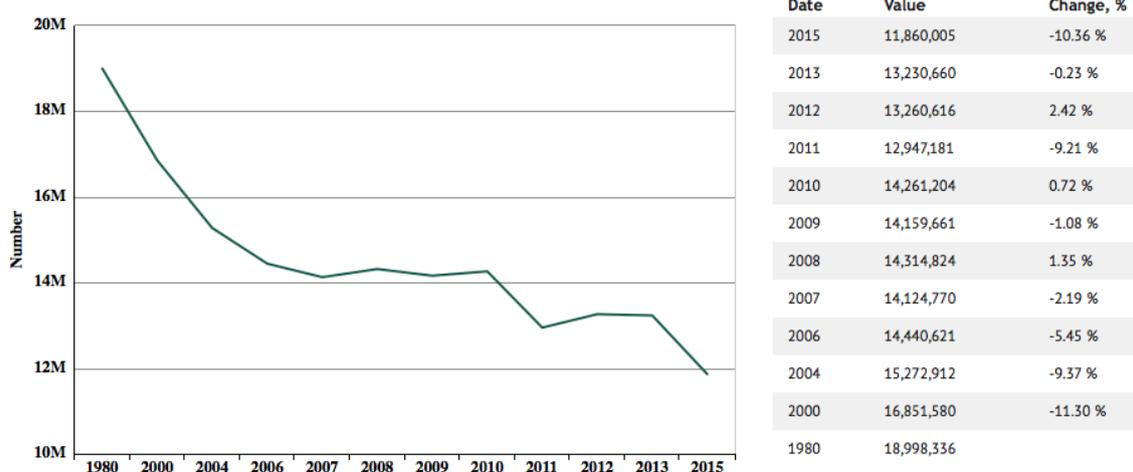
2. Ensuring that by 2015 all children, particularly girls, children in difficult circumstances and those belonging to ethnic minorities, have access to a complete free and compulsory primary education of good quality;

3. Ensuring that the learning needs of all young people and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life skills programmes;

4. Achieving a 50 per cent improvement in levels of adult literacy by 2015, especially for women, and equitable access to basic and continuing education for all adults;

5. Eliminating gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005, and achieving gender equality in education by 2015, with a focus on ensuring girls' full and equal access to and achievement in basic education of good quality; and

6. Improving all aspects of the quality of education, and ensuring excellence of all so that recognised and measurable learning outcomes are achieved by all, especially in literacy, numeracy, and essential life skills. Put simply, the goals may be illustrated as follows:

Source: Education for All 2015 Brazil National Review

It is fair to state that Brazil has worked hard pursuant to the EFA goals. Brazil's efforts can be noted when considering the steady decline in the country's illiteracy levels. Figure 1 demonstrates a decline in illiterate adult population (age 15+) over the last past couple of decades.

Figure 1: Brazil – Adult Illiterate Population

Date	Value	Change, %
2015	11,860,005	-10.36 %
2013	13,230,660	-0.23 %
2012	13,260,616	2.42 %
2011	12,947,181	-9.21 %
2010	14,261,204	0.72 %
2009	14,159,661	-1.08 %
2008	14,314,824	1.35 %
2007	14,124,770	-2.19 %
2006	14,440,621	-5.45 %
2004	15,272,912	-9.37 %
2000	16,851,580	-11.30 %
1980	18,998,336	

Source: Knoema World Data Atlas (2016)

Although there is a high rate of illiteracy in the country, the country strives to promote literacy. The Ministry of Education implemented a policy that integrates initial literacy education with later stages of learning, through classes in Youth and Adult Education (**EJA**) for the people covered by Literate Brazil Programme. However, not all EFA Goals were achieved. The existence of a National Education Plan with 20 targets to be met by 2023 indicates that, in spite of considerable progress, Brazil still has major challenges ahead in the coming years.

Educational goals provided to the country should correspond to the needs of the nation, and consider the rights of children, young people and other students of the country. The right to education is a means to reduce disparities and poverty. Therefore, education programming must articulate the explicit links between the proposed measures and its relationships to reduce disparities and eliminate poverty and injustice, for which it may be necessary to carry out institutional and legal reforms (UNESCO, 2007). Therefore, for this reason we need to think of education in Brazil not only in the global context but also in the context in which it appears – Latin America.

It became necessary to develop an educational agenda more adapted to the reality of Latin America, therefore the "Educational Goals 2012" was established by the Organisation of Ibero-American States for Education, Science and Culture (OEI by its Portuguese acronyms). In 2010, the countries represented in the Ibero-American Conference of Ministers of Education and at the XX Ibero-American Summit, assumed and reaffirmed their commitment to these Educational Goals 2021. The 11 Educational Goals are the following:

1. Reinforce the participation of society in education;
2. Increase opportunities and educational attention to the diversity;
3. Increase initial education offer;

4. Universalize primary, secondary and basic improve your quality;

5. Offer meaningful curriculum in basic skills;

6. Increase the participation of young people in secondary superior, professional technician and superior;

7. Encourage the connection between education and employment;

8. Offer lifelong education opportunities;

9. Strengthen the teaching profession;

10. Expand the Ibero-American Area of Knowledge; and

11. Invest more and better

(0EI, 2010).

The 11 goals constitute a set of objectives, agreed upon at regional level, to be reached by the year 2021. The goals are flexible in the sense that there is room to adapt them to the capabilities of each country. It respects the diversity of Latin America and the development rhythms of each country. Therefore, it is an instrument not only more ambitious than the Millennium Development Goals, but also more flexible in the face of real conditions on the ground. Within the framework of this educational agenda, the situation of the indigenous and Afro-descendant populations stands out for the lags that they present, in terms of access to education, academic results, as well as in the unequal return of training that translates into less social mobility, unequal insertion in the labour market and finally, less well-being. The historical processes of social exclusion that these groups faced in most of the countries of the region continue to act as powerful factors of exclusion and discrimination for indigenous peoples and Afro-descendants. However, while the situation of the indigenous people is more documented, a dense veil still hides the conditions that determine the development possibilities of the Afro-descendant population (Rodríguez & Mallo, 2012).

3.3 The Educational System of Brazil

Describing the Brazilian education system is an arduous and complex task due to the diversity of its structure and organisation. In this section, the attention will be shifted to the evolution of the educational system in recent history. I intend to clarify some concepts and present the way in which the Brazilian educational system is presented today, since the current system is characterised by low educational outcomes. In Brazil, the right to education was recognised for the first time in 1934, when the government defined education as a basic right for all in the nation's Constitution. Although the importance of education was already known in the 19th century, before this time education was important to the individual rather than for society as a whole. Once the importance of education was recognised in a social context, Brazil aimed to decentralise its system, meaning that the Federal State was no longer the main provider of education. Instead, the responsibility was now shifter to the individual states. It is important to

note that the process of decentralisation occurred in a chaotic manner, which led to illiteracy rising to a rate of 80% (de Caravalho & Gonçalves, 2000).

Reform was necessary. It was eventually requested during the 20th century by the New School Movement. The reform addressed all levels of education. The new aim involved education reaching the whole nation's population. Due to inaugurations of the Ministry of Education in the 1930s, the national guidelines for the educational system were established (ibid.). There was great change within the system; from teacher training to text books and curriculum reformation. Due to the established national guidelines, arising during the 1990s, access to basic education almost became universal.

The democratic transition in Brazil during 1980s had a number of significant milestones, including the approval of a new Federal Constitution (**FC**), known as "Citizenly Constitution," of 1988. Defining education as a social right (Art. 6), the Charter set forth innovative provisions, distributed in several articles (Art. 205 and 214). At that time, the educational context was sensibly different. Data from 1989 indicated that the proportion of the population of mandatory school age (7 to 14 years) actually attending school was 82.2%; the proportion of attendance of the population aged 0 - 6 years was 15.3%, and that of ages 15 to 19 in secondary school was 16.5%. The illiteracy rate of the population aged 15 and more was 18.8% in 1989 (MEC, 2014).

Brazil has a large percentage of disadvantaged students. Some 43% of students in Brazil are at the bottom two deciles on PISA's international index of economic, social, and cultural status (**ESCS**), a much higher percentage than the OECD average (12%). However, compared to other Latin American countries, the share of disadvantaged students is somewhat similar to that in Colombia and smaller than that in only two other countries, namely Mexico and Peru (OECD, 2016).
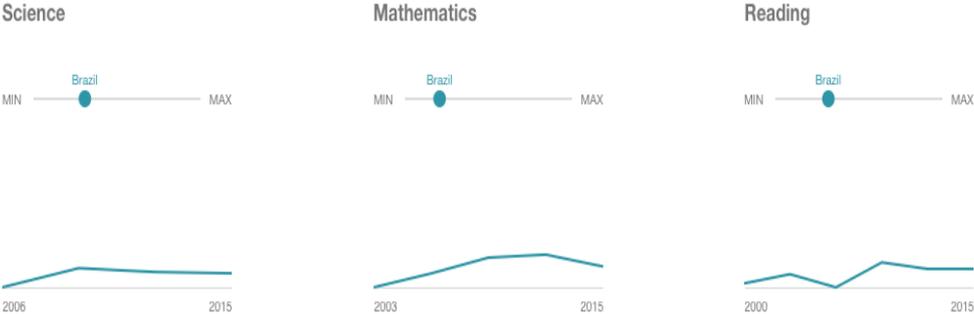
PISA (**Program for International Student Assessment**) is an ongoing program that offers insights for education policy and practice, and that helps monitor trends in students' acquisition of knowledge and skills across countries and in different demographic subgroups within each country. PISA results reveal what is possible in education by showing what students in the highest-performing and most rapidly improving education systems can do. These findings allow policy makers around the world to gage the knowledge and skills of students in their own countries in comparison with those in other countries, set policy targets against measurable goals achieved by other education systems, and learn from policies and practices applied elsewhere.

The last PISA examinations took place in 2015. The results of the recent PISA reveal that the region has a long road to travel to reach the educational standards of many parts of the rest of the world. The results for Latin America are disheartening at best. According to an analysis done by the Education Sector of the IDB, the 10 nations of the region are on average 2.5 years of schooling behind the average for the OECD, with low rankings in

all three areas of mathematics, science and literacy. Brazilian students scored below average in all three areas of science, mathematics and literacy.
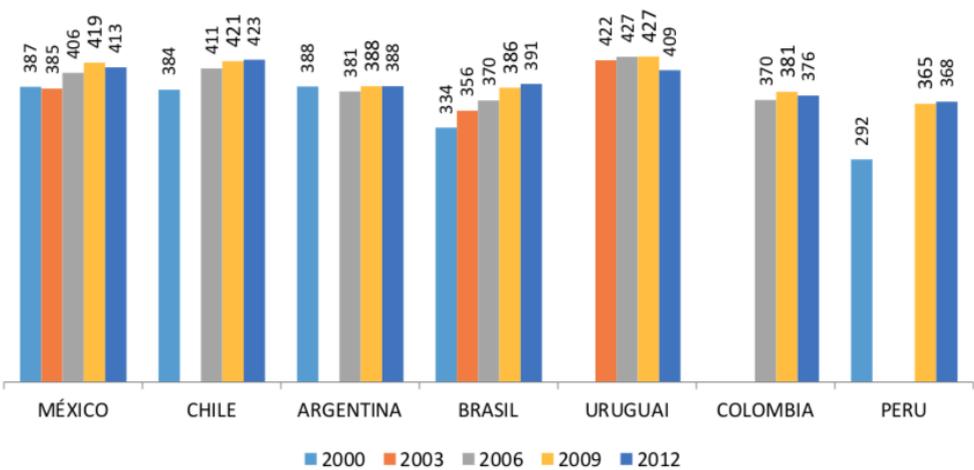
Average performance

The headline indicator for the three subject areas: science, mathematics and reading. Average performance refers to all 15-year-old students in a country/economy regardless of the school type and grade attended. Small differences between countries and over time may be statistically insignificant.

Science	Mathematics	Reading
Brazil	Brazil	Brazil
MIN ——●—— MAX	MIN —●—— MAX	MIN ——●—— MAX
2006 2015	2003 2015	2000 2015

Source: Education for All 2015 Brazil National Review

Brazil has participated in PISA since its first edition, and with the results obtained one can note the country's efforts to improve. For the sake of example, this report compares the results from Brazilian students with those achieved from other Latin American countries which participated in PISA throughout the period of 2000 to 2012.
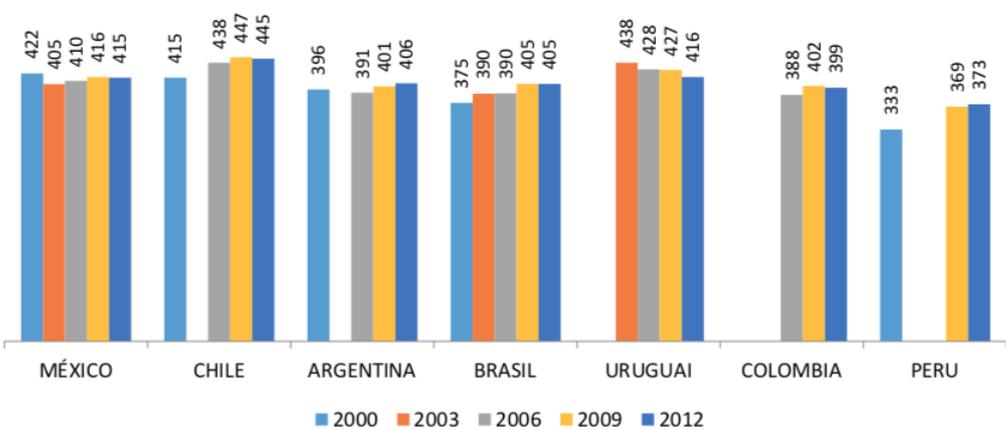
Figure 3: PISA Mathematics: Latin American Countries, 2000-2012

Source: Education for All 2015 Brazil National Review

Figure 3 displays the results of mathematics, showing that Brazil had the second largest growth in Latin America after Peru. Nonetheless, Brazil scores below countries such as Mexico, Chile and Uruguay.
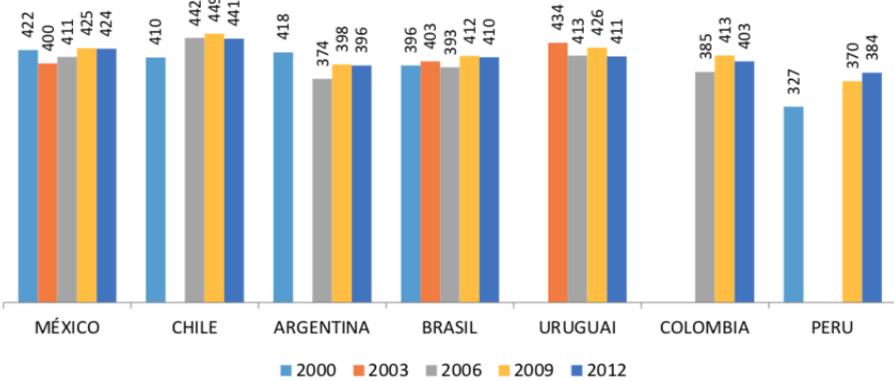
Figure 4: PISA Science: Latin American Countries, 2000-2012.

Once more we see Brazil's growing at a steady pace in the area of science.

Figure 5: PISA Literacy: Latin American Countries, 2000-2012.

Figure 5 - Reading in a historical series, demonstrates the country's 3.5% growth placing the country in 4th place in the ranking of growth for Latin American Countries.
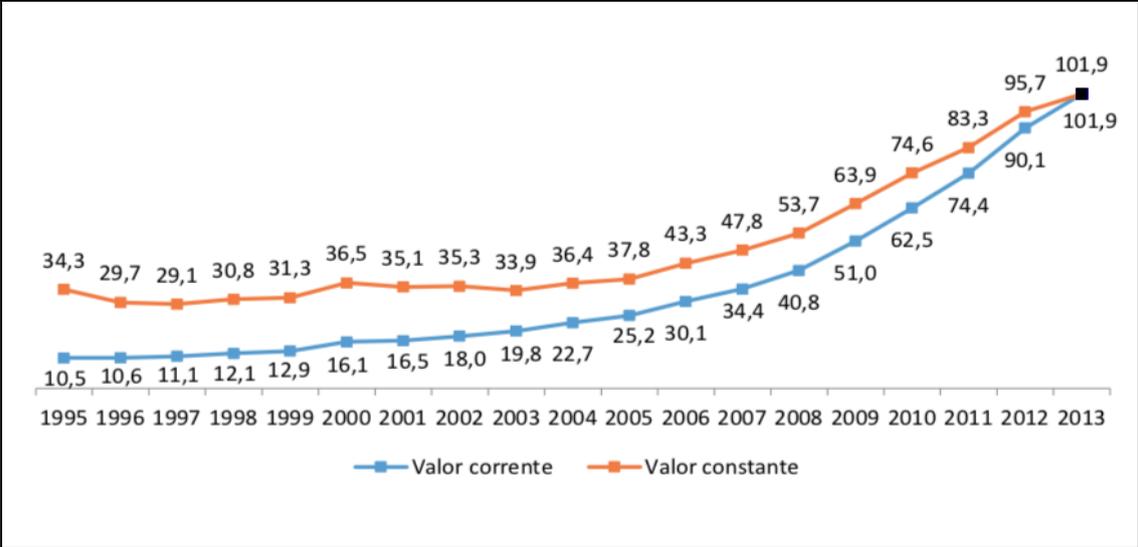
The results show that Brazil has displayed successive increases in its results, although these continue to be inferior to the averages of country members of its region and OECD.

Brazil improved since 2000, however, it still has not attained the level required to develop true quality in education. One must also consider that excellence in education cannot be dissociated from the attention to the peculiarities of human diversity. Hence, it is necessary to work with increasingly larger volumes of information on the relevant indexes of inclusion referring to populations historically excluded from education system, such as indigenous peoples, rural populations, *quilombolas*. This is a major challenge both for the government and society as a whole.

In relation to the results of the last PISA examination conducted in 2015; OECD spending on education has increased since 2012. However, Brazil still faces the challenge of translating the additional expenditure into better learning outcomes. Brazil's per capita GDP (USD 15,893) is less than half that of the OECD average (USD 39, 333). In Brazil, the cumulative expenditure per student between the ages of 6 and 15 (USD 38,190) corresponds to 42% of the average spending per student across OECD countries (USD 90,294), compared to 32% in 2012. Still, other low-spending countries, such as Colombia, Mexico and Uruguay, spend less per student than Brazil, while performing better in science. Chile, whose expenditure per student is similar to that of Brazil (USD 40,607), similarly scored higher in science (447 points).

Nonetheless, Figure 6 is an overview of financial indicators demonstrates that Brazil has advanced greatly with regard to public spending in education, which has allowed the country to increase its level of investment over the period between 2000 and 2013.

Figure 6: Ministry of Education Total Budget 1995-2013 (in Brazilian reals)

*Including FIES and Educational Salary.

Source: MEC (2014)

3.3.1 The Structure of Brazil's Educational System

Today, certain levels of education are compulsory for all children living in Brazil, while others, such as pre-school and upper secondary school, remain optional. The structure of the educational system in Brazil is as follow:

Table 1: Structure of the Brazilian Education System, Law 9,394/96

Level	Step		Duration	Age group
Higher Education	Higher Education		Variable	Above 18 years old
Basic Education	Secondary Education		3 years	15 – 17 years old
	Primary Education		9 years	6 – 14 years old
	Early Childhood Education	Preschool	2 years	4 – 5 years
		Child care	3 years	0 – 3 years

Source: LDB/1996

Pre-school education (*Educação Infantil*) is entirely optional, and for pre-schooled children there is a choice between: *Jardim* or *Maternal.* While the *Jardim* has a more academic focus for small children the *Maternal* is essentially a playground.

In Brazil, it is mandatory for children aged 6 to 14 to go to school. Children under the age of 6 may be enrolled as long as they turn 6 within the first semester. The nine years of compulsory education are known as Fundamental Education (*Ensino Fundamental*) and they are divided into two levels: *Ensino Fundamental I* or *Ensino Fundamental II.* Children study Portuguese, mathematics, science, arts, history, geography and physical education during *Ensino Fundamental I.* During *Ensino Fundamental II*, students learn the same, in addition to at least one other compulsory language. Note that the Educational Council sets a core curriculum and there is a normal practice in Brazilian schools (both public and private) to mix all levels together in one class. Under this system an exam is delivered to all pupils at the end of each year to conclude whether the pupil will move on to the next year or whether they will be held back to repeat the same year. As it is not uncommon to hold a child back, the age mixture of the classes is often varied. However, if the school becomes aware that a pupil is not academically exceeding usually the school will speak to the parents and at times involve other academic systems, such as an after-school study programme.

Following this elementary phase, teenagers (aged 15 to 18) have the option to progress to secondary education (*Ensino Médio*). As well the core curriculum subjects studied during *Ensino Fundamental*, students will also study philosophy and sociology. The

courses provided during this period are essentially designed to allow a young person to enter university. The courses can be directed at the private school the child has been attending up until this point, or at specific colleges that train young people to take the specific entrance exam set by a specific university. Students can also choose to take professional training at the same time.

Once a student has successfully completed secondary education, they may continue their studies at a public or private university. To enter a public university, students must sit an entrance exam, known as *Vestibular*. Entrance exams to a private university are often little more than a formality and, consequently, public university degrees are valued much more highly than those from private institutions.

3.3.2 Higher Education in Brazil

The Brazilian Ministry of Education defines, for the purpose of statistical records, that higher education institutions are classified as follows: Public (federal, state and municipal); or Private (community, confessional, philanthropic and private). Such classifications of institutions are determined by the means with which they are financed.

Table 2: Number of institutions of higher education, by academic organisation and administrative category

Ano	Total	Instituições							
		Universidade		Centro Universitário		Faculdade		IF e Cefet	
		Pública	Privada	Pública	Privada	Pública	Privada	Pública	Privada
2016	**2.407**	108	89	10	156	138	1.866	40	a

Source: MEC (2016)

Among countries with the same level of economic and social development, Brazil is particularly noteworthy for its highly complex and well-developed higher education system, especially its public universities. However, access to this system has traditionally been limited to those who had managed to pass through the basic education tunnel, mainly beneficial to the middle and upper classes. It was Fernando Henrique Cardoso's administration (1995-2002) who gave careful attention to the restructuring of higher education policies, bearing in mind the challenges of the Brazilian society. However, one can also admire Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva's administration (2003-2011) for further reinforcing educational policies.

The higher education system of Brazil is composed by 87.7% private institutions and only 12.3% public (4.45% Federal, 5.11% States and 2.74% Municipality). The Higher Education Institutions (**IES**- Portuguese acronym) are organised as universities (complex and complete institutions, which teach, extend, research and postgraduate, in

general involving many knowledge sectors, now specialised universities are admitted in an area), university centres (without obligation to do research), and faculties (colleges).

Figure 7: Percentage of Higher Education Institutions

The predominant issue within Brazil's higher education system is inequality, which also characterises the country's income distribution with its high Gini coefficient of 51.3% (World Bank Data, 2015), despite Brazil being an upper middle-income economy. The majority of the best universities are publicly funded, but the public sector in higher education in Brazil contributed only 12.3% in 2016, since the entrance to these public universities is based on the highly competitive *Vestibular* examination, therefore excluding graduates from secondary schools of lower quality or those without attending an expensive preparatory course known as *pré-vestibular*, which is largely dependent on the socio-economic backgrounds of the students.

As a result, to meet the excessive demand of higher education in Brazil, the country has witnessed the dramatic growth of the for-profit sector, which has offered the mass or lower socio-economic group additional alternatives to public and not-for-profit private universities. It is ironic that in Brazil, majority of those going to the public universities for free and enjoying public benefits are the ones having attended expensive private basic education, while majority of those ending up in private fee-paying institutions are the ones having gone through the public basic education of poorer quality.

Moreover, in terms of type of higher education provision, most of the public institutions are universities, while most of the for-profit private institutions fall in the type of single faculty non-universities. Within the private sector, inequalities are reproduced, by means of quality of education and consequent value of diploma in the labour market, in proportion to the amount they can spend on tuition, which means the poorer and, in

more need, receives the worse. In fact, the expansion in higher education in Brazil mainly occurs in the for-profit sectors, catering to the students from middle and lower income families, which means that the overall higher education expansion in Brazil is an inequitable one. Where does that leave the black population?

3.4 The Barriers

During the engagement with professors and students, I posed the following question: What are the barriers that the black population face to enter university? The majority answered two things; social inequality and racism. Despite Brazil's progressive constitution, concerns with human rights and social inequalities based on race are still a problem within the country. Brazil's black population still fights to guarantee its basic rights. As professor Dr. Rosana Rodrigues Heringer stated in our interview "We have huge social and racial inequality in Brazil. The majority of black people are amongst the poorest. You also have poor white people, but not in the same proportion" (R. Heringer, interview with de author). In relation to education, this inequality is seen after the first years of education when the drop-out rate of black people begins to rise higher and higher due to poverty (as these young people need to work to provide for themselves and family).

Furthermore, black students of lower social class, have no option but to attend public school, since private schooling is very expensive. As stated by professor Heringer "the quality of schools they [poor, black population] have access to are of poor quality" (R. Heringer, interview with de author) thus, the opportunities for these black students are scarce. Furthermore, in my questioner I stated: Blacks feel discriminated at some point of their basic education. 75% of students answered strongly agree, while 20% answered partially agreed and only 5% disagreed.

In relation to racism, professor Heringer states "There are still many people in Brazil, in our society, that think there is no racism; that the only problem is poverty. Blacks are discriminated not for being black but for being poor" (R. Heringer, interview with de author). The idea of Brazil being a racial democracy is still pendent within the country. However, I strongly believe that the years of colonialism, slavery, and whitening led to the marginalization as well as the implementation of a disadvantage social position of the blacks in Brazil. With the historical theories against the black population and the historical context I have provided, I believe it is unjust to refer to Brazil today (or at any historical period) as a racial democracy.

It was not until 2003, that Law 10.639 was enacted in Brazil, in effect making the teaching of Afro-Brazilian and African history and culture in public and private schools compulsory. The effects of this law go beyond education, as it addresses and questions the commitment of the government in building and implementing an anti-racist agenda

in Brazil. Law 10.639 should further the discussions and debates concerning issues such as racism in Brazil, discrimination, negritude, identity, and the idea of race. However, in most cases this does not happen. History teacher Maria Fernanda Muller stated: "Modules related to African history and teaching are not compulsory at universities".[20] Educators in Brazil are not prepared to teach Afro-Brazilian and African history, much less discuss issues of racism and identity in a classroom. History teacher Isabella Menezes Trindade further expressed: "Most of the teachers I have worked with do not know this law, much less are prepared to have a debate based on it"[21] (I. Trindade, interview with de author).

In my questioner I affirmed, "the Brazilian educational system is effective in terms of constructing students' identity" to which 70% of the students answered strongly disagree while 20% answered somewhat disagree (10% neither agree nor disagree = 100% total). Brazil's educational system is not successful in constructing identity awareness for half its population, which becomes a barrier. Professor Dr. Amilcar Araujo Pereira argued how the curriculum in itself is a major issue. In schools, students are taught through European curriculums, as if, the formation of the Brazilian nation and its society was to come only with the contribution of Europe. In relation to the curriculums and the teaching methods approached in schools, Dr. Araujo Pereira states:

> The lack of representation of the black and indigenous population alongside the knowledge worked in schools, potentiates feelings of inferiority in this population [the black population] that they themselves cannot recognise. Since they are not represented in the educational process, they do not identify themselves within the system thus they have difficulty staying both in school and in university. On the other hand, the lighter skin population that is understood as white continually recognises itself in school. This potentiates building feelings of superiority; thus, one is building and nurturing racism, [racism] that is much greater than the one which occurs between interpersonal relations; between two people, as this becomes something structured in society (A. Pereira, interview with de author).[22]

Thus, the educational system does not represent its black population, and this becomes a barrier for the black population.

In Brazil, racial quotas gained traction since the 2000s, when universities and public agencies began to adopt such a measure in entrance exams and competitions. Universidade do Estado do Rio de Janeiro (**UERJ**) was the first educational institution in Brazil to adopt the system of racial quotas in 2003, through a state law approved in 2001. Figure 8, demonstrates a huge increase in black students attending higher education. In 2001 adding to only 10.2% while in 2011 to 35.8%.

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[20] Own translation.
[21] Own translation.
[22] Own translation.

Figure 8: Students age 18 to 24, by level of education attended, according to the color or race – Brazil 2001/2011

Nonetheless, Law 12.711 sanctioned in 2012 went further. As I have mentioned in the previous chapter, this law reserves 50% of the places at federal universities for students who attended a public school for the whole of their high school years. For federal technical institutions at the intermediate level, 50% of the spaces must be occupied by students who attended elementary and middle school at a public institution. Students from low-income families are entitled to occupy 50% of both types of vacancies (i.e., 50% of the 50% quotas for universities and technical institutions).

As it is known, Brazil experienced a parliamentary coup against the PT party (Workers Party) and President Dilma Rousseff in April of 2016, leading Vice- President Michel Temer of the PMDB (Democratic Party) stepping in as acting president. Today, Brazil is experiencing a severe economic, political, social, and environmental crisis which has had a huge effect on the educational system.

The educational reforms that are being imposed on Brazilian society by the current interim government of Temer, deepen privatisation trends historically present in Brazilian public education. The current regime appears to advocate for the expansion of the actions of private companies increasingly associated with the interests of financial capital International. Furthermore, to pay for the country's budget deficits, Temer's government made huge cuts in the educational budget "leaving teachers with no pay, and scholarship holders with no scholarship" (R. Heringer, Interview with de author).

Brazilians began to fear the possibility of a new neo-liberal cycle in the country. This has led to protests nationwide, as well as occupation of schools as a form of protest against the government. Furthermore, it has led to various strikes in faculties and universities

lasting months. The current situation of the country has become a barrier for the black population who have entered university via the racial quota scheme as their scholarships have been rescinded.

CONCLUSION

The word 'identity' in Brazil carries different meanings. Identity is a concept that may not simply be reduced to the colour or the pigmentation of the one's skin, nor the biological characteristics. According to Freyre, the Brazilian national identity is an identity shared by practically all Brazilians, and has its roots in racial mixing.

In Brazil, identity is always linked to cultural, historical, political and/or economic factors. During my fieldwork, I came across people whom I would personally classify as white but they considered themselves black, and via versa. Subsequently, I began to notice the importance based on the social class in relation to one's identity. College students with whom I talked with from private universities tended to classify themselves as *pardos* or *morenos,* while the majority of students from federal universities would label themselves as *negros* or *pretos.* One student of the UFRJ, brought to my attention that each word has a different interpretation. This student in particular discussed how Brazil constantly goes through changes, and today more and more people identify themselves as *negros* and *pretos* as a form of empowerment. This empowerment movement started from the Black Movement, which is being fortified in several sectors, especially the education sector.

Moreover, in 2003 the government of Lula da Silva legislated Law 10.639, in which it declared in Art. 26-A: the establishment of primary and secondary education, official and private, the teaching on Afro-Brazilian History and Culture becomes obligatory. Lula's government 'officially' discarded the image of racial democracy from the repertoire of national symbolism, and encouraged, through policies, the construction of racial identities. However, when I asked students if the Brazilian education system is effective in the construction of the identity of the students most students answered with a 1 (strongly disagree). Most of my respondents explained to me that their experiences of Afro-Brazilian History and Culture did not teach them much about their identities. As I have mentioned prior, it is not compulsory to study African history and culture at university, thus teachers and educators are not prepared when teaching about such a subject. This begs the question, is it any good passing laws if these laws are not receiving practical implementation?

In the 1930s and 1940s, both the intelligentsia and the general population of Brazil came to share the idea that many centuries of racial mixing had made this nation a unique region free of racial conflicts. Brazil's self-image was that of a country where citizens of all colours lived in harmony and benefited equally from opportunities for social mobility. The idea that Brazil is a 'racial democracy' started from that point. While there are

people (mostly conservatives) who still view Brazil as a racial democracy, most of the respondents confirmed that Brazil's black population suffer various forms of discrimination and racism in public sectors, especially within the education system.

Education and poverty go hand in hand. Brazil is well known for its high inequality and poverty levels even by Latin American standards. According to the main Brazilian household survey, the *Pesquisa Nacional por Amostra de Domicílios,* the mean per capita of Afro-Brazilians was only half that of whites. In Brazil, your social class determines the quality of education you receive. Most white children enrol into private schools, which have a much higher standard for education quality than public schools. Since most of the black population of Brazil receives less income, black students are forced to study at public schools.

There is a huge difference in quality between private a public schooling. Faced with the growth of non-university tertiary education of a private nature, respecting exceptions, not only the university, but even the entire system, has lost much of the meaning of education as a public good, necessarily of quality and social value. Walking around Rio de Janeiro, one cannot help but notice the great amount of billboards advertising schools. Good quality education has become a service that requires money. It is difficult for a student of low class to advance in education without educational policy support.

Today, affirmative action is a widely debated topic amongst Brazilians, especially those in the fields of academia and public policy. Both proponents and opponents of affirmative action use the concept of justice and fairness to defend their arguments, making it difficult to find a consensus. In Brazil, the question of whether or not the policy fairly addresses inequalities has been subject of numerous discussions. Heated debates provoked by academics discussed issues such as equality, equity, justice, exclusion, racism, discrimination and the legitimacy of any race based policy in the country. The debate on quotas in higher education has essentially forced people to recognise differences in ethnicity and race. On one side, affirmative action opponents argue that quotas are impossible to implement due to the difficulty in identifying who is black in Brazil and that it disproportionately considers minority interests. On the other side, affirmative action supporters argue that the policy should be maintained since it addresses discrimination in the country as well as being essential to modernise Brazilian society, as affirmative action in higher education is needed to increase educational opportunities so that minorities have the ability to improve both their social and economic condition. This controversy over affirmative action, particularly quotas, has manifested the on-going difficulty of addressing racial inequality in the country.

The racial quotas system has helped thousands of Afro-Brazilians throughout the city of Rio de Janeiro, and the country, access tertiary education. However, Brazil is facing a political crisis that is affecting all public sectors especially the education sector. With the new reforms introduced by president Michel Temer, huge protests and strikes are taking

place around the city of Rio. The budget cut on education spending has left many students with no scholarships. Despite a policy being implemented by government, it can easy be shattered by the next government in power. Although the racial quotas are helping students access tertiary education, there is not enough support to maintain these students within the system and the current political crisis is an important example of this.

Furthermore, the problem begins from the early stages of basic education, as mentioned by professor Rosana Rodrigues Heringer. Changes need to be made from the early stages of basic education if the country wishes to progress in the education field. The idea of race needs to be further discussed and not avoided would allow for a culture and society that does not discriminate half its population. It must be remembered that even with educational policies to facilitate access to education, most Afro-Brazilians will likely continue to face barriers, be it economic, cultural or social. After tertiary education, they are also forced to face discriminatory problems in the workplace. However, providing good basic education and access to education is the start in dismantling centuries of institutionalised discrimination.

Appendix 1: List of Interviewees				
Interviewee	Affiliation or Role	Discussed Topics	Place & Date	Duration
Prof. Amilcar Araújo Pereira	History Professor at Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro (UFRJ). Specialised in afro-Brazilian culture & history.	- Higher Education - Black Identity - Eurocentrism - Black Movement - Pubic Policies	UFRJ Praia Vermelha campus– Faculty of Education 11/12/17	35 minutes
Prof. Rosana Rodrigues Heringer	Sociologist and Professor at Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro (UFRJ). Specialised in racial inequality in education & social discrimination.	- Higher Education - Identity - Public Policies - Social discrimination - University life	UFF – Block D. 18/12/17	50 minutes
Isabella Trindade Menezes	Secondary School History Educator. Specialised in modernisation and identity.	- Black Identity - Racial Democracy - Public Policies & Educational Laws - Black Movement - Discrimination at the work place	Isabella's Home – Tijuca (Rio de Janeiro) 18/12/17	40 minutes

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