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## **The Discourse of the Unified Black Movement in Brazil**

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### **Introduction**

On Sunday, June 18<sup>th</sup>, 1978, several black organizations in São Paulo, Brazil, met to protest against the death, in the local police precinct of Guianases, of Robson Silveira da Luz, a black worker, after having been arrested and accused of having stolen a box of fruit in the local market. They also protested against the discrimination of a group of black adolescents by the sport club Regatas do Tietê, and the assassination of worker Nilton Lourenço by the Military Police in the local Lapa neighbourhood. After meeting for two years with black organizations in Rio, these events were the catalyst of the foundation of the *Movimento Unificado Contra Discriminação Racial* (MUCDR).

The first act of the new movement was a demonstration on July 7<sup>th</sup>, 1978, on the steps of the Municipal Theatre in São Paulo. More than 2000 (mostly black but also white) people participated in the demonstration, despite the Military Dictatorship. Among the participants were prominent black leaders Lélia González and Abdias do Nascimento (for detail, see Gonzalez & Hasenbalg, 1982).

Prominent newspaper *Folha de São Paulo* the next day published a photograph of the demonstration and a text with the headline “Negros Protestam em Praça Publica”.

## Negros protestam em praça pública



aloud during the demonstration

During the demonstration 5000 copies of a letter were distributed, the first public text of the new movement. Some passages of the letter were read

In this paper I analyze this letter and other texts of the newly founded black movement, which was soon renamed as the *Movimento Unificado Negro Contra Discriminação Racial* (MUCDR), and a year later finally as the *Movimento Negro Unificado* (MNU). The analysis is part of two larger projects, one on the history of antiracist discourse in Brazil (Van Dijk, 2021), and the other on the discourse of social movements.

## Political Context and Historical Antecedents

*The Movimento Negro Unificado* was not the first black organization in Brazil. Though generally marginalized and discriminated after the (late) abolition of slavery in Brazil in 1888, the next decades saw the emergence of many local clubs, newspapers and other organizations of black intellectuals (for detail, see Alberto, 2011; Domingues, 2007).

In 1931, internationally celebrated poet Arlindo Veiga dos Santos founded the *Frente Negra Brasileira* (FNB), later to become the first black political party, especially active in the movement to desegregate public places and providing services for its members (Domingues, 2008).

In 1943 the *União dos Homens de Cor* (UHC) was founded by João Cabral Alves in Porto Alegre, also with the aim to combat racism and to defend the interests of black people (Silva, 2003).

A year later, Abdias do Nascimento founded the *Teatro Experimental do Negro* (TEN), which not only mounted many theatre pieces, but also was politically active, including the creation of an association of domestic workers and a national Council of

Black Women. Its newspaper *Quilombo* protested against racial discrimination (Do Nascimento, 2004; Munanga, 2016).

## **Theoretical Framework**

The theoretical framework of this paper is multidisciplinary. It combines notions and methods of Critical Discourse Studies (CDS) with theories of racism, antiracism and social movements in the social sciences and concepts of cognitive and social psychology.

Critical Discourse Studies emerged in the field of Discourse Studies at the end of the 1970s within the new paradigm of Critical Linguistics (Fowler, et al, 1979). This research showed that some grammatical structures, such as actives, passives and nominalizations, may exhibit ideologically biased strategies of hiding the agents (such as the police) of negative actions. These ideas were further developed in a broader discourse analytical framework, which showed that many other discourse structures may (de)emphasize the ideologies of ingroups and outgroups (Fairclough, 1989; De Melo Resende & Ramalho, 2006; Van Dijk, 2008; Wodak, 1989). Within this new framework of CDS my own work focused on the analysis of racist discourse in politics, the media and education (e.g. Van Dijk, 1991, 1993).

But CDS not only is about the role of discourse in the (re) production of power and power abuse, but also contributes to the study of the discursive resistance against such domination, for instance by social movements such as antiracism and feminism. It is within this new perspective that I studied the theory, history and analysis of antiracist discourse in Europe, the USA and Brazil (Van Dijk, 2021a, 2021b). These studies not only contribute to the discursive approach to antiracism, but also are formulated within a new multidisciplinary paradigm of social movement studies, focusing especially on discourse and cognition, two fundamental dimensions largely ignored in the sociology of social movements (as represented in for instance Della Porta & Diani, 2015)

These various developments in the humanities and social sciences not only relate the study of discourse with theories and analyses of social structures of domination and resistance. Generally lacking both in CDS and in the study of (anti)racism and social movements, also the crucial cognitive aspects of discourse, interaction and society need explicit formulation, as is the case for the role of knowledge, attitudes and ideologies.

Thus, domination is not just social or political, but also cognitive, as is the case in many forms of manipulation and other forms of mind control (see, e.g., Passy & Monsch, 2020).

Within this multidisciplinary framework, the analysis of the discourse of the *Movimento Negro Unificado* (MNU) contributes both to our insights in racism and antiracism, especially in Brazil, but also to the analysis of the discursive and cognitive aspects of social movements (for a social movement approach to the MNU, see, e.g. Santos Leitão, 2012).

## **Studies on the Movimento Negro Unificado**

In its more than 40 years of existence, the MNU also has been studied in many academic publications, only some can be very briefly reviewed here (for the interest of the MNU in the social sciences, see Mateus Rios, 2009).

Unfortunately, few international books on the MNU have been published. Covin (2006) describes the foundation of the movement, as part of a study of racialized societies (also in the USA) and the changing context of Brazil after the military dictatorship, and also cites some of the texts studied below. After a “micro-history of race in Brazil” he examines independent black organizations, the cultural, religious, gendered and political spheres of the 60s and 70s as a context for the foundation of the MNU (then still the MUDCR), as summarized above and dealt with in more detail below, and the following meetings and congresses in São Paulo and other cities. After the detailed history and the activities of the movement, Covin also examines the ideas, theories, analyses as well as the organization of the MNU in the next 20 years, including its major leaders and protagonists.

Another interesting book-length study is the recent PhD thesis of Ramos (2021) who provides a systematic study of the struggle of the MNU against police violence, from the assassination of Robson Silveira da Luz that started the foundation of the MNU in 1978, until the assassination of Marielle Franco in 2018. One of the interesting features of the thesis is the inclusion of unique documents of the movement.

Another interesting PhD dissertation on the MNU is Araújo Pereira (2010) that provides a detailed history of the first 20 years of the movement and an oral history of its most important black leaders in Brazil and the USA within a broader framework of

the analysis of race in Europe and the USA. For interviews with MNU leaders, see also Alberti & Araújo Pereira (2005).

Within our broader project on the role of social movement discourse, finally, Santos Leitão (2012) provides a characteristic SM approach to the black movement, in terms of the notion of political opportunities, by analyzing the relation of the black movement with institutional politics. His thesis is that there is not always an opposition between social movements and official politics. There is even increasing institutionalization of the movement, e.g., through the participation of black leaders in the political process (see also Mateus Rios, 2008).

## **Methodology**

Social movement discourse, in general, and the discourse of the MNU, in particular, may be (and has been) analyzed by many methods of discourse studies, including those of grammar, semantics, pragmatics, stylistics, rhetoric and the analysis of narrative and argumentation, among other. However, this does not mean that any method is *relevant* for our insight in social movements of resistance such as the MNU.

Hence, in our analysis of MNU discourse I'll focus on those structures, at various levels, that play a special role in the expression of the social cognition underlying antiracist resistance, on the one hand, and that can be defined as part of the very social practices that define such resistance.

For instance, antiracist resistance presupposes knowledge about prevalent forms of everyday and systemic racism in society, and such knowledge is expressed and presupposed at many levels of discourse. The same is true for antiracist ideology, typically expressed in polarized ingroup-outgroup (Us, vs. THEM) structures of text and talk. At the same time, such discourse is one of the practices of antiracist resistance, for instance in demonstrations, manifestos, interviews, storytelling, meetings, and so on. The letter distributed during the first demonstration of the MNU in July 1978 is an example of one of such discourses of resistance.

## Corpus

The corpus used for the analyses in this paper consist of

- (i) The first text of the recent foundation of the MNU of June 1978, calling for a manifestation on July 7, which could also be read as a Manifesto.
- (ii) The seminal letter distributed by the members of the MNU in São Paulo on July 7, 1978.
- (iii) A 1988 text *Basta de Racismo* published *Nêgo*, the journal of the MNU
- (iv) The 1990 Action Program
- (v) A more recent editorial (2014) in the Journal of the MNU.

## Analysis

### *The 1978 Call of the MNU*

#### *Context*

Important part of explicit discourse analysis is a systematic analysis of the communicative context, which is part of a broader sociopolitical context. Part of this communicative context of the first text of the MNU, the call for a demonstration on July 7, as well as a foundational text or Manifesto, are the following categories (see Van Dijk, 2008, 2009):

- *Time* (June 18, 1978),
- *Place* (Centro de Cultura e Arte Negra, CECAN, founded in 1971)
- *Participants* (Black Organizations),
  - *Roles: Authors of the Call*
- *Action*: Call for a Demonstration; Foundation of a Movement
- *Goals*: To invite for a demonstration
- *Knowledge* of the participants: about discrimination and racism in Brazil
- *Ideology*: Antiracism

Theoretically, this communicative situation as such is unable to influence the discourse(s) of the call, because a sociopolitical or communicative situation has other structures than discourse. This means that we need a cognitive interface linking (subjective) mental representations of the foundational meeting in the form of context models (Van Dijk, 2008, 2009), with the underlying cognitive structures of the discourse, such as its lexical or topical meanings. The expression of these categories of the communicative situation, as represented in the context models of the authors, is shown in the many *indexical expressions* of the Call:

Nós, Entidades Negras (Participants, Authors)  
Centro de Cultura e Arte Negra (Place)  
18 de Junho (Date)

The indexical expression *Nós, Entidades Negras*, expresses who are the responsible authors of the Call, which was signed by representatives of the following named organizations:

Câmara de Comércio Afro-Brasileira, Centro de Arte e Cultura Negra, Associação Recreativa Brasil Jovem, Afrolatino América, Associação, Casa de Arte e Cultura Afro-Brasileira, Associação Cristã Beneficente, do Brasil, Jornegro, Jornal Abertura, Jornal Capoeira, Company Soul, Zimbabwe Soul.

The editors of the book that published the Manifesto a few years later, Lélia Gonzales and Carlos Hasenbalg (1982), two prominent antiracist scholars and activists, add that during the next meetings, the first organization (Câmara de Comércio Afro-Brasileira) withdraw from the initiative, and the second (Centro de Arte e Cultura Negra, CECAN) started to fear repression by the military dictatorship. Some CECAN members got organized as a *Centro de Luta Decisão* and advanced the idea of a public act, in which also other black organizations participated. Contact was established with groups in Rio de Janeiro, where Abdias do Nascimento had just arrived from abroad (for detail, see also Covin, 2006).

### *The Text of the Call*

After this brief summary of the sociopolitical and communicative contexts of the first text and call of the MNU, let us examine some of its relevant discourse structures. The text opens as follows:

- (1) Nós, Entidades Negras, reunidas no Centro de Cultura e Arte Negra no dia 18 de Junho, resolvemos criar um Movimento no sentido de defender a Comunidade Afro-Brasileira contra a secular exploração racial e desrespeito humano a que a Comunidade é submetida.

The indexical expression *Nós, Entidades Negras*, not only contextually refers to the authors of the current discourse as a Call, but also to the actors of the (new) social movement, and specifically a *black* social movement. Similarly, the time and place indexicals (*18 de Junho* and *Centro de Cultura e Arte Negra*) of the text are also the spatiotemporal coordinates of the foundation of the movement, as well as the place where the movement met first as movement (*reunidos*). The cognitive and discursive dimension of this first act is summarized by the verb *resolvemos*, which implies a dialogue among the participants, a dialogue of which unfortunately we don't have a recording. *Criar um Movimento* similarly indexes and summarizes the aim of the meeting, and the rest of the sentence (*defender...*) the aim of the movement. Thus, the pragmatic, contextual analysis of the indexical expressions of this paragraph coincides with the fundamental parameters of the foundation of a new social movement, such as its founders, actors, the time, place and aims of the movement. Moreover, not only the aim of the movement is an act of defence, but a defence of a community, and more specifically of an afro-Brazilian community, which defines the movement as an antiracist movement. Finally, also the negative situation that gave rise to the movement, namely *secular exploração racial e desrespeito humano*, is made explicit, also specifically defining the movement as an antiracist movement. The opponents of the movement remain implicit in the nominalizations *exploração racial* and *desrespeito*, namely white racists. This is interesting and consistent with the publications of black organizations and journals in the early 1900s, which on the one hand condemned and struggled against prejudice, discrimination and racism, but on the other hand did not want to antagonize white people (Alberto, 2011). At the same time, the current meeting and discourse took place in the middle of the Military Dictatorship, whose denial of racism was fundamental. The use of the adjective *secular* is both a semantic and a rhetorical enhancement of the reference to the oppression of the black community – namely that it has taken place for centuries, a well-known topos of the history of antiracist discourse in Brazil (Van Dijk, 2021b) and of the discourse of the MNU (Da Silva, 2007). The next paragraph elaborates this aspect of the movement:



- (2) Não podemos mais calar. A discriminação racial é um fato marcante na sociedade brasileira, que barra o desenvolvimento da Comunidade Afro-Brasileira, destrói a alma do homem negro e sua capacidade de realização como ser humano.

The first brief sentence of this paragraph presupposes that the founding actors of the movement and the authors of this text have been silent and implies that they now are speaking up, another indexical expression referring to the very act of the ongoing discourse, central part of the communicative situation. The reference to racial discrimination both with a definite expression and qualified as a fact, and emphasized as *marcante* (prominent), epistemically establishes such discrimination as presupposed and hence as another indexical expression referring to a crucial aspect of the communicative context: the *knowledge* of the authors and founding actors of the new movement about the situation in Brazil, and the main reason of the very foundation of the movement.

The rest of the sentence adds another topos of the history of black social movement discourse in Brazil, namely the description of the consequences of racial discrimination, as blocking the development of the black community and black people, here described in the metonymical literary expression (the *soul* of black folk) and still in terms of the generic *black man* – an expression which later will be amplified to refer also to black women (see also Dallalana Quitans, 2015). The definite reference *sua capacidade* presupposes that the authors do believe that black people do have such abilities.

We see that all structures of this paragraph are relevant as defining parameters of a (black) social movement, namely its decision to stop being silent, to speak up, to protest against racism, as the very cause of the movement and the perceived consequence of racism, all part of the knowledge of the authors and founders about the social situation in Brazil.

Only in the third paragraph the call actually provides the name as the new movement, again with its aim:

- (3) *O Movimento Unificado Contra a Discriminação Racial* foi criado para que os direitos dos homens negros sejam respeitados. Como primeira atividade, este Movimento realizará um Ato Público contra o Racismo, no dia 07 de Julho às 18:30 horas, no Viaduto do Chá. Seu objetivo será protestar contra os últimos acontecimentos discriminatórios contra negros, amplamente divulgados pela Imprensa.

A crucial term in the formulation of the aims of the movement is that of *direitos*, consistent with that of the Civil Rights Movement in the USA, which was a major

inspiration of the MNU and the resistance of blacks in Brazil. Again, we may observe the use of *homens negros*, quite typical for the period, despite the activities of many women in the MNU. The same paragraph also announces the first activity of the new movement, a protest demonstration, with its Aim (*contra o Racismo*), time and place, as well as more specific aim of the demonstration, summarizing some of the events mentioned above – the death of various black men. We see that also the meaning of this paragraph is completely defined by the properties and activities of the movement: its name, aim, announcement of a protest demonstration and the aim of the demonstration. That the protest demonstration not only in general will be against racism, but also will protest against recent events of police violence, shows that the movement is directly relevant for ongoing experiences of the black community, events described in the next paragraph:

- (4) No dia 28 de Abril, numa delegacia de Guaianazes, mais um negro foi morto por causa das torturas policiais. Este negro era Robson Silveira da Luz, trabalhador, casado e pai de filhos. No Clube de Regatas Tietê, quatro garotos foram barrados do time infantil de voleibol pelo fato de serem negros. O diretor do Clube deu entrevistas nas quais afirma as suas atitudes racistas, tal a confiança de que não será punido por seu ato.

The last sentence of this event description is interesting because it laconically highlights the common experience of the black community, namely that forms of everyday discrimination and racism are not usually punished. The next paragraph elaborates on this topic:

- (5) Nós também sabemos que os processos desses casos não darão em nada. Como todos os outros casos de discriminação racial, serão apenas mais dois processos abafados e arquivados pelas autoridades deste país, embora um dos casos tenha a agravante da tortura e consequente morte de um cidadão.

This paragraph starts with a crucial epistemic modality, indexing the knowledge of the movement and the black community, knowledge that usually is presupposed or implied, but made explicit here, and an important cognitive condition of resistance. The comparison and generalization (*como todos os outros casos*) emphasize that such knowledge is not ad hoc, on just a few current cases, but is generic, and socially shared by the movement and the black community. Again, such knowledge and experience is internationally known especially because of police impunity in the USA for killing black people – and hence may be defined as international knowledge of black

resistance. Those responsible for the impunity are vaguely but explicitly mentioned (*pelas autoridades*), thus also providing an actor as opponent of the new movement. Note also the formal, legal style of the document when it speaks of the *agravante da tortura*, emphasizing the killing and its obvious intentionality – this was no accident or just bad policing.

- (6) Mas o Ato Público Contra o Racismo marcará fundo nosso repúdio e convidamos a todos os setores democráticos que lutam contra o desrespeito e as injustiças aos direitos humanos, a engrossarem fileiras com a Comunidade Afro-Brasileira nesse ato contra o racismo.

This paragraph adds another fundamental dimension to the description of the movements, its motivation, its aims, and knowledge: its opinions and emotions, defined here as strong rejection (*repudio*). At the same time, the actual act of this call is explicitly formulated when all democratic people are called to join the protest event. This adds a further dimension to the social movement text: the general public and especially those solidary with the movement and the demonstrations, and another formulation of the aims of the protest: *contra o desrespeito e as injustiças aos direitos humanos*, again featuring the crucial notion of rights, this time more generally as human rights, and the general aim of the movement as an antiracist movement.

Though all democratic people are called to participate, the call more specifically addresses black entities in the country:

- (7) Fazemos um convite especial a todas as entidades negras do país, a ampliarem nosso movimento. As entidades negras devem desempenhar o seu papel histórico em defesa da Comunidade Afro-Brasileira; e, lembramos, quem silencia consente.

In this case, not just as part of the (local) protest demonstration, but to join a national movement – another dimension in the indexical structure of the document as referring to the fundamental parameters of the communicative and social situation. Adding *histórico* to the role of black entities, further extends the call not only nationally but also in time, historically. The final proverb (*quem silencia consente*) is a strong argument, if not a warning, for those who don't speak up.

- (8) Não podemos mais aceitar as condições em que vive o homem negro, sendo discriminado da vida social do país, vivendo no desemprego, subemprego e nas favelas. Não podemos mais consentir que o negro sofra as perseguições constantes da polícia, sem dar uma resposta.

In this final paragraph, we first find the presupposition that the black movement so far accepted the conditions of the black community, marking this text and the movement as the beginning of a new movement and as new phase of resistance against the sequence of form of discrimination, un- and under-employment in the favelas – a call still relevant more than 40 years later – as is also the case for the new protest against police violence. The slogans at the end of the text, summarize the main aim of the movement as well as the public demonstration:

- (9) TODOS AO ATO PÚBLICO CONTRA O RACISMO  
CONTRA A DISCRIMINAÇÃO RACIAL  
CONTRA A OPRESSÃO POLICIAL PELO FORTALECIMENTO E UNIÃO DAS  
ENTIDADES AFRO-BRASILEIRAS

We have seen that this first text of the MNU combines all features of a manifesto of the new movements (its name, foundation, aims, motivation, enemies, relevant recent events, etc) and of a call for a demonstration.

### ***The Open Letter***

During the demonstration on the steps of the theatre in São Paulo, called by the document analyzed above, a public letter was read and distributed among the 2000 participants of the demonstration. Let us examine also some of the properties of this letter, another genre of social movements, especially when addressed at members of a movement of, precisely, the authorities.

### ***The Communicative Context***

As we did above, let us begin with a brief analysis of the communicative context of the letter, this time in a more schematic format (for the communicative strategies of the MNU, see Gonçalves de Oliveira, 2015):

- *Time* (July 7, 1978),
- *Place* (in front of the Municipal Theatre in São Paulo, an impressive classical building, construed in 1911, modelled after the Palais Garnier – the Opéra – of Paris)
- *Participants* (members of the MNU) and their various identities (black leaders) and roles (demonstrators, speakers) and members of the public in their role of recipients of the letter, both a read aloud, and as paper distributed.
- *Action*: a demonstration and forms of communication
- *Goals*: To show the foundation of the MNU
- *Knowledge* of the participants: about discrimination and racism in Brazil
- *Ideology*: Antiracism

Because the communicative context of the letter overlaps with the sociopolitical context of the demonstration, its analysis at the same time indexes the structure of an activity of a social movement.

### *The Letter*

Here is the beginning of the letter:

- (10)
- Contra o Racismo
  - Hoje estamos na rua numa campanha de denúncia!
  - Campanha contra a discriminação racial, contra a opressão policial, contra o desemprego, o subemprego e a marginalização.
  - Estamos nas ruas para denunciar as péssimas condições de vida da Comunidade Negra.
  - Hoje é um dia histórico. Um novo dia começa a surgir para o negro!
  - Estamos saindo das salas de reuniões, das salas de conferências e estamos indo para as ruas. Um novo passo foi dado na luta contra o racismo.
  - Os racistas do Clube de Regatas Tietê que se cubram, pois exigiremos justiça.
  - Os assassinos de negros que se cuidem, pois a eles também exigiremos Justiça!

The first line has various functions. It is a title and header and thus summarizes the overall aim of the demonstration as well as of the new movement, focusing on what defines an antiracist movement, at the same time presupposing the very existence of racism.

Line 10(b) provides the ingroup deixis (*estamos*) and the spatiotemporal indexicals of the very letter and the occasion of its distribution: a protest demonstration and categorizes the social movement activity being accomplished with the public act,

and the letter: a protest campaign – presupposing a negative act herewith being denounced.

Line 10(c) elaborates the aim of the demonstration as well as the movements, explicating the general antiracist objectives – also defining the act of resistance against the major forms of racism: discrimination, police brutality, un/subemployment and marginalization. As is the case in the call for the protest demonstration, also the letter, read aloud in the square, and distributed in the neighbourhood, needs to define in a few keywords what the movements stands for – and against—as it is relevant for the black community.

In the next line, the person and place deixis are repeated to address and emphasize the organizers, the participants and the public nature of the movement and its activities and protest – now more generally against the negative life conditions of the black movements, and not just against discrimination, police brutality etc. – and hence relevant for all members of the black community.

Line 10(e) is emphatically indexical, not only referring to the day of the protest demonstration and the letter as one of the discursive acts of the demonstration, but also as a new beginning for the black community, again emphasized by the key word *historical*, and the positive (UP=GOOD) metaphor of SURGIR, also presupposing that black people until now were down (DOWN=BAD).

The next line also features some relevant presuppositions, namely that so far the discussion about racism was mostly indoors, and hence not public. Hence the images of coming out and appear in the streets, very relevant presuppositions and metaphors during the repression of the Military Dictatorship, still very much present in 1978. Within the same metaphorical representation of movement forward, and hence of progress, the rest of the line refers to the first steps of the movement, combined with the classical military metaphor of the *luta*.

After this description of the movements, its goals and the historical significance of the day of the demonstration, the letter briefly reminds current events in 10(g), events probably known by most people present in the public act. Interesting is however 10(h) because it can be read as a recommendation if not a menace against those (police) who kill black people.

After this brief summary of the time, place, activities and goals of the current demonstration, the new organization needs to present itself for the community and the public in general:

- (11) O MOVIMENTO UNIFICADO CONTRA A DISCRIMINAÇÃO RACIAL foi criado para ser um instrumento de luta da Comunidade Negra. Este movimento deve ter como princípio básico o trabalho de denúncia permanente de todo ato de discriminação racial, a constante organização da Comunidade para enfrentarmos todo e qualquer tipo de racismo.

Thus, as we have seen before, the indexicals of the letter refer to the name of the movement, its very creation, its goals and functions – this time formulated in the standard metaphorical terms of an INSTRUMENT representing an efficient actor, and the beneficiary of this activities of the movement: the black community. Again, the main activity, here defined as a principle of the new movement, is permanent denunciation against discrimination and racism in general. The next paragraph starts with another epistemic modality:

- (12) Todos nós sabemos o prejuízo social que causa o racismo. Quando uma pessoa não gosta de um negro é lamentável, mas quando toda uma sociedade assume atitudes racistas frente a um povo inteiro, ou se nega a enfrentar, aí então o resultado é trágico para nós negros:

The ingroup indexical is here generalized as *all of us*, and thus emphasizing that knowledge of the causes of racism, prejudice, is shared in the black community. The rest of the paragraph briefly summarizes a crucial insight of antiracist theory and resistance: that racism is about collective prejudice and against a whole people, and that it is not question of personal dislike. This important ‘teaching’ of the new movement is followed by a brief description of the actual consequences of racism:

- (13) Pais de família desempregados, filhos desamparados, sem assistência médica, sem condições de proteção familiar, sem escolas e sem futuro. E é este racismo coletivo, este racismo institucionalizado que dá segurança para a prática de atos racistas como os que ocorreram no Clube Tietê (...)

Listing the miserable situation of the black community is a prominent topos of antiracist discourse, with the presupposition that such a situation is one of the consequences of racism – as made explicit in the rest of the paragraph – which continues (not reproduced here) with a brief description of the police killing of two black men. Crucial here is again the focus on collective, institutional racism, implicitly asserting, as was done

before, that racism is not (just) about personal prejudice and maltreatment. Thus, also in a brief public text like the letter, the authors engage in a brief sociological analysis – with special attention for the situation of families. The rest of the Open Letter continues as follows:

(14)

- (a) Casos como estes são rotina em nosso país que se diz democrático.
- (b) E tais acontecimentos deixam mais evidente e reforçam a justiça de nossa luta, nossa necessidade de mobilização.
- (c) É necessário buscar formas de organização. É preciso garantir que este movimento seja um forte instrumento de luta permanente da comunidade, onde todos participem de verdade, definindo os caminhos do movimento. Por isso chamamos todos a engrossarem o MOVIMENTO UNIFICADO CONTRA A DISCRIMINAÇÃO RACIAL.
- (d) Portanto, propomos a criação de CENTROS DE LUTA DO MOVIMENTO UNIFICADO CONTRA A DISCRIMINAÇÃO RACIAL, nos bairros, na vilas, nas prisões, nos terreiros de candomblé, nos terreiros de umbanda, nos locais de trabalho, nas escolas de samba, nas igrejas, em todo o lugar onde o negro vive; CENTROS DE LUTA que promovem o debate, a informação, a conscientização e organização da comunidade negra, tornando-nos um movimento forte, ativo e combatente, levando o negro a participar em todos os setores da sociedade brasileira.
- (e) Convidamos os setores democráticos da sociedade (para) que nos apoiem, criando condições necessárias para criar uma verdadeira democracia racial.
- (f) CONTRA A DISCRIMINAÇÃO RACIAL
- (g) CONTRA A OPRESSÃO POLICIAL
- (h) PELA AMPLIAÇÃO DO MOVIMENTO POR UMA AUTÊNTICA DEMOCRACIA RACIAL

After mentioning the discrimination of young black volleyball players and the killings of two black men by the police, the event description must again be brought at the more general level, as does 14(a) with the qualification of *routine*, and its attribution to the whole country, ironically qualified as allegedly democratic. The irony is double here, because not only Brazil is racist, but during the Military Dictatorship also hardly democratic. Hence, the analysis of the Letter is not just sociological but also political. Another conclusion of the analysis of the local and national situation is an explicit legitimation of the black struggle, as made in 14(b) and the claim of the value of justice, further reinforced by the modality of necessity, here to be interpreted as a deontic modality, because it applies to the necessity of action, what *must* be done. Again, also this paragraph thus indexes the parameters of the communicative and sociopolitical situation of the social movement.

This deontic aspect of necessity continues in line 14(c) and the rest of the letter, in terms of the need to get organized, the metaphorical role of the movement as an INSTRUMENT of the STRUGGLE of the black community, as well as the metaphor of the ROAD to travel. The collective, and solidary nature of the struggle is both asserted as well as called for when the demonstrators are invited to join the movement, explicitly named



with capital letters – and here for the first time presented for the community and the public at large.

This call also has a conclusion (*portanto*), as spelled out in 14(d), in the sense of what now must be done, this time with a long list of places and spaces, using the well-known repetitive rhythm of black public talk, as well as that of many social movements. The list could not be more Brazilian, not just because of the *escolas de samba*, but also reminding that many members of the community are religious, also being members or visitors of traditional African-Brazilian religions, and hence in the *terreiros de Candomblé e de Umbanda* – a topic quite relevant at the time given the growing opposition of Evangelical churches against traditional religion, on the one hand, but the support of Umbanda by the Military as well as the population at large (Isaia, 2019). This list of places is followed by another list of discursive and other activities, again, all relevant for the definition of the new social movement, explicitly in view of black people integration in Brazilian society. The military metaphor of STRUGGLE (*luta*) is further emphasized by its properties (*forte*) and its participants (*combatente*). Finally, as is the case in the earlier document, democratic forces are called to support the movement, with the aim to realize the mythical *democracia racial* that had been a main topic of black emancipation, even propagated by the military dictatorship, but in this case qualified as *verdadeira*, presupposing that no such democracy really existed at the moment.

As is the case for the previous document also the Letter ends with the main slogans of the MNU, summarizing its main points of resistance, and its ultimate democratic aims. The Letter has the classical semantic and rhetorical structures of a first public message of a social movement, and at the same time those of an antiracist text:

- The main motivation of the Movement as an opposition against a fundamental social iniquity (racism) and all its characteristics (discrimination, police brutality, etc)
- The identification of the Movement, its name, aims and values
- The activities of the Movement as a form of resistance, metaphorically summarized as a struggle
- The beneficiary of the activities (the black community)
- The pragmatic definition of the letter as denunciation

- The description of recent (racist) events as the immediate reason of the creation of the movement
- The place of resistance: the streets
- A warning against those engaging in violence against the community
- The generalization of local events to a national cause.
- A call to all members of the black community
- A call to all democratic forces to support the movement
- A sociological analysis of racism as institutional
- A call to get organized (form centres of struggle)
- A critique of the lack of democracy
- The discursive nature of resistance (debates etc.)

Such are not just the main topics of the letter, but at the same time they are expressed in many indexical expressions referring to the communicative context of the letter, its spatiotemporal parameters, its authors, its addressees, its functions, its aims, and the knowledge and attitudes of the movement as authors, about all forms of racism.

### ***Basta de Racismo (1988)***

Ten years later, in 1988, the MNU Journal *Nêgo* comments on hundred years of “Abolition”, which they use between quotes. Under the title *Basta de Racismo* they print the following calculation:

$$\begin{array}{r}
 (15) \\
 372 \text{ anos de Escravidão} \\
 + \quad 100 \text{ anos de "Abolição"} \\
 \hline
 472 \text{ anos de Opressão}
 \end{array}$$

As has been a widespread attitude among black intellectuals and activists, the Abolition of slavery in Brazil in 1888 was nothing to celebrate, because the black community was not liberated from racism, discrimination, prejudice and many forms of oppression – also a reason not to celebrate May 13, the day of the Abolition. Let us briefly examine a few fragments of this 500+ word text, beginning with the journal’s explication of the

numbers – not a rhetorical numbers game used to emphasize quantity, but rather years of objective facts:

- (16) Esta é a somatória resumida da nossa história. Nossa história contada em números, porque faltam as palavras para descrever com exatidão a dimensão das atrocidades cometidas contra o povo negro.

Ao se aproximar o centenário da "abolição", o balanço histórico nos mostra a OPRESSÃO como resultado e como característica marcante das relações raciais no nosso país. Ajustando-se à conjuntura de cada momento, assumindo matizes diferentes, a opressão está presente em todas as relações entre os diferentes segmentos raciais do Brasil.

Durante os 372 anos que durou a escravidão, aproximadamente 15 milhões de negros foram seqüestrados da África, e submetidos no Brasil a mais desumana exploração econômica. A categoria de "subhomem" atribuída ao negro pelo escravista branco, tentava justificar e legitimar tanto a exploração, como a degradante situação a que eram submetidos os escravos. A violência, como meio de submissão, desumanização foi utilizada para negar a essência do Homem.

As we have seen above, also the antiracist discourse of the MNU routinely features a summary of the history of slavery, oppression and racism, usually with numbers for years or centuries, this time explicitly referring to these numbers (for detail and examples, see Van Dijk, 2021b). Talking of history is indexically anchored as *nossa história*, but also in terms of the objective designation *o povo negro*, as in a textbook of history. The qualification of this history is predicated and summarized in terms of *atrocidades*, although this term, and any language use, is insufficient to describe these atrocities, a meta-linguistic move used to further emphasize them, as also happens graphically with the uppercase letters of OPRESSÃO in the next paragraph. The whole fragment has the function to explain the quotation marks of “Abolition” and as a summary of 100 years of race relations in Brazil.

The strategy of precision accomplished by the functional move of numbers also characterizes the next paragraph mentioning the millions of the enslaved, semantically emphasized by a series of strongly negative appraisals summarizing the forms of oppression: *seqüestrados*, *submetidos*, *desumana exploração*, *violência*, *submissão*, *desumanização*, and *negar a essência*. Despite the nominalizations, the same sentence explicitly mentions the *escravista branco* as the perpetrator of these crimes, as well as their dominant ideological legitimation, according to which blacks were not human, and hence could be treated inhumanely. Note that the political analysis of this text in the MNU journal, both through content and style at the same time has characteristics of a precise academic analysis: It not only lists all forms of violence, but also explains them in terms of ideological justification and legitimation, hardly terms of political rhetoric.

As the MNU has done in its earlier texts, also this article continues with a demystification of the (then and now) still widespread idea that slavery in Brazil was benevolent, which both nationally and internationally, both academically and politically defined the view of race relations in the country. Again, also this myth is challenged with arguments on the contradiction between alleged benevolence on the one hand, and the terrible forms of force and violence, on the other hand. Slavery, the text argues, does not know degrees, while its history is metaphorically described as *escrita com sangue dessa imensa massa de homens, mulheres e crianças*. Finally, the text moves from critical history to critical analysis of the economic, social and psychological consequences of racism today, and that for black people real abolition is still to happen. On the other hand, for white people 1888 means the transition from an economy of enslavement to a capitalist economy:

- (17) Ainda somos o sustentáculo do sistema: fornecemos mão de obra barata, fazemos os trabalhos considerados como os mais "sujos", temos os menores salários, moramos nas periferias das cidades, nossos filhos quase não têm a oportunidade de frequentar escolas e perambulam pelas ruas com a denominação de "menores abandonados", constituímos um dos segmentos de menor representação política. Em resumo, continuamos construindo uma sociedade, a cujos benefícios não temos direito.

Again, precise socioeconomic analysis of the current situation shows in detail how and where the situation today has hardly changed (as the topical adverb *ainda* shows) for the black population (or rather, indexically for *us*), and that hence *we* have nothing to celebrate (for this lack of change, see also Dos Passos & Nogueira 2015):

- (18) Portanto não temos motivos para comemorar o que consideramos como o centenário da exploração capitalista. As celebrações em voga mascaram a realidade, com manifestações de solidariedade que não aliviam o sofrimento secular do nosso povo; transformam o que poderia ser uma legítima e necessária onda de protesto e revolta, numa hipócrita e fugaz celebração elitizada

This last paragraph of the text significantly provides the critical closure of a text that explains why *we* don't celebrate Abolition. The argument (*portanto*) this time examines the nature of white people's celebration, using the metaphor of the MASK that hides reality in Brazil, a metaphor often used to describe the situation in Brazil. This critical closure even goes a step further by delegitimizing hypocritical white elite solidarity, when protest and revolt against current racism is necessary. Again, this is not just a rhetoric of resistance, but both in content and academic style, precise and systematic analysis of the situation – analysis hardly found in the prevalent white academic texts of the time.

## ***The 1990 Action Program***

After the creation of the Movement in June 1978 and its first public act as a demonstration a few weeks later, the Movement held many National Congresses. On March 13-15, 1990, the IX National Congress was held in Belo Horizonte, where a 9000-word Action Program was approved, as a reaction against the *sofisticação e intensificação dos mecanismos racistas*, in the form of a series of priorities of action, such as:

- The independence of the Movement
- Police violence and the “*indústria da criminalidade*”
- Discrimination at work
- Education in the interest of black people
- Racial violence in the media
- The sexual, social and economic exploitation of women
- International solidarity with all oppressed people

Some of the actions were already mentioned in the foundational text of 1978. But there are some interesting developments. This time, the text is not about the “black man”, but also addressed to, and about women, including a criticism of domestic violence of black men. Another topic that soon became relevant was the criticism of the mass media and their portrayal of black people. Since a full analysis of this important document is beyond the scope of this paper, we’ll briefly examine some of its semantic strategies as an antiracist social movement.

A first major topic is the necessary independence of the black movement, which requires a critical analysis of class relations and solidarity, and its consequences for black people:

- (19) Por força da necessidade de afirmar a unidade da classe trabalhadora, sufocam as diferenças raciais, permitindo que estas se reproduzam enquanto desigualdades, que só privilegiam o grupo branco. As tentativas em fazer avançar sua compreensão da questão racial, não raro tem resultado em debates que ou colocam o racial como acessório, secundário, ou minimizam a importância do MOVIMENTO NEGRO, para atrair quadros como “base” das chamadas “lutas gerais “. E neste caso, tem-se uma versão, com verniz politizado, das velhas tentativas de infantilizar o negro. Também à esquerda, ainda vigora a idéia de que o branco pensa e o negro executa.

First a question of style and context. The formal, academic style of the Action Program is fundamentally different from the founding documents analyzed above, while produced at a national congress for debate and decision making, after eight earlier congresses, and covering all relevant aspects of the movement. The structure is argumentative. While general (working) class solidarity is important, this section of the document and specifically this fragment elaborates on the disadvantages of “general” solidarity, in which black interests typically become less relevant, while favouring white people. This argument explicitly criticizes the left, as part of the general problem of black marginalization in the class struggle in favour of general political interests. The attitude of the left is metaphorically criticised as a *verniz*, implying that it looks alright but below the surface there is the reality of classical exclusion – also metaphorically emphasized in terms of *infantilizar*, implying that blacks are still treated as children, or as people who don’t think, but only carry out what they are told. These few lines summarize a classical debate about the role of the black movement in relation to the labour and other progressive movements. This section continues to stress that blacks don’t want to be marginalized but are necessary part of the centres of power, and should be members of all social and political organizations. Moreover, black people are not a large undifferentiated whole, but also have their internal contradictions, including the presence of opportunists and false spokespersons, often co-opted by national and international institutions (for the relations between the black movement, the State and the institutions, see Giacomini & Terra, 2014; Mateus Rios, 2008).

A second major topic of the Action Program is a critique of the State and its obligations (housing, education, health, etc.) and especially the role of the police, already a major point of critique in the first texts of the movement analyzed above:

- (20) O melhor exemplo disto são as ações da polícia e dos grupos de extermínio sob sua proteção que, em todo país, atingem o povo negro com ostensiva e impressionante impunidade. Mesmo uma rápida consulta às páginas policiais dos jornais comprova essa afirmação. Entretanto, a ideologia da democracia racial e a dramática incorporação destes fatos ao cotidiano da sociedade impedem que os assassinos sejam entendidos como a forma mais extrema de VIOLÊNCIA RACIAL.

The criticism speaks for itself, but compared to the earlier criticism of police violence, in this fragment it is the State that is found to be responsible, while the violence of the police is emphasized in terms of *grupos de extermínio*. This time also “democracia racial” is explicitly characterized as an ideology that dominates everyday life of the

black community. As has been a major and increasing point of debate in the USA, also in Brazil in this document of 1990, not only the violence of the police is mentioned, but especially the impunity of this violence, then, and until today. Interesting is the evidence cited for these facts: the press, responsible for the criminalization of black people, an old feature of the times of slavery, when blacks were seen as rebelling against enslavement. The police are seen in the Action Program as the force that “is deliberately disseminating fear and terror” in the black community. This analysis also focuses on summary executions of purported black criminals, police corruption, the role of the arms and protection industry and the legitimation of these practices by the public at large, via the mass media. The MNU concludes that it is its task to demystify the combat against criminality and the genocidal attitude of the State, mobilize the victims of police violence, augmenting the denunciation of police violence and to involve other institutions of civil society against police violence. Another important topic of this document is racial discrimination at work. That section begins as follows:

- (21) O negro foi o primeiro trabalhador brasileiro. Um trabalhador escravizado, porém ativamente empenhado em destruir o sistema desumano que o oprimia. Recuperar esta verdade histórica é um passo importante no sentido de recolocar o negro como sustentáculo da formação da riqueza da sociedade brasileira, e como precursor da história de luta dos trabalhadores.
- Deste ponto de vista, também é possível perceber que na passagem do escravismo para o capitalismo, o negro foi marginalizado como trabalhador não porque fosse incapaz de participar do novo sistema, mas porque era identificado com a REBELDIA . Por outro lado, o rigor na seleção racial para ocupações mais valorizadas, em regiões influenciadas ou não pela imigração; estava marcado pelo interesse da classe dominante em privilegiar o trabalhador branco.

As is also the case in this fragment, antiracist discourse often presents a historical view of racism and oppression, in Brazil primarily of slavery and its consequences, with the prominent topos that the situation of blacks has not changed much since abolition. Again, content and style combine historical and sociological analysis with that contentious rhetoric, highlighting facts that are not generally known or understood, such as the primacy of blacks as workers, necessary to their role in the general workers movement. At the same time, another dimension of that history must be stressed: that these workers were not passive or subdued, but an active force in the destruction of the system of slavery, here lexically emphasized with the words *inhuman* and *oppress*. The negation in the second part of this fragment indexes the presupposition of a widely shared prejudice, namely that after abolition blacks were unable to function in the new capitalist system. Another negation, that it was not immigration that marginalized

blacks, presupposes the well-known argument that massive immigration of Italians was the cause of black unemployment. Instead, the document emphasizes that racism was the cause of the preference of white workers. In such small passages, we see that the Action Program combines sociological analysis, with critical, combative and argumentative resistance against prevalent racism and at the same time incorrect historical explanations. The conclusion of this analysis is detailed and explicit:

- (22) Excluído do mercado de trabalho -sob a pena de indisciplinado, indolente, preguiçoso e pouco inteligente- restou ao negro as posições mais desvalorizadas da estrutura ocupacional, caracterizando uma **DIVISÃO RACIAL DO TRABALHO**, que não foi rompida nem mesmo com o crescimento das relações capitalistas.

Sociological analysis of the labour market here joins a social psychological explanation in terms of the usual prejudices, thus combining a criticism of capitalism and racism. The rest of this section of the program summarizes the consequences of this racist division of the labour market: black unemployment, being condemned to living in the poorest neighbourhoods, without decent schooling and health service, and more generally inequality compared to white workers. It is also in this context that the unions are criticized for their accusation that black resistance allegedly divides the workers movement, challenged by the argument of the MNU that the workers movement is already divided.

It is in this critical, analytical and argumentative spirit and style that also the rest of the Action Program discusses the main topics of concern for the MNU and the delegates of the national congress. Current education is criticized for its whitening, violence, racist contents and ignoring black history (there are many studies about the role of the black movement and support of black history teaching; see e.g., Gomes de Conceição 2019; Rodrigues da Silva, 2018). A similar criticism is levelled against the political manipulation of black culture, still with ideas about superior and inferior races, and emphasizing the prominent role of blacks in many distinguishing characteristics of national Brazilian culture, such as music, dance and cuisine.

As we stressed above, the document pays special attention to the role and the double discrimination and exploitation of black women – explicitly not as a mere “appendix” of the feminist movement. Besides the well-known criticism of the abuses against black women as domestic servants, the document also mentions the whitening aspects of the aesthetics, the preference for white models, the role of black women in



education that reproduces racist stereotypes, on the one hand, and often as victim of black male violence, on the other hand.

Finally, also mentioned above, the Action Program formulates its criticism of the Brazilian media, totally controlled by the dominant class, thus responsible for news, information, public opinion, models and values within a Eurocentric framework, and confirming white supremacy.

It is in these ways that the Action Program critically analyzes the major dimensions of oppression, marginalization and discrimination, challenges well-known prejudices and misinformation about the labour market, gender and the media, all characterized by pervasive racism.

### ***An MNU Editorial (2014)***

In the next 30 years, during its national congresses, on special occasions, in its journal, on its website, the MNU produces many other documents, often featuring topics, criticism and concerns already formulated before – in a sociopolitical context that has not fundamentally changed since the later 1970s. Most of these texts are hardly publicly available, and only reside in private and institutional archives, studied e.g., in the thesis of Paulo César Ramos (2021) about police violence against the black community since 1978.

Within the strict limits of a single paper, thus, we finally examine some fragments of a more contemporary text of the MNU published in the *Jornal Nacional do Movimento Negro*, issue August-October of 2014. Among other topics, this issue reports on the planning decided at the 17<sup>th</sup> National Congress of the MNU held in Salvador, Ba, with calls for the immediate recognition of 20 November, the National Day of Black Consciousness, as a national holiday, formulated in the combative style of a journal, calling its members to participate in a campaign, and with an argument of comparison:

- (23) Neste país vários feriados são comemorados em homenagem a tradição judaica-cristã e não nos reconhecemos contemplados nestas datas que não reconhece e valoriza nosso legado africano. Conclamamos nossa militância e as entidades co-irmãs a deflagrarem imediatamente uma campanha de mobilização e agitação em defesa desta bandeira histórica e revolucionária.

Let us finally examine some fragments of the Editorial of this issue:

- (24) Nós somos o Movimento Negro Unificado (MNU) não abrimos mão do nosso compromisso com o destino do nosso povo. Por isso, reagimos contra e toda qualquer forma de violência racial. Entretanto vale perguntar: que tipo de espaço devemos privilegiar para concentrarmos a nossa ação militante? Se ainda estamos por nossa própria conta. O Movimento Negro Unificado desde sua fundação em 1978 sempre esteve pronto para combater o racismo que impera na nossa sociedade, por isso, continuamos enfrentando o racismo diariamente sem dar trégua ao combate à violência policial, o desemprego, a falta de moradia e em busca de uma educação de qualidade entre outros.

As we have seen above, a main topic of MNU discourses corresponds to a main concern and focus of resistance: violence against the black population, and especially police violence, as part of a more general struggle against racism, and in favour of employment, housing and quality education for black people. Precisely because in the decades of the existence of the MNU little has fundamentally changed for the black community, also the discourses largely remain the same as to the aims, concerns, activities and values of the movement – as indexed by the expressions *desde sua fundação em 1978, continuamos, etc.* – as usual with the militant metaphors of social movements: *sem dar trégua ao combate*. Also the rest of the editorial features the factive verbs of continuity presupposing previous activities, and the metaphor of CONSTRUCTION conceptualizing MNU contribution to the renovation of Brazil. But there is also another topic, not yet addressed in the earlier texts:

- (25) Não podemos nos dividir nas nossas análises teóricas e muito menos adotar posições que venham nos dividir internamente fragilizando a nossa luta e fortalecendo os racistas que apostam na nossa derrota, temos que ter responsabilidade na condução e direção de nossa luta, isto quer dizer que aqueles que não perceberem nossos objetivos estarão fora, porque fizeram a preferência de trilhar por outros caminhos.

Indeed, one of main concerns of the MNU and black movements in Brazil in general is the lack of broad and active support among the black population, a general problem of many popular movements. Obviously, without vast financial and sociopolitical contributions of the government, in 2014 still a PT government led by Dilma Rousseff, a small movement such as the MNU hardly is able to change police violence, provide housing, jobs or better education. This example more specifically presupposes the lack of unity of the black movement, and the different ways different organizations are working at cross-purposes. Despite this lack of support and unity, the editorial concludes as follows in a more upbeat tone of pride and positive self-presentation, again with the militant metaphors of the DEFEAT:

- (26) O MNU é uma entidade consolidada como a principal organização do movimento negro brasileiro e conseguimos imprimir algumas derrotas ao racismo e aos racistas no plano interno e externo. Derrotamos o mito da democracia racial, consolidamos zumbi como herói nacional, articulamos várias campanhas para nossa luta e afirmação (...)

Part of their contribution has been their challenge of the ideological myth of the “democracia racial”, which even in 2014 is still pervasive in Brazil.

## Conclusions

The discourse of the Movimento Negro Unificado between its foundation in 1978 until today combines the properties of popular movement discourse in general, with the more specific conditions, aims and methods of a black antiracist movement. We have seen that the continuity of the main concerns and struggle are expressed and indexed in the continuity of their discourse topics.

The communicative contexts of their discourses combine the specifics of the sociopolitical situation, such as the assassination of black people by the police, combined with the continuity of the identity and roles of the participants, that is the MNU as movement, actor and author of the discourses, from a first foundation text and a letter of a protest demonstration to the consolidated texts of Plans of Action or Editorials of a journal. The direct addressee of the discourses is first the black community, which also is the beneficiary of both discourses and other antiracist action and the public at large, on the one hand, and their racist opponents in general, and the police in particular.

Style and contents of these discourses for more than 40 years have been, and had to be, surprisingly similar, because the main problems and concerns of the black community have hardly changed, first of all police violence, but also discrimination at work, housing, health and education, all conditioned by racist domination. In some aspects the discourse had to be adapted to more general social changes and the increasing role of women in society, the community and the movement, after the first text still featured the *black man* as the protagonist.

Another change in the contents of MNU discourses is the increasing appeal to the (other) democratic forces in society, on the one hand, but at the same time obvious frustration of the lack of broad support of the black community and even the lack of unity of the black movement in general. And whereas the earliest texts feature a well-

known topos of the new social movements (We can't Remain Silent), the later texts presuppose and imply the voice of a consolidated movement.

Finally, the various discourses on the one hand are those of active resistance, and used in demonstrations, but on the other hand, as is the case of the Action Program of 1990, a systematic and explicit analysis of racism and the situation of the black community in Brazil, using the academic style of a sociopolitical study, expressed in appropriate vocabulary and argumentation structures. In this sense, these programs and analyses are early antiracist analyses that at the time were hardly dominant in (mostly white) academic studies.

Lacking relevant documents, we finally should add the activities and discourses of the MNU and other black organizations in Brazil, reacting to Black Lives Matter in the USA, as the early movement in the 1970s implemented ideas of the Civil Rights Movement in the USA, thus emphasizing global black solidarity and resistance against racism in general, and police violence, in particular.

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