Communication and religiosity: reflections on cyberculture, religious racism, and society

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Abstract: In cyberculture, reflecting on communication is fundamental to understand society, and in Brazil, an important topic is also the religious issue. Given the formative capacity of the media, it is essential to understand how it deals with issues such as religious prejudice. Thus, this article analyzes publications made on eleven profiles of candomblé temples in Sergipe on Instagram, in parallel with the journalistic coverage made by the two largest local television channels. The study, constructed from a Content Analysis, pointed out the lack of stimulation for the debate on religious prejudice, in both media, which reduces the possibility of their contribution to social formation.

Resumo: Na cibercultura, pensar a comunicação é fundamental para compreender a sociedade e, no Brasil, um tópico importante é também a questão religiosa. Dada a capacidade formativa das mídias é imprescindível compreender como ela trata de temas como o racismo religioso. Assim, este artigo analisa publicações feitas em onze perfis de terreiros de candomblé sergipanos no Instagram, em paralelo com a cobertura jornalística feita pelos dois maiores canais de televisão locais. O estudo, construído a partir de uma Análise de Conteúdo apontou a falta de estímulo ao debate sobre racismo religioso, em ambos os meios, o que reduz a possibilidade de contribuição deles na formação social.

1 BERARDI, Franco. **Depois do futuro**. São Paulo: Ubu, 2019.

2 LEMOS, André; LÉVY, Pierre. **O futuro da internet**: em direção a uma ciberdemocracia planetária. São Paulo: Paulus, 2010, p. 45.

3 HOLANDA, Sérgio Buarque de. **Raízes do Brasil.** São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 2015.

4 IBGE. **Censo demográfico 2010**: características da população e dos domicílios. Rio de Janeiro: Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística, 2010. Available at: https://biblioteca.ibge.gov.br/index.php/biblioteca-catalogo?view=detalhes&id=793. Accessed in: 27 May 2025.

5 COSTA NETO, Antonio Gomes da. Racismo religioso: diálogos de um conceito. **Contribuciones a Las Ciencias Sociales**, São José dos Pinhais, v. 16, n. 7, p. 5.323-5.342, 2023. https://doi.org/10.55905/revconv.16n.7-009. p. 5326.

6 BERSANI, Humberto. Aportes teóricos e reflexões sobre o racismo estrutural no Brasil. **Revista Extraprensa,** São Paulo, v. 11, n. 2. p. 175-196, 2018. https://doi.org/10.11606/extraprensa2018.148025

7 FERNANDES, Nathália Vince Esgalha. Racismo estrutural e religioso contra povos e comunidades tradicionais de terreiro durante a pandemia do COVID-19. **Revista Calundu**, Brasília, v. 6, n. 2, p. 19-35, 2023. https://doi.org/10.26512/revistacalundu.v6i2.46422

8 MBEMBE, Achille. Necropolítica. **Arte & Ensaios**, Rio de Janeiro, n. 32, p. 123-151, 2016. Available at: https://www.procomum.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/necropolitica.pdf. Accessed in: 1 Apr. 2025.

1. INTRODUCTION

In a society heavily mediated by digital information and communication technologies, immersed in the context of semiocapitalism[1]—where communicational signs become major drivers of the economy—and characterized by the widespread connectivity[2] that permeates social practices in cyberculture, these technologies exert a profound influence on social relations. Within this framework, the use of media and its effects on human interactions emerge as central topics, and it is not possible to exclude themes such as religion and religiosity from this discussion, particularly considering their foundational role in shaping Brazil's cultural and social formation.

The colonization of Brazil was marked by Christian religiosity, particularly Catholicism[3]. The centrality of Christianity in this process legitimized violence against native peoples, suppressing their languages and liturgies, especially those of African origin. These cultures were demonized, thereby consolidating intolerance and religious racism, which persist in a society where over 90% of the population identifies as Christian[4].

A concerning phenomenon is observed: the increase in cases of religious racism, understood here as the "intentional practice […] of preventing, obstructing, rejecting, contesting, forbidding, prohibiting, and offending through racist discourse."[5] Religious racism arises and is reinforced by the structural racism that is intrinsic to Brazilian society, manifesting in power[6] relations since colonization—a historical moment in which the enslaved population was regarded merely as a functional element of the economy[7].

In this context, racism penetrated various spheres of social life, reinforcing a systemic necropolitics[8] that relegated African-based rituals to conditions of inferiority, violence, and malignancy. Religions such as Candomblé are thus perceived as practices opposing the Christian ideal of society, legitimizing an oppressive culture that subjects Candomblé practitioners to exclusion and aggression, with violence rates rising exponentially over the years[9].

There is, therefore, an urgent need to examine strategies to confront religious racism, with the media playing a significant role in this debate. Due to its formative and facilitating role in fostering public discourse, its constant presence in people's daily lives within cybercultural contexts, and its potential to encourage more inclusive cultural formation, the media must be placed at the center of this discussion.

Accordingly, this article aims to analyze publications on social media—particularly eleven Instagram profiles of Candomblé *terreiros*[10] from the state of Sergipe—in parallel with the journalistic coverage provided by the two largest local television channels. The study, conducted using Content Analysis methodology[11,12], revealed a lack of encouragement for debate on intolerance and religious racism in both media types, thereby reducing their potential contribution to social formation.

In light of these findings, it becomes evident that social groups must be encouraged to engage more actively with media spaces, recognizing them as formative environments within cyberculture. Moreover, it is essential to strengthen media education networks, both for and with the media, aiming to foster the development of individuals who are more active and autonomous in promoting connections and social change through communication.

2. MEDIA AND RELIGIOSITY: A BRIEF CONCEPTUAL DEBATE

Dissociating communication from culture is a challenging task in societies where these elements are deeply intertwined, permeating fields such as politics, economics, and education. This connection is so consolidated that its development is understood as one of the keys to interpreting the historical trajectory of societies[13].

The relationship between media and culture can also be examined through the lens of mediations[14], which focus on the effects of communication devices on individuals' ways of being. In this field, the media are conceived as institutions that underpin the formation of national identities, providing groups with what Jacks and Schmitz termed "cultural thickness."

The influence of communication, and consequently of media, in processes of subjectivation is widely recognized. From scholars such as Martín-Barbero[15], who conceptualize this phenomenon through the notion of mediations, to authors like Thompson[16], who emphasize the objective responsibility of media in shaping interactions between individuals and the world, the interest in understanding the effects of media on individuals and sociocultural interactions is evident.

This mediated interest intensifies within the context of digital cultures, with authors like Jenkins[17], pointing to the consolidation of a convergent culture as a context of social change shaped by shifts at the intersections of media and culture, and Lemos[18] advocating for the establishment of cyberculture as a new organizational framework born from the symbiosis of telecommunications and information technology. In this scenario, media are not merely channels of interaction or formation[19]; they operate as devices that extend even to the realm of citizens' access to rights[20], functioning as pedagogical tools that teach "ways of being and belonging in culture."[21]

Within the conceptual framework, the symbolic role of the media stands out as a key medium of meaning exchange and symbolic reproduction. Furthermore,

9 BRASIL. Ministério dos Direitos Humanos e Cidadania. **No Dia Nacional de Combate à Intolerância Religiosa, MDHC reforça canal de denúncias e compromisso com promoção da liberdade religiosa**. Brasília: MDHC, 2023. Available at: https://www.gov.br/mdh/pt-br/assuntos/noticias/2024/janeiro/no-dia-nacional-de--combate-a-intolerancia--religiosa-mdhc-reforca-canal-de-denuncias-e-com-promisso-com-promocao--da-liberdade-religiosa. Accessed in: 1 Aug. 2024.

10 *Terreiros* refers both to a physical space that is open, flat, and wide, a sacred place where Afro-Brazilian religions such as Candomblé and Umbanda are practiced, these being the best known and most important.

11 BARDIN, Laurence. **Análise de Conteúdo**. São Paulo: Edições 70, 2016.

12 SAMPAIO, Rafael Cardoso; LYCARIÃO, Diógenes. **Análise de conteúdo categorial**: manual de aplicação. Rio de Janeiro: Escola Nacional de Administração Pública, 2021.

13 BRIGGS, Asa; BURKE, Peter. **Uma história social da mídia**: de Gutenberg à internet. Rio de Janeiro: Zahar, 2004.

14 MARTÍN-BARBERO, Jesús. **Dos meios às mediações**: comunicação, cultura e hegemonia. Rio de Janeiro: UFRJ, 2009.

15 MARTÍN-BARBERO, 2009.

16 THOMPSON, John Brookshire. A interação mediada na era digital. **MATRIZes**, São Paulo, v. 12, n. 3, p. 14-44, 2018. https://doi.org/10.11606/issn.1982-8160.v12i3p17-44

17 JENKINS, Henry. **Cultura da convergência**. São Paulo: Aleph, 2009.

18 LEMOS, André. **Cibercultura**: tecnologia e vida social na cultura contemporânea. Porto Alegre: Sulina, 2023.

the media must be considered as a system responsible for shaping the major public debates that have constituted Western culture and that remain in constant transformation in terms of formats, languages, and narratives[22]. In this regard, communication can be characterized as a central element of Western culture, and, within the Brazilian context, it plays a crucial role in political, social, and economic movements.

García Canclini[23] underscores the influence of media across a wide range of cultural processes, making it essential to consider its impact on historical issues, such as the formation of Brazilian society under the colonial model adopted in the country. Communicational practices, which in Brazil historically underpinned religious debates, also play a significant role, particularly in relation to religious racism.

Candomblé, a religion that emerged in Brazil from the hybridization of various African cults, faces not only the historical prejudice rooted in slavery but also a philosophical divergence from Christianity, which predominates in Brazilian culture[24,25]. This divergence has contributed to the exclusion and, in many cases, physical violence against Candomblé practitioners, thus constituting a form of religious racism[26,27].

The media play a fundamental role in disseminating information and in shifting social contexts marked by racism and prejudice. However, historically, Brazilian media have been aligned with a hegemonic framework associated with economic and political power[28], maintaining patterns of religious representation tied to the grotesque or picturesque, as recorded since the 1930s[29].

Thus, it becomes necessary to rethink the media as a space for public debate within the religious context, especially in relation to Candomblé, while also considering the effects of cyberculture on access to communication devices. This approach may bring individuals closer to topics that contribute to a deeper understanding of how issues of culture, religiosity, and media are currently configured in Brazil, fostering a broader social formation capable of confronting religious racism.

3. METHODOLOGICAL DESIGN: THE RESEARCH PROCESS

The discussions regarding the contexts described above informed the design of this research, which is qualitative in nature[30]. The study focused on an analysis of social media publications, specifically eleven Instagram profiles of Candomblé *terreiros* in the state of Sergipe. These profiles were selected through random sampling. In parallel, the journalistic coverage provided by the two largest local television channels, TV Sergipe[31] and TV Atalaia[32], was also considered, as they were the only channels to make the full content of their broadcasts available online.

The decision to cross-reference data from social media and television is justified by the fact that these are currently the two most widely used media by

19 MCQUAIL, Denis. **McQuail's Mass Communication Theory**. London: Sage Publications, 2000.

20 GARCÍA CANCLINI, Nestor. **Consumidores e cidadãos**: conflitos multiculturais da globalização. Rio de Janeiro: Editora da UFRJ, 1999.

21 FISCHER, Rosa Maria Bueno. O dispositivo pedagógico de mídia: modos de educar na (e pela) TV. **Em foco**: Educação e Sociedade Midiática, São Paulo, v. 28, n. 1, p. 151-162, 2002. https://doi.org/10.1590/S1517-97022002000100011. p. 153.

22 SAMPAIO; LYCARIÃO, *op. cit.*

23 GARCÍA CANCLINI, *op. cit.*

24 VIALLE, Wilton do Lago. **Candomblé de Keto ou Alaketo**. Rio de Janeiro: Pallas, 2011.

25 BENISTE, José. **Òrun-Àiyé**: o encontro de dois mundos: o sistema de relacionamento nagô-yorubá entre o céu e a Terra. Rio de Janeiro: Bertrand Brasil, 2021.

26 KILOMBA, Grada. **Memórias da plantação**: episódios de racismo cotidiano. Rio de Janeiro: Cobogó, 2019.

27 ALMEIDA, Sílvio. **Racismo estrutural**. São Paulo: Jandaíra, 2020.

the Brazilian population, providing a more accurate perspective on the media consumption habits and behaviors of Brazilians. All analyzed content addressed issues of intolerance and religious racism, as well as related topics, published between January and December 2023.

The study was based on Bardin's Content Analysis method[33], which seeks to understand meanings and patterns within a dataset, with adaptations proposed by Sampaio and Lycarião[34] to allow more robust inferences regarding the studied elements. These authors advocate for an analysis structured not only around categories but also the analytical codes that compose them. Accordingly, the present study constructed an analysis in which codes were defined within categories, creating a reciprocal relationship between these two analytical elements.

From a methodological standpoint, the choice of Content Analysis is justified by the research's focus on studying communication elements. The methodological design integrated the classical method with contemporary approaches, aligning the study with a multireferenced conception that, drawing on Macedo[35], supports a plural perspective grounded in an epistemology centered on the researcher's subjectivity. This approach offers advantages, such as a more nuanced examination of technical communication aspects in relation to the units of analysis.

Considering the three stages of Content Analysis and the coding processes that underpinned the methodological design, the following analytical rubric was developed, consisting of: a) analysis category, the dimension in which the applied analytical codes are framed for description and reflection; and b) analytical code, the content verified in each unit of analysis.

Table 1: Relationship between category and code

Analysis Categories	Analytical Codes
1) Approach	1.1) Temporality: the period during which the unit of analysis was published
	1.2) Frequency: the recurrence or referencing of the unit of analysis
	1.3) Framing: the editorial context of the unit of analysis
	1.4) Conclusions: inferences drawn from the narrative
2) Language and Narrative	2.1) Terms: words, expressions, and terminology used within the unit of analysis
	2.2) Theme: the specific topic addressed in each unit of analysis
	2.3) Characters: description of reflections constructed from the characters appearing in the units of analysis

28 BELTRÃO, Luiz. **Folk-comunicação**: um estudo dos agentes e dos meios populares de informação de fatos e expressão de ideias. Porto Alegre: ediPUCRS, 2014.

29 FREITAS, Ricardo Oliveira de. Candomblé e mídia: breve histórico da tecnologização das religiões afro-brasileiras nos e pelos meios de comunicação. **Acervo**, Rio de Janeiro, v. 16, n. 2, p. 63-87, 2003. Available at: https://revista.arquivonacional.gov.br/index.php/revistaacervo/article/view/148. Accessed in: 2 Aug. 2024.

30 BOGDAN, Robert; BIKLEN, Sari. **Investigação qualitativa em educação:** uma introdução à teoria e aos métodos. Porto: Porto Editora, 2012.

31 Broadcaster founded in 1971 and part of the Sergipe Communication Group. It currently operates as an affiliate of Rede Globo de Televisão in Sergipe, leading the ratings in different time slots.

32 Broadcaster founded in 1972 and now part of the Atalaia Communication System. It operates as an affiliate of Rede Record in Sergipe, and its programming includes programs that are audience leaders in different time slots..

33 BARDIN, *op. cit.*

34 SAMPAIO; LYCARIÃO, *op. cit.*

35 MACEDO, Roberto Sidnei. **A etnopesquisa implicada**: pertencimento, criação de saberes e afirmação. Brasília: Liber Livro, 2012.

3) Visual Resources	3.1) Colors: colors used in the visual elements of the unit of analysis
	3.2) Graphic Elements: visual resources incorporated into the unit of analysis
	3.3) Spaces: the composition of spaces in which the units of analysis are represented
4) Interaction (category applied exclusively to social media)	4.1) Content: the substance of comments made on the analyzed publications
	4.2) Debate: any discussions or exchanges of content arising from the publications

Source: Prepared by the authors.

The categories and analytical codes were created a priori, based on preliminary readings on the subject. The proposed categories, combined with the analytical codes, provide an expanded perspective on the analyzed units, allowing reflections on the construction of the technical-communicational grammar of content broadcast on television and published on social media. This systematization enabled a focused examination of the *corpus* comprising the units of analysis. These units were collected between February and March 2024 and consist of a total of eleven television broadcasts and fifteen Instagram posts.

4. MEDIA AND THE DEBATE ON RELIGIOUS RACISM IN SERGIPE

The results indicate that, despite differences in audience between social media and television—television reaching a broader audience and social media attracting more specific followers, such as religious adherents—there is a noticeable lack of encouragement for debate on intolerance and religious racism in both media.

Television programming focuses primarily on three significant dates: the National Day for Combating Religious Intolerance, the celebration of Iemanjá, and Black Consciousness Day. These dates hold great importance for Candomblé religiosity, as they relate to reflections on identity, affirmation, and intolerance.

Beyond these dates, there is only one record pertaining to coverage of urban violence, framed as religious intolerance, describing a robbery that occurred within a church in the interior of Sergipe. The configuration of the *corpus* containing the television units of analysis is presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Configuration of broadcasts published on TV

Analysis unit	Date	Broadcaster	Type	Description
1	01/19	TV Atalaia	Report	Account of a church invasion in the municipality of Laranjeiras
2	01/20	TV Sergipe	Live Interview	Studio interview with a professor from the Federal University of Sergipe discussing legislation on religious intolerance
3	01/20	TV Sergipe	Report	Broadcast on the eve of the National Day for Combating Religious Intolerance, defining intolerance and religious racism, with accounts from Candomblé practitioners
4	02/01	TV Sergipe	Live Interview	Interview with the organizers of the "Iemanjá Procession" inviting the public to participate
5	02/02	TV Atalaia	Report	Coverage of the resumption of the "Iemanjá Procession" following the COVID-19 pandemic
6	02/02	Tv Atalaia	Brief Coverage	Note reporting on the execution of the "Iemanjá Procession"
7	02/02	TV Sergipe	Live Interview	Interview in front of the Mother Church in Nossa Senhora do Socorro with the Ialorixá organizing the cleaning of the temple steps
8	11/20	TV Sergipe	Live Interview	Studio interview with a professor from the Federal University of Sergipe regarding issues related to racism
9	11/20	TV Atalaia	Interview	Interview with Luislinda Valois[36]
10	11/20	TV Atalaia	Brief Coverage	Note showing footage of Luislinda Valois' lecture
11	11/21	TV Atalaia	Report	Coverage of a theatrical performance developed by students and teachers from a State Public School in commemoration of Black Consciousness Day

Source: Prepared by the authors.

The sample indicates that, with the exception of Unit of Analysis 1, which falls outside the scope of this study, the remaining units are records produced on dates of celebration or awareness. The approaches are predominantly journalistic, generally adopting a factual reporting tone, although there are exceptions: Units of Analysis 2, 3, 7, 9, and 11, which contribute more substantially to the present analysis.

Unit of Analysis 2 provides reflections grounded in research and analyses of Brazilian legislation related to violence, intolerance, and religious racism. The

36 Luislinda Valois is a lawyer, retired judge of the Bahia State Court of Justice (TJBA), and former Minister of Human Rights of Brazil (2017–2018). She is considered a pioneer in combating religious racism in the Brazilian judiciary.

content argues that, despite the existence of various laws addressing intolerance, effective measures to guarantee religious freedom in Brazil are still lacking. This point is reinforced by Unit of Analysis 3, which employs different narratives and recounts stories that highlight the realities of violence and exclusion faced by *terreiro* communities.

This reality is exemplified prominently in Units of Analysis 7 and 9. In both the interview explaining the ritualistic aspects of the festival and the discussion regarding the life of the magistrate, the core of the debate centers on the interviewees' life experiences, emphasizing the violence and exclusion they have endured. Unit 7 focuses on challenges related to religion, whereas Unit 9 places the issue of racism at the forefront.

Another significant example of using media to promote discussion is found in Unit of Analysis 11. Although the report aired on Black Consciousness Day, it addressed topics extending beyond that date, including education and religiosity. By narrating the actions of teachers and students using performing arts to tell the story of the arrival of enslaved people in Brazil, the content addressed themes such as activism, public policy, and the transformation of lives through knowledge and information.

Beyond these specific analyses, an examination of television content reveals a general scarcity of reflection on the subjects covered, except in Units of Analysis 3, 7, and 11, where news program presenters provide a brief expansion of the debates. Typically adopting a tone of indignation, they emphasize the importance of discussing violence and racism in society without delving into the topic or presenting supporting data and follow-up measures. The content largely remains within the domain of opinion.

However, one case warrants attention, present in Unit of Analysis 9. The entire focus was on the interview with public figure Luislinda Valois, which lasted fourteen minutes in total. Yet less than five minutes were devoted to the interviewee's speech, with the remainder occupied by the news anchor, who interjected with comments throughout the broadcast. As the interview was pre-recorded, it was interrupted multiple times, during which the anchor summarized the magistrate's statements and added personal opinions on the topics discussed.

This editorial choice reflects García Canclini's[37], argument that media do not prioritize preserving or strengthening traditions, but rather aim to meet market expectations and seek popularity for their content. In this case, the media emphasis is not on the interviewee's statements but on the television anchor, who represents the editorial line and ideologically defends the interests of the channel and its advertisers before the public. The remaining units of analysis consist of brief news notes documenting events or providing links to invite the public, with durations ranging from thirty seconds to one minute.

The scarcity of discussions and the limited depth of coverage are also evident on social media, particularly when considering the proportion of posts dedicated to discussions on religious racism relative to the total number of

37 GARCÍA CANCLINI, Nestor. **Culturas híbridas**: estratégias para entrar e sair da modernidade. São Paulo: Editora da USP, 2011.

posts across the eleven Instagram profiles analyzed. In 2023, these profiles collectively published a total of 464 feed posts (stories were not included in the analysis), yet only fourteen posts addressed topics relevant to the focus of this study. Moreover, follower interactions were low, often unrelated to the topic or entirely absent.

When comments were examined, they generally represented less than 1% of the total followers and were almost exclusively expressions of praise, conveyed through emojis, without prompting meaningful discussion or reflection. It should be noted that Instagram restricted visibility of total likes to followers, making this metric accessible only to the administrators of each profile.

As with television, social media content is also concentrated around the dates of January 21 and November 20, with some variations and no evidence of discussions or debates in the comment sections. The *corpus* of social media posts is presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Configuration of Instagram posts

Analysis unit	Profile	Description	Level of interaction
12	Axé Bamirê Obá Fanidê @oficial.axebamire_obafabide	Photo of the Babalorixá delivering a speech at a public event regarding the granting of tax immunity to Candomblé *terreiros*.	Low. 20 comments, 17 consisting of emojis and only text, all praising the Babalorixá.
13	Abassá São Jorge @abassasaojorgee	15-second video showing images of a celebration at the Abassá, accompanied by text marking March 21.	High view count, totaling 7,277, but limited interaction in comments, with only 13, all honoring the Ialorixá.
14	Filhos de Obá @filhosdeoba	*Carousel* post consisting of a photo and a video: the photo shows a *terreiro* representative embracing a state deputy in the plenary of the Legislative Assembly of Sergipe (Alese), followed by a video of *terreiro* representatives singing and dancing liturgical songs within the Alese facilities.	Low. Only seven comments, six of which were emojis, and one praising the physical appearance of the deputy and the *terreiro* representative.

15	Filhos de Obá @filhosdeoba	Photo of children and representatives of the *terreiro* dressed in liturgical attire, embracing in the plenary of the Municipal Chamber of Laranjeiras. The caption explains that they attended the voting session for the municipal laws establishing the Municipal Day of African-Derived Religions and the Municipal Week of Black Consciousness.	Low. Only four comments, all emojis with clapping hands.
16	Filhos de Obá @filhosdeoba	*Card* commemorating Black Consciousness Day, featuring a photo of an Omorisá dressed in liturgical clothing, accompanied by text.	Low. Only seven comments, all emojis.
17	Ilè Asè Ofá Omí @_ofaomi_	*Card* marking the National Day of African-Derived Roots Traditions, featuring a photo of an Omorisá with a basket of flowers by the river.	Low. Only four comments: one praising the *terreiros* work in promoting the date, another emphasizing the date's importance as a moment of memory, struggle, and fight against religious racism, and two emoji comments.
18	Ilè Asè Alarokê Ajagunan @alaroke_	*Print* of Law No. 14,519/23, which establishes March 21 as the National Day of African-Derived Roots Traditions and Candomblé Nations, accompanied by a brief caption explaining the law.	Low. Only six comments, five with emojis and one discussing the importance of public policy in this field.
19	Ilè Asè Alarokê Ajagunan @alaroke_	Photo of Egbé members gathered on a beach, with text referring to the National Day of African-Derived Roots Traditions and Candomblé Nations.	Low. 11 comments recorded, eight with emojis and three praising the *terreiro*.
20	Ilè Asè Alarokê Ajagunan @alaroke_	Video documenting the *terreiros* participation in a session at Alese discussing racism and religious intolerance, including a public reading of a poem.	Low. Only 15 comments.
21	Ilè Asè Alarokê Ajagunan @alaroke_	Photo of Egbé members in an open space, conversing informally, with a brief text addressing religious freedom.	Low. Only two comments, one with an emoji and one praising the physical appearance of the *terreiros* children.

22	Ilè Asè Alarokê Ajagunan @alaroke_	Photo of Egbé members in an open space, conversing informally, with a short text referencing Black Consciousness Day.	Low. A total of six comments: three with emojis and three referencing the date.
23	Ilè Asè Odé Kilambodê @yleaxeodekilambode	No units of analysis fitting the study's scope were found.	Not applicable.
24	Egbé Ofá Oluá Ibú @axeofaoluaibo	No units of analysis fitting the study's scope were found.	Not applicable.
25	Ilè Asè Ofaderewá @ofaderewa	Video compilation of photos of celebrations and people at the *terreiro*, with text reading "*Dia da Consciência Negra – 20 de novembro.*"	Low. 15 comments, 14 with emojis and one praising the beauty of the *terreiros* children.
26	Ilè Asè Yaaparalomin @yaaparalomin	*Carousel* post including two videos and two photos showing the Ialorixá's participation in a session at the Municipal Chamber of Nossa Senhora do Socorro, addressing religious intolerance.	Low. 16 comments recorded, 14 with emojis and two discussing the topic.
27	Ilè Asè Omin Dandá Onirê @ileaxeomindandaonire	*Card* featuring a montage commemorating March 21, the "*Dia das Tradições das Raízes de Matrizes Africanas.*"	None. No comments were made.
28	Ilè Asè Rundè Onyssewé @ile_ase_ runde_onyssewe	No units of analysis fitting the study's scope were found.	Not applicable.

Source: Prepared by the authors.

Within the *corpus* composed of Instagram posts, three significant points emerge. First, there is a notable lack of interactivity. Posts addressing issues of prejudice, intolerance, and related topics received, on average, less than 1% engagement in the form of replies or comments. While this scarcity may be partly attributed to the platform's algorithm and content distribution, another aspect must be considered: the few comments recorded do not reflect critical opinions nor foster constructive debate, consisting almost exclusively of emojis.

Furthermore, there is an evident underutilization of some of the essential characteristics of cultural production in the context of cyberculture, including network building and interconnectivity[38]. No partnerships, inter-community interactions, or mobilizations for participation in live-streamed events were identified on the analyzed profiles. Even in cases where multiple *terreiros* participated in the same activity, as seen in analysis units 14 and 20, the mobilization was presented in isolation on each profile, without reference to other *terreiros* participation.

These observations warrant attention and reflection. Data analysis reveals a certain effort by public authorities to promote debates and enact laws encouraging

38 JENKINS, *op. cit.*

the integration of communities into society and combating religious intolerance. Five instances of this type of mobilization were identified, notably in analysis units 12, 14, 15, 20, and 26. This may indicate progress in raising the relevance of these issues in society; however, based on the levels of interaction and public debate observed, it is clear that much remains to be understood and fostered by the groups themselves.

As with television analyses, social media data indicate a higher volume of posts around dates of significance to these communities. Nine posts addressed these commemorative dates, including photos and videos. This result reflects limited mobilization through social media and a scarcity of user autonomy: users respond to posted content but do not take the initiative in the debate or question the content. These characteristics form the basis for network-building processes and collective intelligence, which are also defining features of communication in cyberculture[39].

These insights are further corroborated by a general reading of the proposed analysis codes, which allows for an understanding of how the topic under discussion is presented in the units. The first category, related to approach, comprises four codes that focus on understanding the approach of each content item. Results indicate that discussions were sporadic and infrequent; in the case of television, they were almost always framed within generic editorial sections, such as "City." The topics addressed were exclusively linked to commemorative dates, contributing little to effective debate on the issues discussed in this study.

Regarding language and narrative, elements of the second category of analysis, a content similarity is perceptible. All materials treat issues of intolerance and religious racism using comparable language, with no distinction between the manner in which content is presented on television and online. Concerning the characters depicted in the narratives, alignment with the agendas is apparent: all appear in liturgical contexts, dressed in ritual attire, or identified as Candomblé practitioners.

Graphic elements can be analyzed from two perspectives. On television, they are underutilized. Except for analysis unit 3, no material employed graphics, tables, or on-screen text to reinforce messages or expand discussion; only standard identification banners typical of each newscast were shown. Similarly, Instagram materials show limited use of graphic resources, and when used, these were typically titles indicating the dates of publication. Finally, codes for analyzing interactions do not allow for significant inferences. As previously noted, no interactions in terms of debate, reporting, or discussion were observed.

This panorama suggests a general underutilization of media in their potential formative capacities, particularly in the online environment, which offers ample space for broad and in-depth debates. These findings underscore the need to promote a more critical use of media, particularly through its integration into formal, informal, and non-formal educational settings.

39 LÉVY, Pierre. **Cibercultura**. São Paulo: 34, 1999.

5. FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The study conducted provided insight into the relationship between media, religiosity, and religious intolerance within the context of cyberculture, offering a focused perspective on the configuration of debates on this topic in Sergipe's media, as well as the use of Instagram by Candomblé terreiros and practitioners in the state. In this regard, the study also outlined the community's understanding of media's potential, revealing a lack of empowerment among individuals in this sphere.

The results presented here indicate a gap in promoting discussions on issues of identity, religiosity, and racism across both traditional media—including television—and social media, particularly Instagram. Although there was a higher frequency of content addressing intolerance and religious racism on important commemorative dates, there remains a scarcity of critical reflection and debate on these issues, especially among members of the Candomblé community itself.

Additionally, low interactivity was observed on social media, with few comments or interactions fostering constructive debate. The underutilization of cybercultural features, such as network-building and interconnectivity, further suggests an unexplored potential for promoting broader and more inclusive discussions on these matters.

Given these findings, it is clear that encouraging more engaged use of media spaces—by both institutions and individuals—is essential to foster deeper and more inclusive debate on religious intolerance and racism. It is necessary to reconsider the role of media in shaping a more just and inclusive society, where religious diversity is respected and valued, thereby contributing to the fight against intolerance and racism in all its forms. These insights justify the development of new and broader studies on the topic.

Ultimately, the study highlights the importance of motivating social groups to engage more actively with digital media spaces. Moreover, it is essential to strengthen networks for media education, aiming to prepare individuals to become more active and autonomous in promoting connections and social change through communication.

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