

The agenda of digital Black Feminism in Portugal: A case analysis of Afrolis

La agenda del feminismo negro digital en Portugal: un análisis del caso de Afrolis

2

ARTICLE



Patricia Posch

University of Minho

Patricia Posch holds a PhD in Cultural Studies. She is a Research Fellow at the Center for Communication and Society Studies – CECS (Portugal) and a member of the Art, Culture and Power Research Group (PPCIS/UERJ, Brazil). She conducts research in Cultural Studies and Communication, with a special interest in issues related to identities, social memory, media, art, and museums. In addition to her scientific career, she works as a Marketing and Communication consultant and in innovation projects in Sustainability and Social Responsibility.

patriciaposch@gmail.com

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1839-3511>

Abstract

This paper focuses on the agenda of digital Black feminism in Portugal, presenting a thematic analysis of articles published by the alternative digital media outlet *Afrolis* between March 2023 and May 2023. The findings reveal that *Afrolis's* activism aligns with the core themes of the Black feminist agenda and plays a pivotal role in addressing both latent and urgent issues affecting racialized women in Portugal. By denouncing structural oppressions and creating spaces for narratives that promote collective empowerment, Black women have been repositioned at the center of a media ecosystem oriented toward alternative futures.

Keywords

Black feminism, digital culture, alternative media, discourse, *Afrolis*, Portugal

Resumen

Este artículo examina la agenda del feminismo negro digital en Portugal mediante un análisis temático de artículos publicados por el medio alternativo *Afrolis* entre marzo y mayo de 2023. Los hallazgos muestran que el activismo de *Afrolis* se alinea con los temas centrales de la agenda feminista negra y aborda cuestiones urgentes que afectan a mujeres racializadas en Portugal. Al denunciar las opresiones estructurales y crear espacios para narrativas que

promuevan el empoderamiento colectivo, las mujeres negras han sido reposicionadas en el centro de un ecosistema mediático orientado hacia futuros alternativos.

Palabras clave

Feminismo negro, cultura digital, medios alternativos, discurso, Afrolis, Portugal

1. INTRODUCTION

In her book *Imagination*, Ruha Benjamin highlights imagination as a powerful mechanism for building alternative futures, particularly in a world of dominant hegemonies that, by presenting specific perspectives as universal, exclude voices and marginalize people from the public social sphere. This reflection is especially relevant to social communication and our current times, in which diverse paths are being pursued as a way to open space for plural voices that enrich debates and work toward futures that embrace diversity. In this regard, the democratization and structure of new technologies have been fundamental in leveraging the potential of new media to broaden collective memory supports, strengthen counter-memories, and create spaces of expression for marginalized actors. This is especially true in the context of increased disputes for the control and “domestication” of knowledge (Santos, 2021).

In the literature on the relationship between “race”, Blackness, and digital technologies, studies have progressively expanded beyond the initial general interest in the lack of access to new digital technologies for historically marginalized social groups and the replication of such marginalization within digital environments (Everett, 2009). With technological advancement and efforts toward digital democratization, although these issues persist, studies have emerged to explore further the intersectionalities within digital spaces (Anguiano, 2023; Noble & Tynes, 2016). These include researches

that delve into the relationship between “race”, culture, and digital media (Florini, 2019) and offer a diachronic perspective on Black social activism within new digital media (McIlwain, 2020). Such contributions have paved the way for developing new theoretical and methodological approaches, centered, for example, on the idea of an Afrofuturist African-American cyberculture (Brock, 2020) or the approach to “race” as technology (Benjamin, 2020). They have also fostered urgent and critical discussions on issues such as algorithmic racism (Ewerton & Lima, 2023; Noble, 2018; Silva, 2024), digital and data colonialism (Enein, 2023; Faustino & Lippold, 2023; Lippold & Faustino, 2022), and the intersectionalities of artificial intelligence (Intahchomphoo & Gundersen, 2020).

In Black feminism studies, bell hooks, in the final pages of her emblematic book *Ain't I a Woman?*, reflects on the role of Black women as pioneers on a path of racial liberation and in the fight against racism and sexism, challenging oppressive systems and inspiring others to follow their own paths of resistance and self-realization.

We, black women who advocate feminist ideology, are pioneers. We are clearing a path for ourselves and our sisters. We hope that as they see us reach our goal—no longer victimized, no longer unrecognized, no longer afraid— they will take courage and follow. (hooks, 1983, p. 196)

More recently, in addition to contributions toward a more globalized movement (Gonzalez, 2020), the literature presents works not only

of inscription but, more importantly, of repositioning Black women in their relationship with digital technologies, in a movement aimed at “deconstructing white supremacist patriarchal capitalism in digital culture” (Steele, 2021, p. 10). This reconfiguration, which recognizes the prominent role of Black women and their potential to advance discussions in the field of digital technologies, has been explored in studies by various authors in Portugal and beyond, encompassing different focuses and approaches (Curtis, 2015; Noble, 2016; Jackson *et al.*, 2020; Sobande, 2020; Steele, 2021; Williams, 2015). As various studies indicate, digital media have been used by Black women as essential tools for their activism and fight for justice (Jones, 2019), including in Portugal (Curington, 2020; Henriques, 2017; Magalhães *et al.*, 2018; Marôpo *et al.*, 2017; Rua, 2023; Tostes, 2020).

In Portugal, Correia *et al.* (2024) mapped several alternative digital media outlets related to migrant and/or racialized communities in Portugal. According to Posch *et al.* (2024), the emergence of these media outlets is part of a broader context of strengthening the Black and anti-racist movements in Portugal and is also influenced by an increasing crisis in journalism globally (Johnson, 2024), with reverberations in the country (Silva, 2024). While the emergence of the first Black press outlets linked to the Black movement in Portugal dates to the early 20th century (Varela & Pereira, 2020), it was mainly in the second decade of the 21st century that various collectives and media outlets led by Black feminist women arose, addressing the concerns of Black movement through an intersectional lens. Still, in contrast to the European trend of predominantly male newsrooms, the presence of women in Portuguese *mainstream* newsrooms is increasing but still lacks diversity (Bandeira & Vizeu, 2018; OberCom, 2017),

with Black women being excluded from multiple areas within the information industry.

Collins (1990) stated that Black feminism encompasses a broader activism to restore human dignity and achieve social justice. According to Roldão (2019), beyond advancing topics inherited from pioneering Black feminist women in Portugal, the latest generation of Black feminist activists and researchers in the country are bringing new questions to the agenda, addressing matters of identity, aesthetics, gender, representation, social mobility, racism, and violence. Nonetheless, intersectionality has largely been thought of as only a backdrop in academia within the intersection of Journalism and Gender Studies (Lago *et al.*, 2018). Despite recent studies¹ aimed at understanding racial issues in Portugal—which help bring the country more in line with Europe concerning public and sectoral discussions about racism and racial matters (Cabecinhas & Macedo, 2019; Vala, 2021)—the engagement of “white Portugal” in Black feminism, as Roldão (2019, para. 1) noted, remains “slow, recent, and highly sectoral”. This scenario has created a latent demand for addressing digital Black feminism and its journalistic practices, which would allow for examining how alternative digital media have been working to deconstruct “personhood hierarchies” (Cerqueira & Magalhães, 2017, p. 10) that contribute to social inequality through the erasure and marginalization of certain subjects in media discourse.

In order to fill this gap, this work sought to contribute to an understanding of the agenda of contemporary digital Black feminism activism

¹ For example, studies addressing racial issues in Portugal within educational institutions (Araújo, 2007), in school textbooks (Cabecinhas *et al.*, 2022; Cupata *et al.*, 2024), in film production (Lins *et al.*, 2024; Macedo *et al.*, 2023), and in cultural institutions (Moutinho, 2022; Posch, 2016, 2018).

in Portugal. For this matter, it presents a case study consisting of an analysis of the thematic covered by alternative digital media *Afrolis* in their content. In 2014, Angolan journalist Carla Fernandes founded *Rádio Afrolis*, recognizing the importance — and urgency — of speaking about Black Portuguese people distinctively from migrants. According to her, there seemed to be no space for Black voices in *mainstream* Portuguese media: “Black Portuguese people are not part of the norm, and we are placed in boxes that still confine us to even smaller ones” (Fernandes apud Henriques, 2017).

In 2023, benefiting from a grant by the *Google News Initiative Europe 2023* initiative², *Afrolis* was launched as the journalistic wing of *Afrolis — Associação Cultural*. With an editorial team of 11 people, *Afrolis* had the mission to “provoke the change of the media ecosystem by bringing Black and racialized professionals to the center of the discussion”, as well as “disseminate the diversity of the realities of Black and racialized people, especially women”, and “encourage their participation in the production of media content” (*Afrolis*, 2024, para. 1). Since the beginning of the project on March 8, 2023, it has published content in various formats and sections, such as articles, blogs, interviews, photo galleries, podcasts, and videocasts. It ended its operations on December 3, 2023, celebrating the date with an event at *Casa Mocambo* in Lisbon. The event featured a debate on the journey of racialized women in the media alongside Black women professionals doing research in Communication Studies (Fernandes, 2023).

2. METHODOLOGY

Aiming to understand the activism of Black women in Portugal, the present work sought to contribute to the knowledge of the agenda of Black women’s journalism in the country’s alternative digital media landscape. To develop this issue, it presents a case study of *Afrolis*, one of the digital alternative media outlets in the Portuguese alternative digital media map related to migrants and/or racialized people developed by Correia *et al.* (2024).

The case study involved a thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2022) of 39 texts published in the “articles” section of *Afrolis*’s website from its first publication in March 2023 until the second half of May 2023.³ This time frame was set to encompass two relevant events concerning international migration in the Portuguese context: the establishment of a new elected government in Portugal in March 2022 and the creation of the *Agência para a Integração Migrações e Asilo* (Portuguese Agency for Minorities, Migration, and Asylum), replacing the *Serviço de Estrangeiros e Fronteiras* (Foreigners and Borders Service) (GOV.PT, 2023).

On May 16, 2023, the articles were collected using a web scraping script (Drucker, 2021). The thematic analysis process involved the following stages: familiarization with the corpus, generation of primary codes, drafting themes, reviewing themes, and naming and conceptualizing themes. The coding of text excerpts was carried out using *NVivo* and followed a semantic bottom-up inductive approach.

² Recent studies have raised concerns regarding the relationship between the information industry and funding through private initiatives (especially *big techs*), particularly regarding editorial independence (Bell, 2021; Papaevangelou, 2024; Posch *et al.*, 2024).

³ The articles are published and available for reading at <http://www.afrolis.pt>

3. RESULTS

The comparative analysis between the five main themes addressed in *Afrolis*'s articles, filtered by the total number of coded articles (Table 1) and the total number of coded text excerpts (Table 2) related to each theme, reveals the persistence and distribution of specific themes during the analyzed period. Although listed separately, the themes are strongly interconnected.

Table 1

Most representative themes of the analysis, by total of articles

Theme	Total of articles
Social Discrimination	21
Representations	13
Representativity	13
Violences	13
Narratives	11

Table 2

Most representative themes of the analysis, by total of coded excerpts

Theme	Total of coded excerpts
Social Discrimination	65
Violences	42
Representativity	34
Narratives	29
Reparations	29

Social discrimination was the most prominent topic on *Afrolis*'s agenda during the analyzed period. This matter has been extensively studied in academia, including prejudice against Black women within the Black community (Hooks, 1983) and in the Portuguese context (Cabe-*cinhas*, 2007; Loza, 2024). In a report published in 2023 by the National Institute of Statistics of Portugal, 44.2% of respondents who claimed to have experienced social discrimination in the country identified as Black, with 17.5% of them being women (INE, 2023).

The articles published by *Afrolis* addressed the various forms of social discrimination that Black women face in Portuguese society, highlighting "race" (racism), gender, nationality (xenophobia), culture, and religion. This approach reflects the intersectional aspect inherited mainly from the third wave of Black feminism in the 1990s, influenced by the works of Crenshaw (1989, 1991), as well as the awareness that Black women are subjected to triple social discrimination—social, racial, and sexual (Gonzalez, 2020). As written in the article *Vicissitudes da Linguagem...* (Vicissitudes of Language...), the origin of social discrimination is attributed to "knowledge acquired within family circles and other institutions throughout one's life", a frame of reference that makes it possible for a person "to never recognize the racist/aggressive acts

they commit” (para. 4). It is also rooted in “the strengthening of eugenic theories developed in the late 19th century in Europe and colonialist theories” (para. 7) along with Eurocentric narratives about African people and their history, as discussed in the article *Sobre a importância de conhecer as histórias de vida de pessoas negras* (On the importance of knowing the life stories of Black people):

For centuries, we have been creating and accessing Eurocentric narratives in various educational and cultural mediums, both formal and informal, about African populations who were enslaved from the 15th century onward, as well as their descendants, as if their stories were only relevant while subalterns. Such narratives have contributed and continue to contribute to the current state of affairs, where predominantly Black people continue to be publicly insulted, psychologically humiliated, physically and patrimonially violated. Condemned to live in extreme poverty, and deprived of their fundamental rights. (para. 2)

Social discrimination is closely connected to acts of violence, which is also one of the most discussed topics by *Afrolis*. Various forms and dimensions of violence suffered by Black women in Portugal are denounced, including police violence, domestic violence, violence within the family, institutional violence, property violence, parental alienation, bullying, sexual harassment, and violence against Black women’s bodies.

Both social discrimination and violence are correlated to a lack of representation of Black women across various sectors of Portuguese society. The underrepresentation of these women is problematic not only in quantitative

terms but, more importantly, qualitatively, as it denies these individuals decision-making positions and silences their voices. Roldão (2019, para. 4) states, “there is not much space in Portugal for a Black woman to work academically and critically on colonial issues.”

This was also one of the key topics on *Afrolis*’s agenda during the analyzed period⁴, mainly focusing on denouncing the lack of representation and/or underrepresentation of Black women in various spheres of Portuguese society. As stated in the article *A falta da representatividade na academia portuguesa: Mulheres Negras não pensam?* (The lack of representation in Portuguese academia: Black women do not think?):

In contrast to this damaging practice to democracy – scientific racism – we have notable Black women in Portuguese society, people we should draw inspiration from through their work, such as Joacine Katar Moreira (Historian, Politician, Activist), Grada Kilomba (Writer, Interdisciplinary Artist, Psychologist), Carla Fernandes (Writer and Director of *Afrolis*), Luzia Moniz (Journalist, Writer, Sociologist), Raquel Lima (Poet, Performer, Art Educator, Researcher), Gisela Casimiro (Poet, Writer, Activist), among others. In the country where the African presence is the most important historically, not even in the Assembly of the Republic do we see Black representation. Is ethnic-racial equality a utopia? And what about gender equality? Can there be

4 It is important to note that representation for *Afrolis* seems to be not only a topic of discussion but also a matter of practice, especially regarding civic representation (four of the articles within the analysis period were written by guest contributors from various areas of civil society) and media representation (two articles celebrate the conferral of an Honorary Doctorate title to Black Portuguese artist and writer Grada Kilomba).

social equity without representation of the cultural diversity present in a country across all sectors of society? (para. 6)

In Portugal, a recent survey found that 90.3% of people aged between 18 and 74 with a migratory background self-identify with the “black ethnic group” (INE, 2023). Despite this, these people are still invisible and marginalized in various social spheres, often stereotyped as “other” (Borges, 2008). Specifically in the case of Black women, Reis (2019, p. 53) states that, in addition to invisibility and lack of social representation, they are affected by a “silenced double discrimination”. The author highlights the intersectionalities that reflect social asymmetries among Black women in Portugal: among the women she interviewed, those with “lower levels of education and no education are those who have poorly paid precarious jobs and live in social housing”.

This perspective contrasts with the recognition of the role and importance of Black women in various social contexts, which is also present in *Afrolis*’s agenda, particularly in the article *Direito à Luta e Direito ao Descanso* (Right to Fight and Right to Rest):

The contribution of Black and African women to the building of the societies in which they find themselves and to the construction of a global movement for equality is undeniable. Whether through their thinking, their labor force, or their diverse historical experiences. (para. 1)

Raising awareness for this issue is crucial because, as stated in the article *Vicissitudes da Linguagem...* (Vicissitudes of Language...), “the silencing of the feelings and voices of Black women is still quite normative” (para. 6). While *Afrolis* draws attention to the lack of represen-

tation of Black people in Portuguese general society, the media, the arts, academia, the education system, and school textbooks, the lack of representation of Black women specifically is more strongly highlighted in academia, the arts, education, and politics. In the article *Mulheres negras que sonham ser cientistas* (Black women who dream of becoming scientists), for example, the topic of the importance of Black women’s representation in the arts is raised, so that “Black girls and women can dream and make their dreams come true in a world deeply marked by colonial and patriarchal legacies” (para. 11). In academia, *Afrolis* associates the lack of representation of Black women as a supra-national issue. According to Black researcher Ane Ogbe, after collecting personal testimonies with colleagues and analyzing quantitative data, she found that “Black women are a minority and often lack the organizational powers of the dominant White and male cultures” (Ogbe, 2022, p. 679). On the same aforementioned article by *Afrolis*, one reads that “there is a lack of Black representation in science, both in Portugal and in various former colonizing or colonized territories”, which is “a result of scientific racism that has been perpetuated for centuries” (para. 9). It also emphasizes that “it is very important to know about Black women who dreamed of becoming scientists, who fought, and who succeeded” (para. 9).

Afrolis also addressed the lack of representativity of Black women, including migrant women, in public spaces and the cartographies of the cities. Reflecting on the question that gives name to the article “*Também Estão No Mapa?*”: *Cartografia como espaço de resistência* (“Are they also on the map?”: Cartography as a space of resistance), regarding one art exhibition displayed at the garden of the Museum of Lisbon – *Palácio Pimenta*, it is stated:

A question often posed to those who “insist” on being on the map but are not legitimized to be there. A question the Black and migrant populations are constantly asked, to which they do not always know how to respond. “Lisbon is a very segregated, very segmented, very fractured city. So, the exhibition tries to give other voices to the city to rebuild it with a different discourse,” says António Brito Guterres, revealing one of the goals of that work. (para. 1)

It is important to remember that the lack of representation of Black women in society is embedded within a capitalist patriarchal context, a fundamental concept in Black feminism literature (Gonzalez, 2020). *Afrolis's* article *Um Momento de Escuta e Partilha no Teatro do Bairro Alto* (A Moment of Listening and Sharing at the Bairro Alto's Theater) reports the case of a Black mother who, when denouncing instances of racism her daughter faced at school, “had to always turn to the white father for her claims to be heard” (para. 6).

Weighing on this environment of social discrimination, violence, and lack of representation are the discourses and representations associated with Black women. According to Sampaio (2022), current social representations of Black bodies and subjects are intertwined with a long process of ideological construction of the representation of Black people in Portugal. The author states that through the establishment of social hierarchies and the denial of Black culture, African Black people were objectified, subjugated as “retrograde” (p. 21), infantilized, and animalized, resulting in social disempowerment and alienation of identity. Seen through the lens of socially established beauty standards that position the Black body as a contrast to the white, the Black woman is frequently “an-

imalized” (p. 21) and “associated with ugliness and dirt” (p. 26).

The article *Não serei eu uma mulher* (Ain't I a woman) discusses the connection between representativity and representation, starting with the idea that women have historically been portrayed according to the male gaze – “our position in society has been closely tied to how men view women” (para. 7). The hair and braids of Black women, which contribute to construction of their Black identity while simultaneously serving as a form of social protest (Portuguez & Schucman, 2023), are the central topics of the article *Cabelo Negro: falta de representação e compreensão na indústria da moda* (Black Hair: lack of representation and understanding in the fashion industry). According to Ngandu-Kalenga Greensword (2022, p. 746), Black women's hair has been politicized throughout history, being weaponized to “control, hypersexualize, and de-feminize Black women”. In *Afrolis's* article, it is highlighted that “the belief that natural hair is unsuitable for fashion or must be altered to be more ‘palatable’ is both harmful and restrictive” (para. 4), and how “the inclusion of Black models with natural, textured hair is seen as a way to challenge these stereotypes and encourage other Black women to embrace their natural hair” (para. 4).

The article *Descontinuidades Familiares das Mães Pretas - Continuidades Coloniais* (Family Discontinuities of Black Mothers - Colonial Continuities) sheds light on the relationship between the social representations of Black women and social intervention and healthcare, stressing the connection between representation and social change:

A majority of magistrates will not verify facts described in social reports and similar documents, considering the ways in which Black women or other

racialized women are historically/pejoratively interpreted by social work professionals and/or psychologists. This allows for the reproduction of colonial, patriarchal, and/or misogynistic violence on the bodies of Black women and children. (para. 5)

In the article *A oportunidade de uma história plural* (The Opportunity of a Plural History), the importance of the social representation of Black people in medical literature is explicitly pointed out:

Because those who are cold have blue lips, and those with a fever have rosy skin. We could write chapters about the meaning of this omission, but I write about the meaning of this revelation. Because only we can ask and answer: And we, with dark lips and Black skin? Don't we get cold? Don't we get a fever? And what about Mahsa Amini, isn't she news? Do we have to be blonde people who eat apples in the winter? (para. 8)

When it comes to Black women's representation in the media, the same article questions the *mainstream* journalism agenda and the attention given to issues related to marginalized women. It questions the priority given to a women's football match over the World Cup opening ceremony in 2022, disregarding the ongoing protests in Iran following the death of Mahsa Amini – “how many times did this appear in the news, for how many days, and how many total minutes? — it did not even reach 90 minutes of a football match” (para. 7). This critique supports the perception of 90.6% of over two hundred Black women from the Lisbon region, who in a 2020 survey indicated that they perceived the media preferentially portrays white women, and 85.6% considered that mixed-race

women have privilege over Black women (Sampaio, 2022).

On the other hand, the article *A Angela tem razão!* (Angela is right!), which marked the launch of *Afrolis*, states that Black women, knowing that they are “the driving forces of the structural transformations they need for a matter of survival” (para. 2), are involved in “infinite processes of reinvention” (para. 2). In a conversation as part of the cycle of talks about love and curatorial practice *Curating as a Practice of Love*, Lwando Xaso, South African author of *Made in South Africa: A Black Woman's Stories of Rage, Resistance and Progress*, states, in the article *Lwando Xaso, Uma Mulher Made in South Africa* (Lwando Xaso, A Woman Made in South Africa) that even negative stereotypes can be (re) signified in favor of a more just representation of marginalized people:

“That's it, Made in South Africa.” But then, regarding the rest of the title, I wanted people to know that to be made in South Africa often means being enraged. To adopt an attitude of resistance. But at the same time, there is also a sense of progress. Some people might think, “Really? Progress?” but I believe there is. I think it's chaotic, but even in the midst of chaos, there's some kind of momentum of a democracy that is maturing and developing. (para. 6)

The efforts to (re)signify representations of Black women can be framed as part of a broader activist movement for reparations in various forms. In the public sphere of Portugal, the topic of reparations gained further traction, especially in April 2023, when then-president Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa delivered a speech at the Assembly of the Republic emphasizing the need for Portugal to apologize to the enslaved

and colonized populations. Rebelo de Sousa (Lusa, 2023) stressed: “we must fully assume responsibility for what we did” (para. 13), adding that “it is not just about apologizing [...], it is about taking responsibility for the future of what we did, both good and bad, in the past” (para. 14).⁵

Reparations for racialized people in Portugal have been the focus of various studies (Biondi, 2003; Cabecinhas & Barros, 2022; Pereira *et al.*, 2024; Sousa *et al.*, 2022). In the article *Tribuna negra: origens do movimento negro em Portugal (1911-1933): Part 3* (Tribuna negra: origins of the Black movement in Portugal (1911-1933): Part 3), *Afrolis*’s point of view of reparations includes a call for an inward journey, an act of “self-reparation” (para. 8) for racialized individuals that stems from “the knowledge of the depth and complexity of our history” (para. 10), as written in the part one of this series of three articles written about the launch of the book that names the articles. This reflexive exercise leads Black women to the conclusion that reparations must occur across multiple interconnected dimensions, such as narratives, history, and epistemologies. Regarding the latter, Collins (1990, p. 221) states that the issue of epistemologies in Black feminism aims to highlight Black women as an “emerging power as agents of knowledge”, emphasizing the empowerment inherent in constructing new knowledge grounded in the experiences of African American women.

Considering the untold history of Black in colonial archives and libraries, *Afrolis* asks: “how

to handle this colonial heritage?” (para. 11) and “what tools can we forge to gain access to alternative ways of seeing, reading, and narrating ourselves?” (para. 11). The answer comes in the same article where these questions were posed, the third of the above-mentioned series. It proposes not a substitution of one history with another, but rather the construction of a pan-africanist Black archive where a plurality of histories, built from different standpoints, are in dialogue:

In its concluding section, the book *Tribuna Negra* offers several insights while stressing the importance of building a Black archive. I think this is a fundamental step, as only by doing so can we fertilize our imaginaries with new possibilities. The construction of this archive, which I prefer to call Pan-African, also includes the need to catalog and incorporate colonial archives within it. Refusing the colonial archive is refusing a historical debt. Keeping this archive alive in a decolonized form is to keep the reparation project alive. I understand reparation as a possibility for a relationship. Along this path, the concepts of breath and life are important. (para. 16)

This perspective supports the argument of Pereira *et al.* (2024, p. 4), for whom reparation in the Black movement goes beyond cultural artifacts and encompasses—and primarily entails—“reparation of historical narratives that continue to exclude from collective memory and render invisible the contributions of racialized groups and people to the construction of the present.”

⁵ In April 2024, the topic gained renewed traction in the mainstream media with new statements from Portuguese President Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa, asserting that Portugal must “pay the costs” it owes due to slavery and colonialism (Miranda, 2024), placing Portugal on an European movement to return cultural artifacts looted during anthropological ventures or colonial times.

Expanding the scope of reparations, *Afrolis* positions education as an essential practice within Black feminism in Portugal that should foster reparative and anti-racist initiatives. Proactive reflection and an anti-racist educational agenda are highlighted in the article *Racismo, xenofobia e/ou sexismo: consequências na vida de crianças e jovens nos âmbitos educacionais* (Racism, xenophobia, and/or sexism: consequences in the lives of children and youth in educational environments) as indispensable “if we wish to forge decolonial paths toward an education that is anti-racist and centered on affection” (para. 14).

4. CONCLUSIONS

The analysis presented in this work allows the conclusion that the agenda of digital Black feminism in Portugal, as seen through the content of the alternative digital media *Afrolis*, has played a key role in articulating latent and urgent issues affecting racialized women in the country. It has denounced structural oppressions and provided spaces for narratives that challenge stereotypes, promoting collective empowerment.

The predominance of topics such as social discrimination, violence, representativity, reparations, and activism in *Afrolis's* agenda reflects the civic and political practice characteristic of alternative media (Atton, 2002), within which the political-cultural journalism agenda practiced by Portuguese alternative digital media related to migrants and/or racialized people is embedded (Posch *et al.*, 2024). A deeper examination of how the most representative themes were addressed revealed that they not only speak to the particularities of the Portuguese

case but are also in line with global discussions within the Black feminist movement and the anti-racist struggle, such as reparations (Pereira *et al.*, 2024) and the Black archive (Caradonna, 2024; Kaur, 2022).

Like any historically situated and temporally defined work, this study has limitations. This research focuses on a temporally limited sample of content from only one alternative digital media. To deepen the understanding of digital Black feminist activism in Portugal, future studies can include a longitudinal analysis that tracks the evolution of this movement, which would enable a comprehensive assessment of how strategies, themes, and community engagement shift in response to sociopolitical changes and digital advancements. Also, this line of study will undoubtedly benefit from framing these findings in a comparative framework with mainstream media, seeking to understand how they counterbalance or complement each other, highlighting how racialized Black women contribute to the construction of a more diverse media ecosystem oriented toward alternative futures.

This article was developed within the scope of the project “MigraMediaActs – Migrations, media and activism in Portuguese language: decolonising mediascapes and imagining alternative futures” (PTDC/COM-CSS/3121/2021), supported by national funds through FCT — Foundation for Science and Technology, I.P.

REFERENCES

- Afrolis. (2024). *Sobre nós*. <https://afrolis.pt/sobre-nos>
- Anguiano, C. I. (2023). Las prácticas políticas feministas y las Tecnologías de Información y Comunicación: El caso del 35° Encuentro Plurinacional de Mujeres, Lesbianas, Trans, Travestis, Intersexuales, Bisexuales y No Binaries en Argentina. *Obra Digital*, (23), 87–98. <https://doi.org/10.25029/od.2023.366.23>
- Araújo, M. (2007). O silêncio do racismo em Portugal: O caso do abuso verbal racista na escola. In N. L. Gomes (Ed.), *Um olhar além das fronteiras: Educação e relações raciais* (pp. 77–94). Autêntica.
- Atton, C. (2002). *Alternative media*. Sage.
- Bandeira, A. P., & Vizeu, A. (2018). A mulher na redação em Portugal: O processo de feminização do jornalismo. In L. Aguiar, M. P. da Silva, & M. Martinez (Eds.), *Desigualdades, relações de gênero e estudos de jornalismo* (p. 35–52). Intercom - Sociedade Brasileira de Estudos Interdisciplinares da Comunicação.
- Bell, E. (2021). Do Technology Companies Care About Journalism? In A. Schiffrin (Ed.), *Media Capture: How Money, Digital Platforms, and Governments Control the News* (pp. 291–296). Columbia University Press.
- Benjamin, R. (2020). *Race After Technology: Abolitionist Tools for the New Jim Code*. Polity.
- Biondi, M. (2003). The Rise of the Reparations Movement. *Radical History Review*, 87(1), 5–18.
- Borges, R. (2008). Imigrantes africanos e negros brasileiros: A identidade imaginada na imprensa portuguesa e brasileira. *Revista de Estudos da Comunicação*, 9(20), 247–255. <https://doi.org/10.7213/rec.v9i20.16613>
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2022). *Thematic analysis: A practical guide*. Sage.
- Brock, A. (2020). *Distributed Blackness: African American Cybercultures*. New York University Press.
- Cabecinhas, R., Balbé, A., Camanho, L., & Cunha, L. (2022). Imagens e miragens do mundo lusófono nos manuais escolares de história portuguesas: visões do passado, presente e futuro. In M. L. Martins, A. Balbé, I. Macedo, & E. Mabasso (Eds.), *Portugal e Moçambique - Travessias identitárias e imaginários do passado e do presente* (pp. 193–220). Húmus
- Cabecinhas, R., & Barros, M. D. (2022). Knowledge production, historical reparation and construction of alternative futures. Interview with Miguel de Barros. *Comunicação e sociedade*, (41), 243–258. [https://doi.org/10.17231/comsoc.41\(2022\).3719](https://doi.org/10.17231/comsoc.41(2022).3719)

- Cabecinhas, R. & Macedo, I. (2019). (Anti)racismo, ciência e educação: teorias, políticas e práticas. *Medi@ções*, 7(2), 16-36. <https://doi.org/10.60546/mo.v7i2.242>
- Cabecinhas, R. (2007). *Preto e branco: A naturalização da discriminação racial*. Campo das Letras.
- Caradonna, V. (2024). 'These are large ideals that we hope for': Heritagising the past and present of anti-racist activism in the Black Archives. *International Journal of Heritage Studies*, 30(4), 488-503. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13527258.2024.2315232>
- Cerqueira, C., & Magalhães, S. I. (2017). Ensaio sobre Cegueiras: Cruzamentos interseccionais e (in)visibilidades nos media. *ex aequo - Revista da Associação Portuguesa de Estudos sobre as Mulheres*, (35), 9-20. <https://doi.org/10.22355/exaequo.2017.35.01>
- Collins, P. H. (1990). *Black feminist thought: Knowledge, consciousness and the politics of empowerment*. Unwin Hyman.
- Correia Borges, G., Posch, P., Cerqueira, C., Lobo, P., Cabecinhas, R., & Macedo, I. (2024). *Média Alternativos Digitais relacionados às Migrações e/ou pessoas racializadas—Mapeamento* [Dataset]. Repositório de Dados da Universidade do Minho. <https://doi.org/10.34622/datarepositorium/ZT1UXK>
- Crenshaw, K. (1991). Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence against Women of Color. *Stanford Law Review*, 43(6), 1241-1299. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1229039>
- Crenshaw, K. (1989). Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics. *University of Chicago Legal Forum*, (1), 139-167. <https://chicagounbound.uchicago.edu/uclf/vol1989/iss1/8>
- Cupata, J., Cabecinhas, R., & Macedo, I. (2024). A história de África em livros didáticos vigentes no sistema educativo angolano: O caso do I ciclo do ensino secundário. *Capoeira - Humanidades e Letras*, 9(1), 318-338. <https://revistas.unilab.edu.br/index.php/capoeira/article/view/1905>
- Curington, C. V. (2020). "WE SPEAK BACK!": Challenging Belonging and Anti-Blackness in Portugal. *Du Bois Review: Social Science Research on Race*, 17(2), 337-362. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1742058X20000144>
- Curtis, T. (2015). *New media in Black women's autobiography: Intrepid embodiment and narrative innovation*. Springer.
- Drucker, J. (2021). *The Digital Humanities Coursebook: An Introduction to Digital Methods for Research and Scholarship*. Routledge.
- Enein, D. G. (2023). Post-Colonialism And The Digital Age. *Journal of Namibian Studies: History Politics Culture*, 38, 262-277. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.geoforum.2023.103824>

- Everett, A. (2009). *Digital diaspora: A race for cyberspace*. State University of New York Press.
- Ewerton, B., & Lima, C. (2023). Racismo Algorítmico: Vivências e Percepções de Influenciadores(as) Digitais Negros(as). *Revista África e Africanidades*, 16(47–48), 1–16.
- Faustino, D., & Lippold, W. (2023). *Colonialismo digital: Por uma crítica hacker-fanoniana*. Boitempo.
- Fernandes, C. (2023, December 1). Balanço Afrolis 2023. *Afrolis*. <https://afrolis.pt/balanco-afrolis-2023/>
- Florini, S. (2019). *Beyond Hashtags: Racial Politics and Black Digital Networks*. New York University Press.
- Gonzalez, L. (2020). *Por um feminismo afro-latino-americano*. Zahar.
- GOV.PT. (2023, April 10). Aprovada criação da Agência Portuguesa para as Minorias, Migrações e Asilo. GOV.PT. <https://www2.gov.pt/noticias/aprovada-criacao-da-agencia-portuguesa-para-as-minorias-migracoes-e-asilo>
- Henriques, J. G. (2017, September 16). As várias faces do ativismo negro. *Público*. <https://www.publico.pt/2017/09/16/sociedade/noticia/as-varias-faces-do-ativismo-negro-1785487>
- hooks, b. (1983). *Ain't I a Woman: Black woman and feminism*. Pluto Press.
- INE. (2023). Inquérito às condições de vida, origens e trajetórias da população residente. *Instituto Nacional de Estatística*.
- Intahchomphoo, C., & Gundersen, O. E. (2020). Artificial Intelligence and Race: A Systematic Review. *Legal Information Management*, 20(2), 74–84. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1472669620000183>
- Jackson, S. J., Bailey, M., & Welles, B. F. (2020). *#HashtagActivism: Networks of Race and Gender Justice*. MIT Press.
- Jones, F. (2019). *Reclaiming our space: How Black feminists are changing the world from the tweets to the streets*. Beacon Press.
- Johnson, P. R. (2024). Journalism and its Response to Crisis: Understanding the Role of Place and Community in Journalism Studies. *Journal of Communication Inquiry*, 48(3), 335–337. <https://doi.org/10.1177/01968599241252285>
- Kaur, H. (2022, February 19). How Black archives are highlighting overlooked parts of history and culture. *CNN*. <https://edition.cnn.com/2022/02/19/us/black-archivists-history-culture-cec/index.html>

- Lago, C., Kazan, E., & Thamani, M. (2018). Jornalismo e estudos de gênero: E a interseccionalidade, onde está? In L. Aguiar, M. P. da Silva, & M. Martinez (Eds.), *Desigualdades, relações de gênero e estudos de jornalismo* (pp. 124–140). Intercom - Sociedade Brasileira de Estudos Interdisciplinares da Comunicação.
- Lins, L., Macedo, I. M., Cabecinhas, R., Brasil, J. A., & Sá, A. (2024). O cinema como espaço de ativismo mnemónico: Uma análise da produção cinematográfica com financiamento público em Portugal. *Observatorio (OBS*)*, 18(3), 134–156. <https://doi.org/10.15847/obsOBS18320242463>
- Lippold, W., & Faustino, D. (2022). Digital colonialism, racism and the primitive accumulation of data. *Germinal: marxismo e educação em debate*, 14(2), 56–78. <https://periodicos.ufba.br/index.php/revistagerminal/article/view/49760>
- Loza, Y. (2024). “Volta para a tura terra”? Uma visão crítica da discriminação racista em Portugal. *Cadernos IS-UP*, (5), 29-37. <https://doi.org/10.21747/2975-8033/cad5a4>
- Lusa. (2023, April 25). 25 Abril: o povo é “o supremo senhor” da democracia e “garante da estabilidade”, indica Marcelo. *Sic Notícias*. <https://sicnoticias.pt/pais/2023-04-25-25-Abril-o-povo-e-o-supremo-senhor-da-democracia-e-garante-da-estabilidade-indica-Marcelo-1f7b6b8b>
- Macedo, I., Lins, L., Vieira da Silva, T. & Cabecinhas, R. (2023). Exploring images of otherness through cinema: Analysis of counter-visualities in Portuguese films. *Papers on Social Representations*, 32(2), 1.1-1.27.
- Magalhães, M., Marôpo, L., & Amaral, I. (2018). Ativismo feminista no Facebook: Uma análise comparada das páginas Não me Kahlo (Brasil) e Capazes (Portugal). *Mediapolis – Revista de Comunicação, Jornalismo e Espaço Público*, (7), 31–46. https://doi.org/10.14195/2183-6019_7_2
- Marôpo, L., Silva, M. T., & Magalhães, M. (2017). Feminismo online em Portugal: Um mapeamento do ativismo no Facebook. In S. Pereira & M. Pinto (Eds.), *Literacia, Media e Cidadania - Livro de Atas do 4º Congresso* (pp. 280-293). CECS.
- McIlwain, C. (2020). *Black software: The internet and racial justice, from the AfroNet to Black Lives Matter*. Oxford University Press.
- Miranda, T. (2024, April 24). Marcelo diz que “temos de pagar” pela escravatura em África e massacres coloniais. *Expresso*. <https://expresso.pt/politica/2024-04-24-marcelo-diz-que-temos-de-pagar-pela-escravatura-em-africa-e-massacres-coloniais-00c34700>
- Moutinho, M. (2022). Pensamento decolonial e as heranças africanas nos museus em Portugal. *Cadernos de Sociomuseologia*, 64(20), 21-34. <https://doi.org/10.36572/csm.2022.vol.64.02>

- Ngandu-Kalenga Greensword, S. (2022). Historicizing black hair politics: A framework for contextualizing race politics. *Sociology Compass*, 16(8), e13015. <https://doi.org/10.1111/soc4.13015>
- Noble, S. U. (2018). *Algorithms of oppression: How search engines reinforce racism*. New York University Press.
- Noble, S. U. (2016). A future for intersectional black feminist technology studies. *Scholar & Feminist Online*, 13(3), 1–8. <https://sfonline.barnard.edu/safiya-umoj-noble-a-future-for-intersectional-black-feminist-technology-studies>
- Noble, S. U., & Tynes, B. M. (2016). *The Intersectional Internet: Race, Sex, Class, and Culture Online*. Peter Lang International Academic Publishers.
- OberCom. (2017). *Profissão Jornalista: Condições laborais, formação e constrangimentos*. OberCom.
- Ogbe, A. (2022). A seat at the table is not enough: a perspective on Black women representation in academia. *Immunology & Cell Biology*, 100(9), 679–682. <https://doi.org/10.1111/imcb.12584>
- Papaevangelou, C. (2024). Funding Intermediaries: Google and Facebook's Strategy to Capture Journalism. *Digital Journalism*, 12(2), 234–255. <https://doi.org/10.1080/21670811.2022.2155206>
- Pereira, A. C., Correia Borges, G., & Lança, M. (2024). Opening Note: Repairing the Irreparable. *Vista*, (13), 1–9. <https://doi.org/10.21814/vista.5813>
- Portuguez, B. S., & Schucman, L. V. (2023). Cabelo como denúncia e via para a construção da negritude. *Revista da Associação Brasileira de Pesquisadores/as Negros/as (ABPN)*, 16, 198–232. <https://abpnrevista.org.br/site/article/view/1600>
- Posch, P., Correia Borges, G., Simões, C., & Cerqueira, C. (2024). Emerging Perspectives: An Overview of Alternative Digital Media and Migrant and/or Racialised People in Portugal. *Lusophone Journal of Cultural Studies*, 11(2), e024015. <https://doi.org/10.21814/rlec.5748>
- Posch, P. (2018). Manifestação da memória social brasileira na exposição [Co]Habitar na Casa da América Latina de Lisboa. *Museologia e Patrimônio*, 11(2), 246–265. <http://revistamuseologiaepatrimonio.mast.br/index.php/ppgpmus/article/view/684>
- Posch, P. (2016). *Há memória no museu? Uma análise crítica do Museu Nacional de Etnologia*. The Street and the City - Awakenings, Lisbon.
- Reis, S. dos S. (2019). *A (In)visibilização da Mulher Negra em Portugal—A dupla discriminação silenciada* [Master's thesis, New University of Lisbon]. Repositório Universidade Nova. <http://hdl.handle.net/10362/94406>

- Roldão, C. (2019, January 18). Feminismo negro em Portugal: Falta contar-nos. *Público*. <https://www.publico.pt/2019/01/18/culturaipsilon/noticia/feminismo-negro-portugal-falta-contarnos-1857501>
- Rua, I. (2023). Feminismo Negro no Meio Digital em Portugal: Análise dos Perfis de Instagram @quotidianodeumanegra e @umafricana. *Interações: Sociedade e as novas modernidades*, (45), 156–182. <https://doi.org/10.31211/interacoes.n45.2023.a7>
- Sampaio, L. C. (2022). Como o status social colonial é refletido no cotidiano das mulheres negras – análise de percepções das mulheres negras em Portugal através do padrão de beleza dominante. In L. C. Sampaio & P. P. Cabreira (Eds.), *Por uma História com mulheres: Compreensões e caminhos em classe, raça e gênero* (pp. 17–32). Desalinho Publicações.
- Silva, M. S. (2024). “I Don’t Have the Necessary Conditions”: How Television and Radio Journalists Rate the Quality of Journalism in Portugal. *Comunicação e sociedade*, 44
- Santos, M. S. (2021). Memória e tecnologias digitais. In M. S. dos Santos (Ed.), *Memória Coletiva e Justiça Social* (pp. 149–164). Garamond.
- Silva, T. (2024). Fighting Algorithmic Racism: Reactions, remediations and re-appropriations. In A. Gonçalves, L. Torre, & P. Melo (Eds.), *Inteligência Artificial e Algoritmos: Desafios e oportunidades para os media* (pp. 135–159). LabCom.
- Sobande, F. (2020). *The Digital Lives of Black Women in Britain*. Palgrave Macmillan.
- Sousa, V., Khan, S., & Pereira, P. (2022). A restituição cultural como dever de memória. *Comunicação e sociedade*, (41), 11–22. [https://doi.org/10.17231/comsoc.41\(2022\).4039](https://doi.org/10.17231/comsoc.41(2022).4039)
- Steele, C. K. (2021). *Digital Black Feminism*. New York University Press.
- Tostes, I. (2020). *Articulações entre o feminismo negro e o racismo em Portugal* [Master’s thesis, New University of Lisbon]. Repositório Universidade Nova. <http://hdl.handle.net/10362/117793>
- Vala, J. (2021). *Racismo, Hoje—Portugal em Contexto Europeu*. Fundação Francisco Manuel dos Santos.
- Varela, P., & Pereira, J. A. (2020). As origens do movimento negro em Portugal (1911–1933): Uma geração pan-africanista e antirracista. *Revista de História*, (179), 1–36. <https://doi.org/10.11606/issn.2316-9141.rh.2020.159242>
- Williams, S. (2015). Digital Defense: Black Feminists Resist Violence with Hashtag Activism. *Feminist Media Studies*, 15(2), 341–344. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14680777.2015.1008744>