The involuntary racist

A study on white racism evasiveness amongst social movements activists

in Madrid, Spain

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The involuntary racist: A study on white racism evasiveness amongst social movements activists in Madrid, Spain

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**Abstract**
This study explores how white social movement activists in Madrid, Spain, relate to race and racism, a previously unexamined issue in the Spanish context. The study is based upon qualitative semi-structured interviews and analytically framed within critical whiteness studies. The first part of the study focuses on how the interviewed activists understand race, whiteness and racism at a conceptual level. The second part analyses three dominant discourses that the white activists employ to make sense of race and racism in the specific context of social movements. The findings indicate an important gap between the two and show that when referring to social movements, all activists engage in racism evasiveness, allowing them to reproduce a sincere fiction of the white self as a "good" and "non-racist" person. The study moreover discusses how the three discourses may influence the way in which anti-racist work can be framed and despite some differences, they all present serious limitations in terms of challenging both internal and external racial power relations.

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**Keywords**: social movements, whiteness, racism, white sincere fictions, racism evasiveness, critical whiteness studies.
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1. Introduction

A friend recently told me that Spain has many problems but fortunately racism is not one of them. I was startled, but not surprised. I have heard this argument before coming from white friends involved in feminist antidiscrimination work, colleagues in NGOs or journalists discussing racist hate crimes in other countries. Racism is rarely discussed as a public problem in Spain and, as in many other European countries, race as such has not been considered a relevant issue neither in politics nor in research (Flores 2015).

My interest in whiteness and racism started with this perceived silence. In this study, I want to explore how white left-wing social movement activists, who are generally very attentive towards other systematic inequalities, relate to race and racism. One the one hand, my interest in social movement activists stems from my personal experience in political change work. As a white feminist activist, with a strong interest in intersecting inequalities, I am to some extent exploring my own relationship with racism and white privilege. One the other, left-wing social movement activists come across as a particularly interesting group for a study on whiteness and racism, precisely due to their political commitment to equality, often explicitly including anti-racism.

To look at how white social movement activists relate to race and racism is also important as social movements are strong in Spain. As demonstrated by the mass protests inspired by the anti-austerity Indignadxs movement in 2011, they have played an important political role over the past few years. The way in which these movements manage to deal with multiple interrelated inequalities, including racism, is fundamental for their capacity to address multidimensional social problems in a comprehensive way. Indeed, their ability to attend to racism, as part of intersecting systems of discrimination, is particularly relevant as race de facto is an issue of growing importance in Spain, due to the significant increase in immigration since the millennium shift (National Statistics Institute 2017). The accounts of everyday racism experienced by these foreign-born immigrants and racialised Spaniards alike, stand in stark contrast to the (white) perception of Spain as a non-racist country (SOS Racismo 2016; Fundación Secretariado Gitano 2016).

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1 I use the gender-neutral noun Indignadxs with an "x", rather than "indignados", grammatically referring only to men, or "indignad@s", including both women and men, but not transpeople. The Indignadxs, or 15M movement, emerged in 2011 during the economic crisis in Spain and mobilised millions of people.
Internationally, several authors have discussed whiteness critically both from an empirical and a theoretical perspective (Frankenberg 1993; Dyer 1997; Ahmed 2007). A few studies have also explored how whites relate to race and racism in the specific context of social movements, particularly in the United States (Ernst 2010; Bilge 2013; Beeman 2015). However, research concerning whiteness and racism in the Spanish context is glaringly absent. So are studies focusing on racism in the otherwise rich literature on social movements in Spain. This investigation can thus be considered not only a first, albeit limited, case study of how white social movement activists relate to race and racism, but also as one of the few academic and political discussions concerning whiteness and racism at all in the Spanish context.

Following this Introduction I will introduce my purpose and research questions, the previous research in relation to the topic and the methodological and theoretical frameworks. I will then continue with the analytical discussion, which is divided into two parts, the first one focusing on the activists' general understandings of race, whiteness and racism and the second on how they make sense of race and racism in the specific context of social movements. The study will then be concluded with some final remarks.

2. Purpose and research questions

As highlighted in the previous section, the purpose of this study is to explore how white activists in social movements in Madrid, Spain, relate to issues concerning race and racism. I want to know what they say and believe in terms of racial matters, both generally and in the specific context of social movements. My intention is not to label the white activists as "good" or "bad" or as "racists" or "non-racists". Rather, I am interested in examining white racialised thinking and how racism might be structurally reproduced – or challenged – by the white activists.

In order to explore how the white activists relate to race and racism I will focus on the following research questions:

- How is race, whiteness and racism understood by the white left-wing activists?
How do the white left-wing activists discursively address and/or avoid race and racism in the context of social movements? What dominant discourses are used?

What are the consequences of these dominant discourses for how anti-racist work can be framed in social movements?

These research questions attempt to address both the conceptual understandings of race and racism broadly, explored in the first question, and the way in which the activists make sense of these issues in their own spaces for political activism, covered by the second research question. I believe that the way in which the activists make sense of race and racism in social movements matters, as different discourses may hold different transformative potential, facilitating or obstructing internal and external anti-racist work. This transformative potential, or lack thereof, is addressed by the third question.

I hope that this study can contribute to a debate concerning race and racism in the context of social movements as well as to an incipient discussion concerning whiteness in the Spanish context.

3. Previous research

My study is located at the intersection of whiteness, social movements and race/racism. This is a field of study which has not been previously explored in the Spanish context, where research on social movements abound, but studies concerning whiteness, race and racism in the context of these movements are glaringly absent.

Indeed, little has been written at all on whiteness in Spain, despite an emergent and limited political debate online (see for instance: Garcés 2017; Rico 2017). In terms of academic research, a few studies have dealt with different aspects of whiteness as part of the Spanish colonial project and yet another has explored Swedish whiteness in Southern Spain (Fracchia 2009; Lundström 2013; Twinham 2015). None of these investigations are relevant for the purposes of this study, which focuses on Spanish whiteness in present-day Spain.
There is, however, a rich literature on contemporary social movements in Spain, particularly related to a variety of aspects concerning the recent Indignadxs movement (Cruells-Lopéz & Ruíz-García 2014; Cruells & Ezquerra 2015; Fominaya 2015; Carty 2015; Taibo 2015; Antentas 2015; Rovisco 2016). Whereas some of this literature addresses the capacity to deal with interrelated inequalities, there is no previous research on how social movements, and/or their activists, address issues related to race and racism. Indeed, Cruells-López and Ruíz-García, in their study of intersectionality in the Indignadxs movement, do not consider race due to limited resources. They argue that they chose to focus only on class, gender, sexual orientation and gender identity as these are "dimensions that are historically dominant in the Spanish context" and "carried relatively greater weight within the movement" (Cruells-López & Ruiz-García 2014, p. 9). This argument is problematic for two reasons. First, the fact that race has not been a dominant analytical category in the Spanish public debate does not necessarily mean that it is irrelevant. Rather, this lack of public visibility could be interpreted as a systematic silencing of certain inequalities at the expense of others. Second, the fact that race, according to the authors, carried less weight within the movement could in itself indicate that racial power relations were significant, rather than irrelevant.

Several authors have discussed precisely how race has been systematically displaced in the European context, including Spain (Knapp 2005; El-Tayeb 2011; Lewis 2013; Bilge 2013; Flores 2015). These authors show how the concept of race has been analytically and politically discredited and disavowed as irrelevant and/or unspeakable in parts of Europe. The effect of this rejection is that the relevance of race is displaced to elsewhere, particularly the United States and, to some extent, Great Britain (El-Tayeb 2011, pp. xv-xvi; Lewis 2013, p. 874). First and foremost, this is a social and epistemological erasure, but it is also problematic from an analytical point of view if we understand race as being – de facto – a key organising principle in European societies (Lewis 2013). In the case of Spain, Flores has reclaimed the use of race as an analytical category in order to understand discrimination against immigrants (2015, pp. 261-64). He describes Spanish society as one denying racial differences and argues that both political and intellectual elites in Spain reject the notion of race (Flores 2015, p. 238). These authors are highly relevant for the purposes of this study not only for analysing a potential lack of discussion of race and racism amongst social movement activists, but also for contextualizing the lack of previous research on these issues.
Finally, several authors have explored issues related to whiteness, race and racism in other countries, primarily the United States. Although their findings may not be entirely applicable to a Spanish context, they do provide an important starting point for my investigation. Frankenberg, in her influential study, focuses on whiteness by looking at how race shapes white women's lives (1993). She describes three discursive repertoires that the interviewed women use to think and speak about race: essentialist racism, colour evasion and race cognizance. Her findings indicate that a colour- and power-evasive repertoire dominated amongst the interviewees, even if other discourses also emerged (1993, p. 245). Moreover, Frankenberg shows important continuities between progressive left-wing discourses and conservative ones, with racism being reproduced regardless of the individual's intentions to challenge it (1993, p. 19).

Hughey, comparing the racial identities of white nationalists and white anti-racists, displays similar findings (2012). He shows that despite possessing antagonistic political views, these two groups share similar understandings of racial categories and also display hegemonic whiteness in comparable ways (2012, p. 184). Hence, he concludes that "[w]hites are bound to, but not overdetermined by, the dominant meanings of white racial identity (2012, p. 192). The findings of Frankenberg and Hughey are of interest for this study as they indicate that whites tend to reproduce racism and white privilege independently of political orientation and intentions, being influenced by dominant racial discourses in society.

Feagin, Vera and Batur, drawing upon interviews with ninety whites across the United States, find that relatively few whites think about their whiteness reflectively. They argue that most whites are uncomfortable with overtly racist attitudes, but at the same time "soften the harshness of the racist realities" in a way that conceals racism and exonerates white perpetrators (Feagin, Vera & Batur 2001, p. 196). They use the term white "sincere fictions" to describe how white people can portray themselves as non-racist or "good people" even when they think or act in racist ways (2001, p. 216). Their study does not focus specifically on progressive whites, but the notion of sincere fictions comes across as a particularly interesting concept, which will be explored in more detail as part of the theoretical framework.
There are also a few studies focusing specifically on how social movement activists deal with race and racism, again primarily from the United States. Beeman highlights how activists in interracial organisations engage in racism evasiveness to maintain movement solidarity under a colour-blind identity. Despite being aware of racism, and considering fighting it important, the activists fear addressing it explicitly. Racism evasiveness is justified by emphasising action over talk, as the "activists strategically 'walk the walk' but do not 'talk the talk' on racism" (Beeman 2015, p. 128). Beeman further argues that despite knowing how racism works, both radical leftist whites and people of colour engage in racism evasiveness and that social movements therefore need to pay greater attention to how external racist ideologies influence movement strategies (2015, p. 144). Beeman has also discussed racism evasiveness in the Occupy movement, highlighting how racist discourses influenced the movement and how they were challenged (2012). In a similar way Bilge describes how the Occupy and SlutWalk movements lacked decolonial perspectives and engaged in racism evasiveness (2013).

Lastly, Ernst explores how colour-blind racism influences welfare activists and finds that the overwhelming majority of white activists employ several colour-blind frames to avoid confronting racism (2010). Following Bonilla-Silva's categorisation, her findings indicate that the activists use traditional expressions of colour-blindness, such as abstract liberalism and minimization. She also finds that activists engage in what she calls "cosmetic" colour-blindness, which incorporates an explicit discourse of race, but "avoids any connection between race and political, economic, or social power" (Ernst 2010, p. 39). Some interviewees, primarily women of colour, also challenged the dominant discourse of colour-blindness (Ernst 2010, pp. 142-43).

Although Beeman, Bilge and Ernst focus on specific social movements, and not on activists in a broader sense, their conclusions are relevant for this study as they show how racism as a central ideology in society affects progressive social movement activists. However, their findings should be applied with care to a Spanish context, which may differ from the United States. For instance, one might expect that the activists in this study are influenced by structural racism in Spanish society, but also that they are affected by the above-mentioned European disavowal of race as a relevant category and hence find speaking about race as such problematic.
4. Methodology

4.1 Producing one's own material: qualitative interviews as a method

The empirical material to be analysed in this study consists of the transcriptions of six qualitative interviews with social movement activists. As argued by Denscombe, interviews are particularly useful for the intricate task of gaining insight into people's opinions, experiences and emotions (2010, pp. 173-74). Moreover, they allow the researcher to go into depth and explore potentially sensitive issues, fundamental aspects for a study focusing on opinions regarding race and racism.

I have chosen to work with semi-structured interviews. This type of interviews are guided by an interview guide, but both the questions and the wording may be altered depending on the interview situation (Davies 2002, p. 95). My interview guide\(^2\) started with a brief introduction to the study followed by a few personal questions meant to break the ice and give me relevant background information concerning the interviewee. The subsequent questions focused on diversity and the people integrating social movements, general understandings of race and racism, perceptions of race and racism in the context of social movements and finally opinions regarding how social movements should tackle these issues in the future. However, other questions were added depending on the interview situation, including follow-up questions on examples given by the interviewees. As pointed out by Letherby, this approach aims at keeping the interviews open and allows for detecting new topics along the way (2003, p. 84). One such topic that turned out to be important in my case concerned why the interviewees believed that there was a lack of racial diversity in social movements.

In contrast to traditional research methods, where the researcher should not interfere with the interview context, Oakley argues that the interview works better if the interviewer invests her personal identity in it (1981, p. 41). I consider interviews to be interactive by their very nature and both interviewer and interviewee inevitably contribute to the way in which knowledge is produced. Following Oakley, I have chosen to participate actively in the interviews, for instance by offering information about myself and at times validating the ideas or feelings expressed by the interviewees, due to both practical and ethical reasons. My study deals with a topic that can be

\(^2\) See Appendix 2 for the interview guide.
considered sensitive by the interviewees. By participating actively in the conversation, I wanted to make the activists feel comfortable enough to share their opinions, without feeling judged. My intention was to avoid placing myself in what could be perceived as a morally superior position when discussing racism. Hence, I consciously tried to reduce the distance between "the researcher" and "the researched" by establishing a common "us" in the interviews. This comes across as particularly important given that I, to some extent, share the interviewees' location as a white social movement activist.

Access to interviewees has been granted by common friends or acquaintances who have helped me to establish a first contact and/or provided me with the contact details. Given that I am not primarily interested in how a specific social movement deals with issues concerning race and racism, but rather in the understandings and discourses employed by the social movement activists, I have chosen to interview activists from a broad range of movements. Most interviewees have been active in several groups, sometimes simultaneously, and their backgrounds include the feminist and LGBTQ movements, political squatting associations, international solidarity committees, the anti-militarist movement, student activist groups, the anti-globalisation movement and community-based organisations working in specific neighbourhoods. Interestingly, all interviewees have also participated to varying degrees in the recent Indignadxs movement.

All participants are Spanish nationals living in the Madrid region. Three interviewees identify as men, two as women and one as non-binary and their ages range from 21 to 43 years old. Unfortunately, access has not been granted to older interviewees, who possibly would have given additional insights. It should also be noted that all the participants have attended university, a background they, according to previous research on for instance the Indignadxs movement, seem to share with a majority of social movement activists (Calvo, Gomez-Pastrana & Mena 2011, p. 7).

Interviews lasted between 50 to 120 minutes each, were recorded and then transcribed verbatim in Spanish. The material has been analysed using a colour coding technique to identify patterns that related to the research questions. Themes have primarily emerged

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3 This interviewee's name is usually associated with women in Spanish and hence I have chosen to use a female-sounding pseudonym. Nonetheless, respecting their identification as non-binary, I use the neutral pronouns they/them/their to refer to this interviewee throughout the document.
from ideas that were recurrent in the interviews, but also from theoretical concepts that have framed the study, such as expressions of racism evasiveness or white sincere fictions. When analysing the material I have looked both at what is being said (or not) and how it is being said. I have consciously chosen to use many quotations, both to make the interviewees’ own voices heard and to make my analysis more transparent. Moreover, when relevant, I have paraphrased or included my own questions when citing the interviewees’ answers in order to make myself as a researcher visible in the text.

The interviews have been conducted in Spanish and all translations to English are my own. I have spoken Spanish for almost twenty years and my personal and professional life has evolved primarily in that language for the past fifteen. Conducting the interviews in Spanish has not implied any particular limitations in terms of language, but the task of translating the rich quotations into English has at times been challenging, as some of the nuances are inevitably lost in translation. I have tried to contextualise the material to compensate for such losses.

In the quotations, silences in the interviews are marked with three dots, whereas [...] indicates my own editing of the material. Quotations are literal, although slight editing has been carried out to make them easier to read, except for when I have considered that the repetitions or rhetorical incoherencies were important for the analysis, for instance indicating that an issue was particularly sensitive for the interviewee.

### 4.2 Ethics and reflexivity

Issues of information, consent and confidentiality are central ethical concerns when conducting interviews. All the participants have been informed about the research project both verbally and in writing and have given informed consent before starting the interviews.\(^4\) Apart from explaining the aim of the study and that the material would be used only for academic purposes, interviewees were also informed that they had the right to withdraw their consent at any time. Moreover, all the interviewees have been offered to review the transcriptions in order to add or withdraw information to be used in the study. Half of them asked for the transcription but made no changes to the

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\(^4\) See appendix 1 for the information sheet given to the interviewees before starting the interview.
original version. I have also encouraged all the participants to contact me if they have any further questions. Confidentiality has been guaranteed during all stages of the research process and all names have been changed. In some cases personal information, such as an explicit reference to an interviewee’s work place, has also been eliminated in order to protect anonymity. Upon the explicit request of several interviewees, the names of their activist groups have also been omitted and only a general description of the movements has been included. The Indignadxs movement is the only exception to this rule, due to its immense size and the fact that all the interviewees have participated in this movement in one way or another. However, no reference is made to specific working groups within the movement. All interviewees have also been offered to read the final version of the study, upon previous request.

As highlighted above, all knowledge gained in interviews is situational and shaped by the interaction between the interviewer and the interviewee (Kvale 1997, p. 47). Power relations is a central factor in such interactions, and the research interview is always hierarchical *per se*. The researcher has the power to define not only the questions to be asked but also how the material is to be interpreted. As discussed in the previous section, I have tried to somewhat mitigate the effects of such power relations by using an interactive approach and establishing a common "us" in the interviews. However, as pointed out by Ramazanoglu and Holland, differences in power can never be completely eliminated and some of the factors that have shaped the interaction during the interview situation will be discussed below, including my own background (2002, p. 158).

To a great extent, I share the interviewees’ social, as well as political, location as a white social movement activist. I too was inspired by the recent Indignadxs movement and participated in the mass demonstrations and in some working group meetings. I have also been involved in the feminist movement in Madrid ever since I moved to the city a decade ago. My interest in anti-racist politics grows out of that feminist commitment and has been inspired primarily by feminist authors and activists of colour who have made me question from where, and at the expense of whom, I have made certain feminist demands as a white woman. Understanding racism as a structural issue, I consider myself as part of perpetuating white privilege, and in that sense no different from the interviewees whose ideas and perceptions I analyse. Although this time the researcher, I could also have been the object of study.
Nonetheless, there are also some differences between myself and the interviewees, that most probably affected the interview situation, including age, sex/gender and nationality. In terms of age, there is a certain gap between myself and the youngest interviewee and this turned out to be the shortest interview of all, perhaps as it was slightly more difficult to find common ground. Sex/gender may also have influenced the interview situation with regards to the male interviewees, although such power relations were probably compensated by my position as the researcher controlling the interview. The interviewee who identified as non-binary was also the youngest one, and it is possible that issues related to gender identity might have shaped the interview, although I perceived age to be more influential. Finally, as a Swedish national who first visited Spain almost twenty years ago and has lived permanently in Madrid for the past ten, I am both an insider and an outsider in the Spanish context. I understand, and share, the vast majority of cultural codes and few Spaniards can easily tell I am Swedish. However, all the interviewees were aware of my nationality before starting the interview, and this probably influenced the conversation, for instance by interviewees explaining more in depth how things "are" in Spain. A few times, it also gave me the opportunity to make comparisons, for instance with regards to how the concept of race is used in other countries, which proved a useful strategy to approach a sensitive issue. Moreover, the fact that I have learnt many of the cultural codes as an adult – and implicitly and explicitly contrasted them with the ones from my native country – may have helped me to detect certain cultural perceptions that are rendered so normal they might go unnoticed in your own cultural context.

Finally, in one case, racial differences were also highlighted by one of the interviewees, Pablo, questioning the common "us" I had established. He argued:

I don't know, it's strange, because seeing your face and seeing mine, I have the impression, when we were speaking, we are both speaking like we are white, but you are a lot whiter than I am, and you have a different phenotype. I… my father is from Cádiz [in southern Spain], I probably have Muslim or Arab family or whatever and my phenotype is very different from yours and still we have considered both of us in that way […] [W]hen you say white I feel less identified and suddenly I see you right in the centre of the discourse of whiteness... And it surprised me a bit.5

5 The empirical material in this study derives from the following qualitative interviews: Claudia, interviewed 17 April 2017; Daniel, interviewed 6 April 2017; María, interviewed 6 April, 2017; Marta, interviewed 10 April 2017; Pablo, interviewed 8 April 2017 and Raúl, interviewed 8 April 2017. The interviews were carried out in Madrid. All subsequent references to these interviews will be made using the interviewee's pseudonym.
Pablo continues by saying that for the conversation that we are having, it is not a mistake to establish that common "us" as we share certain privileges in the Spanish context. Nonetheless, where I saw similarity, he, to some extent, saw difference. This clearly shows how race is socially constructed and highly contextual. Indeed, in the interaction between the two of us in the interview context, racial difference can be – and was – highlighted, whereas in relation to other groups, such as sub-Saharan migrants\(^6\) in Spain, both of us might be perceived, and perceive ourselves, as similar/white. Finally, Pablo's reflection can also be interpreted as a way of subverting power relations in the interview situation, by linking me with whiteness – and white privilege – while distancing himself from it.

5. Theoretical Framework

5.1 Whiteness, white privilege and white sincere fictions

This study is theoretically framed within critical whiteness studies. As highlighted by Lykke, this field critically examines racialised power relations by analysing the processes which construct whiteness as a superior norm. It also turns the gaze towards the dominant positionality – the white subject (2010, p. 56).

The concept of whiteness has informed not only my analysis, but also the very design of the study, including research questions and choice of interviewees. Lewis defines whiteness as a "configuration of practices and meanings that occupy the dominant position in a particular racial formation and that successfully manage to occupy the empty space of 'normality' in our culture" (2004, p. 634). I find this definition useful for several reasons. First, by referring to practices and meanings, it puts emphasis on whiteness both as action (doings) and as discourse (sayings). Put simply, white bodies act within a set of discourses related to race, whiteness and racism. Second, it places whiteness within particular racial formations, allowing for an understanding of whiteness as relational and situational. One is perceived, or identify, as white in relation to the "non-white" and these particular formations are provisional and depend upon the context. Whiteness is then part of a social relation, rather than an intrinsic characteristic. Finally, Lewis' definition also highlights how whiteness is constituted as the socially

\(^6\) I will use the term "migrant" to refer to a person who moves from one country to another to settle temporarily or permanently in that country.
normative and dominant position. This means that whiteness is the socially unmarked norm and that being perceived as white in racist societies inevitably implies benefiting from unearned privileges – white privileges, discussed in more detail below.

Following these ideas, I understand whiteness not as an ontological given, but as the effect of racialization. Whiteness, just as race more broadly, is a social construct but with real, material and lived effects. It is the dominant part of a social relation, where those read as white mark difference, normativity and superiority to those read as "non-white". To use the concept of whiteness as the overarching frame for my study allows me to connect the white activists and their narratives with certain social locations, discourses and practices. For instance, as pointed out by Frankenberg, it makes room for seeing particular practices as white when I interpret my material (1993, p. 6).

White privilege is fundamental to racialised power relations. I will use this concept throughout the study to refer to the advantages conferred upon, and exercised by, people inhabiting white bodies. Although such privileges may indeed be explicit, such as not being the target of racial profiling by the police, they are often a lot subtler. Sullivan describes white privilege as an environmentally constituted unconscious habit that "operates as unseen, invisible, even seemingly nonexistent" (2014, p. 1). Similarly, Ahmed suggests that "whiteness functions as a habit, even a bad habit, which becomes the background to social action" (2007, p. 149). Treating whiteness as a habit comes across as particularly useful for understanding how white privilege is being reproduced almost automatically through everyday interaction. Ahmed argues that these habitual actions of white bodies inevitably shape public spaces and institutions that, as a consequence, become oriented around whiteness (2007, pp. 156-58). In such spaces, the "body-at-home" is inevitably a white body, whereas the non-white body is seen as out of place (2007, pp. 158-59). I perceive social movements precisely as such places that may become oriented around whiteness through the repeated exercise of white habits.

I will also use the concept of white sincere fictions to guide my analysis. Feagin, Vera and Batur argue that in order to understand white racism, it is fundamental to look not only at what white people think of people of colour, but also what they think of themselves (2001, pp. 4-5). They use the concept of sincere fictions to refer to personal ideological constructions that reproduce societal ideas, or myths, about the white self.
These fictions are sincere in the sense that whites are "honest in their adherence to these rationalizations and are either unaware of or have suppressed the alternative interpretations" (Vera, Feagin & Gordon 1995, p. 297). Such sincere fictions allow white people to portray themselves as non-racist or "good people" even when they think or act in racist ways (Feagin, Vera & Batur 2001, pp. 186-87). Hence, sincere fictions of the white self perpetuate white privilege and tend to conceal racial, and racist, realities. I find this concept particularly helpful for understanding how the white activists relate to race and racism in their own spaces for political activism.

Finally, in my analysis I will also draw upon Ahmed's discussion of the non-performativity of white anti-racism (2004). She argues that certain white declarations, such as admitting to one's own racism, are put forward and taken as evidence for an anti-racist commitment. In this sense, admitting to bad practice, is taken as a sign of good practice. According to Ahmed, such declarations are not only non-performative in the sense that they do not contribute to change racial power relations, but they can even reproduce whiteness in unforeseen ways (2004, par. 12). I find Ahmed's discussion useful for interpreting how anti-racist declarations are used by the progressive white activists. I see her ideas as complementary both to a broader discussion of how white privilege is unexpectedly reproduced through anti-racist discourses and to the concept of white sincere fictions, as these declarations may serve the purpose of maintaining the fiction of being a "good" white person.

5.2 Racism Evasiveness

The theoretical concept of racism evasiveness is also central to this study. Several authors have discussed how new, subtler, forms of racism have supplanted the previous overt racial ideologies based upon ideas of biological inferiority/superiority (Frankenberg 1993; Bonilla-Silva 2006; Sullivan 2014; Goldberg 2015). As argued by Sullivan, "[w]hile big-booted forms of conscious oppression still exist, in the early twenty-first century white domination tends to prefer silent tiptoeing to loud stomping" (2014, p. 5).

In this context, the concept of colour-blind racism has gained scholarly attention over the past decades and is often described as the current hegemonic racial ideology in
Western, neoliberal societies (Bonilla-Silva 2006; El-Tayeb 2011; Goldberg 2015). The central idea behind this ideology is that universal humanity transcends race, which should therefore be ignored, particularly by people who define themselves as anti-racists. El-Tayeb argues that this strategy of denial is especially persistent in Europe, where the outright denial of race makes racial thinking along with its effects completely invisible (2011, p. xvii). By choosing not to see race – and ultimately racism – white privilege is reproduced and racial inequalities are maintained. Bonilla-Silva describes four different expressions of this racial ideology, namely abstract liberalism, minimization, naturalization and cultural racism (2006, pp. 25-49). Ernst has further expanded Bonilla-Silva's original conceptualisation by adding cosmetic colour-blindness (2010). I will not impose the categorisation proposed by Bonilla-Silva and Ernst as a straight-jacket on my material, but I will make use of the general idea of racism evasiveness throughout my analysis, and particularly when analysing how the activists relate to race and racism in social movements.

It should be noted, that although I make reference to the term colour-blindness when referring to specific authors, in my own analysis I prefer the concept of racism evasiveness, for two main reasons. First, to overcome the inherent ableism that the term colour-blindness entails, as it uses the lack of seeing as a metaphor for the undesired (Annamma, Jackson & Morrison 2017, pp. 153-54). Second, I choose the term racism evasiveness as it more accurately illustrates the problem I wish to describe. As pointed out by Beeman, "[w]hat people are ultimately avoiding when they say they do not see color, when they overlook differences in power or avoid 'race words', is racism" (2015, p. 131). Moreover, this term effectively shows how the failure to see racism is not a benign passivity, but rather entails an attempt to obliterate. It is about avoidance, rather than passivity (Annamma, Jackson & Morrison 2017, pp. 154-56).

6. Analytical discussion

In this section I will analyse the empirical material in relation to my aim and research questions. As highlighted in the Introduction, this discussion will be divided into two parts. The first will focus on how the white activists conceptually understand race, whiteness and racism in general terms. In the second part, I will discuss how the left-wing activists relate to race and racism in the specific context of social movements, by
outlining three dominant discourses that the interviewees employ. I will also address how these discourses may frame how anti-racist work in social movements can be carried out. For the purposes of this study, I define discourse as "an ordered and structured framework within which people see their world" (Abercrombie, Hill & Turner 2006, p. 112). Hence, discourse in this case refers to the structured ways of thinking and talking about race and racism in social movements.

6.1 Understandings of race, whiteness and racism

In this section I will analyse how the white activists understand race, whiteness and racism at a conceptual level, including, but not referring primarily to, the context of social movements.

6.1.1 Race: a word to be avoided, renegotiated and rejected

Race is a sensitive concept for most of the activists and some explicitly state that it is a difficult term to employ. Hence, Raúl explains that it is a concept which is rarely used and that "the word race, for some reason, causes resistance" and Pablo argues that its connotations make it "difficult" to use. Similarly, both Claudia and Pablo describe race as "harsh-sounding" and Marta says it is "associated with conflict". This reluctance to relate explicitly to the concept of race can be seen in three ways throughout the interviews, namely in how it is being avoided, renegotiated and rejected by the activists.

The way in which race as a concept is avoided – or excluded – becomes clear when speaking of diversity in social movements. When being asked to describe the kind of people that integrate social movements, interviewees describe activists in terms of class, gender, age and educational background, but no one mentions the category of race until being explicitly asked about it. Pablo, Raúl and Daniel do highlight the lack of migrants in social movements, but without using the concept of race as such and none of these interviewees comment upon the absence of other racialised groups. This is particularly noteworthy given that when being asked, all interviewees recognise that social movements in general, as well as their own spaces for political activism, are predominantly, or completely, white.
Race is also being renegotiated as something else throughout the interviews, primarily as origin, ethnicity and culture. Marta says that race is an issue that is being discussed, but that "we might use the word cultures more". In a similar way, Daniel, as many of the interviewees, reflects upon whether ethnicity might be a more appropriate term:

To me it seems like when analysing discriminations etcetera maybe colour isn't that relevant, perhaps only as an indication, right? You identify someone with a colour, who comes from a particular territory [...] and you assign certain characteristics to that person, but I think [these characteristics] are cultural, rather [than racial]. The prejudices most people have are related to that kind of things.

Skin colour is here being reinterpreted as merely indicative of cultural origin which is portrayed as the main factor behind discrimination. In a similar way Raúl puts forward the following argument to explain why he prefers using ethnicity rather than race:

I don't use race as I associate it more with a biological issue. Genetic-biological. In fact, the idea of race, it always makes me think of animals, right? Dog breeds, etcetera. And the ethnic part, I associate that more with cultural issues, and... I think there certainly is a strong component of cultural racism, or ethnic racism. In fact, I often hear: "I'm not racist, but the Rumanians..." And there, I don't hear anyone saying the Rumanian race, I hear them saying: "the Rumanians are..." and they speak as of behaviours. That is why I associate it with cultural issues.

In this quotation, race and culture are presented as two separate issues, the former presumably related to bodily difference and the latter to behaviours/customs. As argued by Goldberg, rather than being two unrelated matters, racial configurations have from the very outset tied colour to culture by linking certain bodies to certain behavioural projections (2015, pp. 17-18). However, by presenting race and culture as two separate issues, and subsequently linking discrimination primarily with the latter, race as an uncomfortable concept can be effectively avoided and renegotiated as something else.

Bonilla-Silva argues that the level of rhetorical incoherence increases when whites speak of racially sensitive issues (2006, pp. 68-70). The perception of race as an uncomfortable term makes defining it a delicate affair for most interviewees. The following quotation by Claudia exemplifies both how race is perceived by the interviewed activists and how speaking about it is a sensitive matter, shown by the long pauses and unfinished sentences, characteristic of all the interviewees:

Race? [silence]. Difficult. Ehm… Ehm…Right, that's difficult, because as such… I mean, humans as such don't have any race, right? So, more like an analytical category… so, I don't know… ehm… mmm, pffff. Well, I don't know… a group of people with certain bodily features, colour, I'm not sure.
Claudia clearly struggles to choose the right words and starts by stating that race as such does not exist. This denial of race, by referring to the idea of racelessness, is expressed explicitly by most of the activists in different ways. Raúl insists that race does not make sense scientifically and Daniel, struggling to define the term, remarks that a good definition might not exist. Pablo, recalling when he came into contact with the concept of race through university activism, states that "we always said that there is only one race, the human race". Marta further elaborates upon this idea of racelessness when describing her activism in neighbourhood associations:

Like I already said, I find it difficult to see reality in terms of... races. Because in those spaces I think that what one thinks about is the... the... so to speak... the injustices, right? In the harm that people may suffer, regardless of race. I mean, I don't think about improving my neighbourhood for Latin-Americans, or improving my neighbourhood for black people, or improving it... I think about improving the neighbourhood for people. I don't see reality in so much terms of... races.

Marta emphasises that rather than seeing race, she sees people, an idea she comes back to throughout the interview. As argued by Goldberg in his discussion of postraciality, this type of claims are aspirational and descriptive at the same time (2015, pp. 14-15). Since race should not matter, it does not matter. Such arguments involve a fantasy of transcendence, where refusing to see race becomes a political action to abolish race. However, as pointed out by Ahmed, it is impossible to do away with race as long as racism persists, as it keeps shaping what we can, or cannot, do (2004, par. 48). Moreover, choosing not to see race is a privilege granted only to people inhabiting white bodies, who do not suffer the consequences of racism on a daily basis.

This idea of racelessness, a central tenet of racism evasiveness, is also expressed by some of the interviewees as a specific characteristic of Spanish society. Spain is presented as a racial and cultural melting pot, making the very idea of race superfluous. Hence, Raúl argues that Spain is different both due to its "variety of phenotypes" and as it is "a historically more multicultural country than others", having been shaped by several groups, including Arabs and Celts. In a similar way Pablo argues that "the concept of Spain is really very diverse" referring both to Arab influences and a close relationship with Latin America due to the colonial past. Both explicitly conclude that race is therefore not that relevant in Spain, as is here exemplified by Raúl: "I don't know if it is due to our history, but I think that the idea of race has not permeated the [minds of] the Spanish man and woman". This idea of a cultural and racial melting pot comes
across as a very persuasive form of racism evasiveness in a country with a high degree of diversity amongst whites in terms of eye, hair and skin colour. One can easily highlight the physical similarities between, for instance, some Spaniards and some Syrian refugees, *while evading differences in power*. White Spaniards can then think of themselves as inherently non-racist, or less racist, due to physical similarities with certain racialised groups, as is implied in the previous quotations.

By avoiding or discarding race as a concept, or referring to the idea of one human race, the interviewees are making a conscious effort not to see, or acknowledge, race. I interpret this insistence on not seeing race as a way to clearly distance themselves from an essentialist understanding of race as biologically determined. As seen in a previous quotation, Raúl says that "I don't use race as I associate it more with a biological issue". He rejects the concept as he perceives its meaning to be linked with biological determinism and white superiority: race as a biological, rather than social, category. Hence, using the word could in itself be considered racist. Marta expresses this clearly when being asked why she thinks the word race is not being readily used amongst left-wing activists in Spain:

Hmm... well, it seems like it makes you a bit afraid, doesn't it? To use the word race. Because... I suppose because it may be associated with racism. [...] You might create difference. It is like highlighting difference, I think.

According to Marta, using the word race is associated with racism and implies not only pointing out (racial) difference, but generating that very difference, in a way that may be perceived as racist. Hence, for left-wing activists defining themselves as anti-racists, race becomes a difficult word to pronounce, and a concept to be avoided, renegotiated or rejected.

However, as argued by Ahmed in her discussion of non-performative anti-racism, "to be against something is, after all, to be in an intimate relation with that which one is against" (2004, par. 47). This dismissal of race still relates both implicitly and explicitly to race as a concept. First, by rejecting race altogether, rather than reinterpreting it as a social category, the idea of race as biologically determined is left uncontested. As a consequence, the essentialist definition of race, along with all its connotations, is confirmed and reproduced. Second, as expressed by Annamma, Jackson and Morrison, in order to know when racial difference is to be ignored, one must first recognise that
racial difference (2017, p. 149). In this sense, all the interviewees explicitly relate to definitions of race focusing on bodily characteristics and/or difference, although this clearly creates discomfort. Hence, Claudia, cited above, ends her definition by defining race as a group of people with "certain bodily features" or "colour". María frames it in a similar way:

Right... so, the differences... [silence]. It would be like a category that is useful for making different bodies visible. Or, eh, yes. Well, different bodies in the sense of... eh... colour... and hmm. Colour and origin. Origin... It doesn't have to be linked with the issue of nationality. Rather... Well, yes. You can be Spanish and black. But that would be race.

María emphasises colour and origin. She, like all the interviewees, is aware of – and reproduces – the idea of race primarily as bodily difference. No interviewee defines race as a social, or socio-corporeal category, although Claudia argues that it should be used as an "analytical category". Hence, despite rejecting the idea of race, the interviewees still relate to it both implicitly and explicitly.

In summary, race is an uncomfortable concept for most of the interviewees. By avoiding or renegotiating it as a concept, or denying its existence by referring to the idea racelessness, the interviewees are making a conscious effort not to see, or acknowledge, race. These findings coincide with previous research that describes race as unutterable in large parts of Europe (Knapp 2005; El-Tayeb 2011; Lewis 2013; Bilge 2013; Flores 2015). Such efforts to evade race can be interpreted as a rejection of biological determinism, as the very word race is perceived as being linked with such understandings. Nonetheless, interviewees still relate to race, both implicitly and explicitly, and they do so primarily in biological, rather than social, terms.

6.1.2 Whiteness: the invisible norm

Whereas the concept of race comes across as a sensitive one, the idea of whiteness is met with surprise, rather than discomfort, by the interviewees. Even before the interview, the activists comment upon whiteness as part of the aim of the study. Some explicitly state that the term is unfamiliar to them, as exemplified by Marta:

Sandra: So before, when we started you asked me about the word whiteness, written there on the [information] sheet. What is it that caught your attention?

Marta: Because I had never heard it before. I suppose that the words that we know tend to be to refer to the others, right? To the minority [...]. It is as if you always refer to integration
from your position. You never see yourself like the other one, like another actor on the scene, I suppose. I had never felt like the object of study. Now, think about that... Me as a white person, I mean.

Marta remarks that the word whiteness – or *blanquitud* in Spanish – is new to her. Daniel makes the same observation, using almost the exact same words, whereas Raúl and Pablo comment more generally that whiteness is not commonly used, nor understood, in the Spanish context. Similarly, María at first says that she "has no idea" what whiteness might be when being asked to define it. Hence, whiteness seems to be a concept with less negative connotations than race, but also one that the activists have reflected less upon previously. This coincides with the results of Feagin, Vera and Batur, who argue that "for most whites, being white means rarely having to think about it" (2001, p. 191).

Moreover, Marta highlights that as a white person, she has never felt like the object of study and observes that normally focus is on the racialised "other", letting her, as a white subject, go unnoticed and unnamed. Several authors have described how whiteness is perceived as invisible by white people, as hegemonic power marks whiteness as normal and the racialised "others" as different and therefore "visible" (Ahmed 2007, p. 157; Gronold & Pedersen 2009, pp. 65-57). The other interviewees make similar observations, linking whiteness with neutrality and normality. Hence, Claudia answers in the following way when being asked what whiteness means to her: "Eh… [silence]. Let's see, so to me whiteness is a bit like neutrality, right? Where, from where everything else is set up...". Whiteness is described as the neutral benchmark against which the (racialised) "others" are conceptualised. In a similar way Daniel states that "we are used to being the neutral ones" and continues:

I think we always have that idea [of whiteness] as a contrast, as if… As if race is something others have, like speaking with an accent, right? It is everyone else that has an accent.

Again, whiteness is described as invisible, existing only as a contrast to the racialised "other", as an absent presence. Finally, both Pablo and María also highlight how whiteness is linked with normality, as exemplified by María when being asked if she thinks that white people perceive themselves as white:

No. Because whiteness is normal, and what is not normal is the other. There, the Black, the Arab, the Brown... well, all those words... that are used to denominate what is not white. From that position I don't perceive myself as white. Yes, yes. No, whiteness is what it is.
Whiteness is here described as the uncontested and unmarked norm: "it is what it is". Hence, despite not having given their whiteness much previous thought, the interviewed activists do possess certain knowledge of what whiteness means, describing it in terms of normativity, as inhabiting what Ahmed calls "the-body-at-home" (2007, p. 157).

Feagin, Vera and Batur claim that the idea of white superiority is a fundamental part of the racial thinking of many whites. Consequently, they argue, when whites do speak of whiteness they usually link it with privilege (2001, p. 196). Although it should be noted that not all the interviewed activists link the normative position of whiteness with hegemonic power, or racialised power relations more generally, several do explicitly identify whiteness with privilege. Hence, Pablo argues that whiteness "is a concept that refers to a set of privileges" and Claudia states that "being white is a quite privileged situation" and continues by saying that "[o]bviously nothing has ever happened to me for being white [laughter]. So, I have never been insulted or anything". Claudia perceives white bodies as safe from racialised attacks and the mere thought of being harassed as a white person produces laughter. Finally, Raúl also describes, at some length, whiteness as a privilege:

Generally, I think that in the Western World being white is a kind of, how to put it, it's a kind of position or social rung from where you live... I mean... You avoid a certain type of discrimination, not all, but a certain type. Being white is a visual situation, that is socially very important, phenotypical, the phenotype of your bodily features, but if you ask me for a definition, I think today, being white is a... it's a position related to a social class or something like that, isn't it? [...] It doesn't prevent you from suffering all types of discrimination, it doesn't prevent you from suffering gender-based discrimination, or gender oppression, it doesn't prevent you from suffering other types of discrimination, but it does prevent you from suffering a lot of it. [...] For sure, in Spain today it does save you from a lot of trouble with the police, the institutions and obviously socially. So, yes, I would say that whiteness, well it's a kind of passport, or social class, to easily access certain... spaces or certain circuits. But it doesn't guarantee you everything.

Raúl quite clearly recognises whiteness not only as a bodily "fact", but also as a social position which is linked with certain privileges. Moreover, these privileges are expressed in structural terms, as discrimination is described as going beyond individual prejudice, encompassing social and institutional dimensions. However, this recognition of structural discrimination is accompanied by several subtle disclaimers, as he stresses that being white does not mean that you avoid all types of discrimination. On the one hand, this is a way of highlighting that race intersects with multiple other power differentials. On the other, it tends to take the edge off the structural critique of whiteness as a privilege by somewhat minimizing its importance. It may also to some
extent allow the interviewee to distance himself from that privileged position by highlighting that whites could be at a disadvantage along other axes of discrimination.

Hence, whiteness is a concept most of the interviewees have not reflected upon previously, but that they interpret in terms of invisibility, neutrality and normality. Several of the activists also link it with individual and/or structural privilege.

6.1.3 Racism: individual prejudice versus structural discrimination

Whereas race and whiteness are perceived in quite similar ways by all interviewees, there are two different understandings of racism. The first considers racism an individual prejudice whereas the second conceptualises it in structural terms.

Marta, when being asked to define racism, describes it as "a prejudice which makes you define the other person on basis of skin colour". Similarly, Claudia links racism with "discriminatory attitudes and behaviours" and Daniel relates it to "attributing certain characteristics, normally negative, to another race [...] like establishing unreal differences". Racism is here linked primarily with attitudes and prejudice, an idea Marta expands upon when being asked if she considers Spain to be a racist country:

I do think there's racism, racist comments... I mean, I love [ironically] how common the expression "I'm not racist, but..." is. [...] Like, "I'm not racist, but two blacks were screaming on the tube" and it's like what should bother you is that they are screaming, not that they are black, right? I mean, for instance very subtle things, because like I said, it's politically incorrect to be bothered by someone being black, but in practice the comments are there, I mean when you tell someone an anecdote and part of that anecdote is related to the origin of the people that are part of it, that's because you are insinuating... because in your mind the fact that they are from a particular country or of a particular race is influencing the story. You are not seeing them as people, you are seeing them as belonging to a race or a country that is different from yours or... and to me, that's racism.

In order to justify why she considers Spain to be racist, Marta emphasises how common it is for people to express racist opinions. Similarly, when Claudia is asked the same question they refer to a survey on immigration that they carried out on behalf of the regional government in Madrid:

And it was brutal, I mean, brutal. Especially elderly people, like... older than 60 years, the amount of racism was brutal. Well, like "they should all go home, they are taking our jobs, they come here to steal". Above all there's a lot of racism against Rumanians, it's brutal, here in Madrid, in the suburbs.
In both these quotations racism is portrayed as a matter of consciously expressing racist opinions and/or acting in a racist way. Such understandings put emphasis on racism as a personal trait, rather than as part of a larger social system of discrimination. As argued by Bonilla-Silva, reducing racism merely to a matter of ideas or ideology, limits the possibility of seeing how racism affects life chances at a structural level (1997, p. 467).

Moreover, focusing on individual prejudice facilitates an understanding of racism as something "other" white people engage in. This becomes clear in the following quotation where Marta describes "coexistence problems" in her neighbourhood:

> And then, there's something curious, when there are problems of coexistence in the neighbourhood, well of course, the people who have a racist filter automatically handle it like this: "Because the Moroccans" and so on, "because I always argue with Mohammed", for instance. I mean maybe the person who argues with Mohammed also argues with Maruja [a common Spanish name], but they will only tell you that they argued with Mohammed, they only consider that part of the coexistence important, so that happens too. There are conflicts in the neighbourhood and [...] the people that have that racist filter, well, they interpret all conflicts as... as... as racial conflicts.

Racism is here portrayed as perpetrated by particular individuals with a "racist filter", who give voice to racist opinions. By linking racism with certain whites, a clear distinction between a non-racist "us" and a racist "them" can be established.

Daniel also links racism with the opinions and actions of individual people, although in a slightly different way by highlighting racist opinions as extreme and uncommon:

> [S]o when I say that there's no racism, I am speaking generally. Obviously there are people with really extreme ideas, really extreme, that might be focusing more on that, right? The neonazi movements, etcetera. And there's another thing... I think that, and here I would analyse, this is a very personal thing, but a lot of the time there isn't even real racism behind every insult [...] If there are two kids that are fighting and one is of a different colour, then it's really easy, right? To say something, they will use everything, if the other kid has a big noose he'll pick on his noose, and if he's black and there have been negative comments about black people then he'll say something about black people, right? So... Is that racism? I mean, it's really ugly, obviously, but I think that when we analyse it we need some common sense, not everything is... [...] A lot of the time I don't see a profound sense of contempt for other races.

Daniel then concludes by stating that "indeed, there are small groups, small parts of the population that do have racist ideas as such". In this account a distinction is made between, one the one hand, "real" racism, which is carried out by extremists, and on the other, "innocent games". This understanding of racism only recognises explicit racist hatred as "real" racism and only outspoken white supremacists as "real" racists. As in Marta's account, a clear distinction can then be made between bad (racist) white people
and good (anti-racist) white people. As argued by Feagin, Vera and Batur, this way of distancing oneself from whites that are deemed as racist works as a strong sincere fiction which allows whites to deflect attention from their own role in perpetuating racism (2001, p. 216). It should be noted that this understanding of racism as individual prejudice does not always take the form seeing racism as something other whites engage in. Hence, Claudia argues that they themselves may reproduce racism as "in the end no one escapes prejudice". However, it does provide the basic conditions for establishing such dichotomy, as can be seen in the case of Marta and Daniel, whose accounts are more recurrent than the quotation by Claudia.

Individual racist attitudes and behaviours are mentioned by the rest of the interviewees as well. However, they also put emphasis on structural elements when defining racism, as is exemplified by the following quotation by Raúl:

Racism would be like a kind of, it's like a kind of social architecture, that... marks certain paths for certain social groups and make other [paths] unavailable for other social groups. [...] [L]ike certain paths that certain groups can walk or follow and others can't, so it's a kind of, racism is a kind of discrimination that is very invisible, very symbolic, that facilitates and reproduces the continued access of certain groups to certain social resources, making their lives easier, and the lives of other social groups more difficult.

Racism is here described in structural terms, going beyond individual prejudice by taking social opportunities and resources into account. In a similar way, when being asked to describe racism in Spanish society, Pablo highlights individual prejudice as well as institutional and structural aspects:

Well, you can see it in terms of institutional representation, that we can't imagine a Roma getting into [parliament], because it would be, it even makes me laugh, however racist that image may be [...]. [I]t would be unimaginable, and that indicates an outrageous racism. And you can see it in the usual discourse of people coming from abroad and taking our subsidies and so on, you can see it in that they are not even part of social movements, or not represented to the same extent [...]. You can see it in the urban segregation, you can see that there are places for black people, places for Roma people [...] You can see it... I suppose you can see it in everything, in the labour market, the ones that do certain jobs...

Rather than focusing merely on individual attitudes, Pablo highlights a broad range of discriminatory situations which can be considered an effect of racism, including lack of political representation, urban segregation and discrimination in the labour market. In a similar way, María highlights police brutality and the southern border fence in Melilla.

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7 I consistently use the terms Roma/Romani in English to translate the Spanish word "gitanos/as" – which literally means "gypsies". I have avoided "gypsies" in English due to its negative connotations. In Spanish "gitano/a" is used by the Roma and their organisations and is not considered a derogatory term. Hence, I find Roma/Romani a more accurate, although not literal, translation.
when being asked why she considers Spain to be racist. Although it should be noted that there are contradictions between these more abstract understandings of racism and the way in which racism is interpreted in other parts of the interviews – some of which will be discussed in the second part of the analytical discussion on social movements – these accounts still represent an initial understanding of racism in structural terms.

In summary, and despite some nuances and contradictions, the interviewed activists present two different understandings of racism. The first interprets racism in terms of individual attitudes and behaviours, which allows for establishing dichotomy between bad (racist) white people and good (anti-racist) white people. As a consequence, racism can be explicitly or implicitly ascribed to "other" white people. The second defines racism as a structural problem, including, but also going beyond, individual prejudice.

6.2 Dominant discourses concerning race and racism in social movements

In this section I will analyse three recurrent discourses that the activists employ to relate to race and racism in social movements. I will also discuss the consequences of each discourse for how anti-racist work in social movements may be framed. I have named these discourses, that all relate to racism evasiveness, displaced racism, unintentional racism and renegotiated racism. They represent the dominant ways of talking about race and racism in social movements, although it should be noted that not all activists give voice to all discourses, and while some combine several, others express mainly one.

6.2.1 Displaced racism: social movements as inherently non-racist

Two of the interviewees consistently deny the existence of racism in social movements, arguing that they are inherently non-racist. Daniel argues that he has never encountered racism in social movements, but rather "the very opposite" and Marta, when being asked if she thinks that these movements might reproduce racist mechanisms, says that this is not the case and further adds that it would be "completely absurd".

Both interviewees do not only strongly reject the idea that social movements may reproduce racism, but they also perceive it as a contradiction in terms. As put by Daniel when being asked if he has ever witnessed a racist incident in social movements:
So, it seems unlikely to me that if people are actively participating in social movements, because they have a certain awareness etcetera, that there would be an openly racist issue, like that. I haven't seen it, and it comes across as difficult.

Social movement activists are described as politically conscious, and therefore highly unlikely to engage in racist practices. Marta expresses this idea even more clearly when being asked if she thinks that migrants or Roma would feel welcome in an activist group where she is a member, integrated exclusively by white Spaniards:

Yes! [with emphasis]. Of course. Yes, yes. Totally yes. Yes, of course. Yes, because besides, I mean, by definition, a libertarian movement is always absolutely anti-racist, anti-fascist. So, how could they not be welcome? That would be a brutal incoherence.

Bypassing structural forms of racism, including how white habits may work to exclude non-white people, Marta argues that the association, by definition, is non-racist and therefore open to migrants and Roma. As in the previous quotation by Daniel, racism is here seen as a matter of ideas and behaviours which are incompatible with left-wing social movements. These movements can then be described as almost inherently non-racist, as racist opinions are considered to contradict their very nature.

The idea of social movements as inherently non-racist is further strengthened by descriptions that emphasise the irrelevance of race and racial power relations in these movements. Marta repeatedly argues that in social movements, activists work "horizontally" and "as equals" and that race does not – and should not – matter:

Marta: When I am participating in a meeting, and like I said there are Latin-Americans, I don't see myself as a white person talking to you, who are Latin-American, I don't have those filters.

Sandra: And do you think the Latin-American person would see it differently?

Marta: In the spaces where I'm participating, I don't think so. [...] That person, who's from Peru, and I, we have the same goal – my neighbourhood. So, I very much doubt that that person is worrying about whether I'm Spanish or not, because since I'm in the same boat, I don't believe they're thinking that. And if they're thinking that, eh... that would also be a problem of racism, wouldn't it? [...] I have always found the relations very affectionate and very equal, with all of us being on the same level.

Social movements are here described as being characterised by non-hierarchical relations of equality, where activists do not interpret reality by applying a racial "filter". By emphasising that activists share the same goals and difficulties, race is portrayed as irrelevant. Consequently, noticing race at all can in itself be considered a racist attitude. This is a classical illustration of racism evasiveness, which emphasises the idea of racelessness, discussed in more detail in section 6.1.1, "Race a word to be avoided,
renegotiated and rejected”. By portraying social movements as inherently non-racist, and even raceless, white privilege is rendered invisible and reproduced.

Despite highlighting social movements as inherently non-racist, racism as such is not denied by the interviewees. Marta readily and repeatedly identifies racism in Spanish society and particularly in her own neighbourhood. She argues that racism, as an external problem, is an issue they speak about frequently in her neighbourhood association, as "we know that these problems exist: you see it in the squares, you see it in the streets, it's an issue that's on the table". Likewise, Daniel describes racism both in extreme right-wing groups and in his previous work place. These accounts stand in stark contrast to the descriptions of social movements, and sometimes they are even explicitly compared, as in the following quotation by Daniel:

I have not encountered racist people in social movements. For instance, [...] all those years that I worked for [name of workplace], I did encounter racist opinions etcetera, like I said, that a lot of people consider immigration to be a problem, almost like "they are coming here instead of dying from hunger in their own countries", right? I mean, no one will say so openly, but you do hear it, right? Like opinions that may have a racist undertone. But in social movements, to be honest, I've never heard those opinions.

Social movements are here compared with Daniel's previous workplace, describing the former as a space with no "racist people" and the latter as a place where racist opinions could be heard. Hence, both interviewees recognise racism outside social movements.

By highlighting racism as part of broader society and/or specific groups while simultaneously describing social movements as inherently non-racist, racism becomes a problem that is occurring somewhere else and being perpetrated by somebody else. Racism is hence effectively displaced to "elsewhere" by these interviewees. This way of perceiving social movements as inherently non-racist and different from broader society is intimately linked with the way in which Marta and Daniel understand racism more broadly, namely as an individual prejudice, discussed in section 6.1.3, "Racism: individual prejudice versus structural discrimination". As racism becomes linked with intentionally bad people, and even extremists, it becomes increasingly difficult to recognise oneself, or one's political activity, as reproducing racism. This displacement of racism to "elsewhere" is a way of evading racism as part of social movements and it functions as a strong sincere fiction of the white self, in the sense that it allows the
activists to perceive themselves as "good" (anti-racist) whites (Feagin, Vera & Batur 2001, pp. 186-87).

From this understanding of social movements as inherently non-racist, it follows that anti-racist work should primarily be directed outwards, as it is responding to racism in society. Indeed, both Marta and Daniel describe how their associations have engaged in external anti-racist actions, formulating political demands, reacting to racist abuse or responding to the needs of undocumented migrants by offering important legal and social services. Hence, despite the fact that racism is evaded as an internal problem, anti-racist work is effectively carried out externally. As found by Beeman in her study of social movements in the United States, these activists seem to "walk the walk" but not "talk the talk" on racism (2015).

Nonetheless, this discourse presents serious limitations in terms of tackling racism both internally and externally. Internally, no action is considered necessary, given that racism is not perceived as a problem in social movements. As put by Daniel, when saying that he remembers few debates concerning this issue, but also few conflicts. Indeed, internally the ideal situation is to ignore race, as recognising it could in itself be considered racist. Externally, racism may be tackled, as exemplified above, but only if the issue is considered to be relevant in the broader social agenda. Daniel, when being asked how he thinks social movements should address racism, expresses this clearly:

So, I think that also depends on how other things evolve... [...] I think that you can't rule out an increase in racism in Spain, whenever they need to cover something up and the media starts... [...] But if there's a change, if racism increases, I think [social movements] ought to deal with it. If there's no change, then, how would I like them to deal with it? I mean, I would like racist opinions not to exist in Spain and social movements not having to deal with it, right? I would like to there to be nothing to solve.

The ideal situation according to this quotation is not having to deal with racism at all, in a society where racism does not exist. Studies from other countries show that whites tend to downplay the importance of racism as compared to people of colour, who are direct targets of it (Feagin, Vera & Batur 2006, p. 189; Goldberg 2015, pp. 35-36). Given that social movements according to all interviewees are predominantly white, the perception that racism should only be addressed if relevant in broader society is problematic and could favour status quo as the white activists may not identify racism as a problem. Indeed, Daniel himself argues that it should be addressed if there is an
increase in racism, implying that racism is currently not a significant problem. As highlighted by Frankenberg in her study, anti-racist work is here considered optional, something which may be carried out if needed, but not as something linked to the white activists themselves (1993, p. 6). Hence, the discourse of displaced racism has serious limitations in terms of addressing racial power relations internally and externally.

In summary, interviewees who reproduce the discourse of displaced racism argue that social movements are inherently non-racist as racist attitudes would be a contradiction in terms. This discourse displaces racism to elsewhere, namely Spanish society more generally or extremist right-wing groups. From this understanding follows that anti-racist work should primarily be directed outwards, responding to possible outbreaks of racism in society, an approach with a limited potential to address racial power relations.

6.2.2 Unintentional racism: social movements as involuntarily racist

Several of the interviewees explicitly recognise that social movements may, and do, reproduce racism, but argue that such expressions are involuntary. María, when being asked in what ways social movements reproduce racism, answers in the following way:

We have learnt it. And since we have learnt it, it's inevitably there. I mean, if you don't make an effort, in the end, without wanting to, you reproduce it... Unconsciously, you reproduce it, like that. I think that the mechanisms are unconscious, I don't know any feminist movement that declares itself racist... [laughter]. That's not the idea, that would be incoherent [...] but I think that in a subtle way it slips through, sometimes.

Racism in social movements is here portrayed as subtle, unintentional and to some extent beyond individual control. Rather than being deliberate, it is described as something which slips through almost inadvertently as activists reproduce it unconsciously and unwillingly.

Claudia too argues that social movements reproduce racism. However, when being asked to give an example, Claudia cannot recall any incident and argues that it might be as "I don't pay attention" to racism and then quickly continues:

It's not like I don't pay attention because I don't want to pay attention, but because, because obviously, because in the end, I mean, well, it's like, I mean, since you consider it normal, in the end I don't realise when someone is really feeling bad or feeling attacked, so, it's like, I take things for granted a bit.
Claudia argues that racism is easy to overlook since it is normalised. Indeed, as pointed out by Gronold and Pedersen, as white people are not directly confronted by racism, they benefit from the luxury to be able to choose when to deal with it (2009, p. 69). Moreover, Claudia underlines that this behaviour is involuntary, they do not overlook racism because they want to, but rather they do so unintentionally. The high level of rhetorical incoherence suggests that the very idea of coming across as intentionally racist is uncomfortable and requires clarification precisely by stressing a lack of intent.

Such descriptions of racist practices as unintentional are recurrent in the interviews with activists who recognise racism as part of social movements, both when they refer to themselves and when speaking of social movements more broadly. Hence, Claudia also recognises "hav[ing] a lot of racial prejudices that slip out involuntarily" and Raúl highlights how racism in social movements is not about "intentional discrimination or oppression". Similarly, Pablo refers to "involuntary barriers" to explain why social movements are white and María repeatedly comes back to the idea that racist practices "slip through although we don't want to".

Whereas there can certainly be a point in showing how certain behaviours, or certain white habits, structurally maintain and reproduce white privilege in social movements, such explanations need to relate closely to power relations in order not to be evasive. In these accounts, by describing racist expressions as unintentional without explicitly linking it to white privilege, racism in social movements can be downplayed. First, as the very argument that the actions are unintentional in itself makes them look less significant. Second, as such descriptions make it possible to describe racism in social movements as qualitatively different from "real" racism, namely as softer and less harmful. Pablo expresses this clearly by arguing that social movements can be considered racist "due to inaction, [but] not due to explicit racism" and throughout the interview he makes sure to establish a difference between "real", intentional, racism and the kind one can find in social movements. Thus, when discussing an incident involving racist comments made by other activists, he concludes by saying:

It's a discourse that's obviously […] racist… But it's not racist in the sense, I mean, like we normally understand the word racism, it's not racist in the sense of saying, they are all... I mean, it's a kind of racism that I think we've contextualised in social movements.
A difference is here established between ordinary, or "real", racism and a supposedly more benign racism in social movements. This idea is expressed even more clearly in the following, quite harsh, quotation when Pablo argues that:

Within a spectrum of racism, it's not the same thing wanting all blacks to end up in a crematory oven, as considering, as part of this daily racism, due to the way you speak, that your argument carries a bit more weight than the person next to you, who is from somewhere else, right?

By using extreme racist opinions as a point of comparison, unintentional racism in social movements comes across as almost harmless. Although there is indeed a difference between overt biological determinism and more subtle forms of racism, in these accounts the former comes across as the "real" and usual form racism, making the latter look less severe by force of contrast. In fact, as pointed out by several authors, although overt racism defending white superiority certainly still exists and is perpetrated by white supremacists, it is no longer the dominant racial ideology, as it has been supplanted precisely by the subtle forms described by the activists (Bonilla-Silva 2006; Goldberg 2015). Hence, although racist practices are recognised as part of social movements, they are downplayed and presented as different from "real" racism.

Moreover, by highlighting the unintentional character of racism, white responsibility can to some extent be evaded and white social movement activists described as "good" people, even when engaging in racist practices. María, fraught by a perceived tension between her feminist and anti-racist convictions, describes an incident when she felt unfairly accused of being Islamophobic, by a male Muslim activist:

So now you're Islamophobic, fuck that... So, yes, yes, yes, but I mean, one thing is to know that, in practice I most probably am, because it slips through involuntarily, because it's not intentional, so of course I am, but they tell you so in an aggressive manner, not considering that we are all Islamophobic.

María, although clearly disagreeing with being labelled as Islamophobic, argues that she probably is so in terms of practical behaviour, but emphasises that it is involuntary. As argued above, by highlighting unintentional behaviour – as opposed to deliberate attitudes – her own racist practices are softened and downplayed. Moreover, responsibility is further evaded by arguing that "we are all Islamophobic", in the sense that we all interiorise and reproduce racism. If everyone is Islamophobic, individual responsibility can be more easily dismissed. Indeed, María finds the accusation
aggressive *precisely* as she is singled out individually and the white subject even comes across as a victim who is being unfairly accused.

Pablo also exemplifies how white responsibility can be evaded by combining accounts of racist practices as unintentional with explicit references to white people as decent and reasonable. He describes how four spokespersons are to be elected when planning a demonstration against one of the immigrant detention centres in Madrid. He explains how one of the migrant participants intervenes at a point when "without wanting to, due to the internal dynamics, the spokespersons were not specifically going to be migrants". He continues by describing how, after having been taken to task by the migrant activist speaking up, four migrants were elected rather than the four initial native Spaniards. Pablo then highlights how this "was accepted and encouraged by everyone" and a bit later he comes back to this incident and repeats how "everyone very much agreed and it was approved by everyone".

Although Pablo clearly criticises the election of non-migrants as inappropriate, he also makes sure to describe this situation as completely unintentional, unfolding by inertia. Again, despite the fact that whites engage in exclusionary and racist behaviours, responsibility can to some extent be evaded by the very argument that those behaviours were involuntary. Pablo moreover repeatedly emphasises how the white activists instantly agreed to having migrant spokespersons for a demonstration defending migrant rights, conveying an image of reasonable white subjects willing to rectify.

This discursive strategy, highlighting the good will of white activists, is being used recurrently by both Pablo and María. Hence, Pablo argues that white activists defending migrant rights "of course make all the efforts on earth" to involve migrants themselves and he also underlines several times that white social movement activists are "very" or "more conscious" (than other people) of racist discrimination. María also stresses that activists make "a real attempt" not to reproduce racism. Finally, there are also a few accounts of explicit exoneration of white subjects. Pablo describes how he was disturbed by, and protested against, the racist discourse against Moroccans in a pro-Saharan solidarity committee. However, he concludes the story by saying:
So, that is a racist discourse. Eh, in a different sense, I mean I want to excuse them because I'm thinking about my friends, and it's not like... that phrase, even if they said it, they did so in a very specific context, that of the Saharan [independence] struggle.

Although clearly recognising that the discourse in his opinion was racist – although in a different way from "real" racism – he exonerates the perpetrators and softens the incident by arguing that it happened in a very specific context.

To describe racism as unintentional hence serves at least two interrelated purposes, namely to portray racism in social movements as different from "real" racism and to exonerate the white self as a perpetrator of racist practices. These ideas are mutually reinforcing arguments, that partially overlap and partially stand on their own. When combined they function as a strong white sincere fiction as they allow the activists to perceive themselves as "good" (anti-racist) whites, even when engaging in racist practices. Indeed, the very fact that racism is openly acknowledged as affecting social movements can ironically be seen as part of that white fiction, as it signals a certain, politically correct, consciousness of racial matters. As argued by Ahmed in her discussion of non-performative white declarations, "[i]f racism is defined as unwitting and collective prejudice, then the claim to be racist by being able to see racism... is also a claim not be racist in the same way" (Ahmed 2004, par. 20). In other words, recognising oneself as racist becomes a way of claiming that one is not racist or at least a different type of racist. This image is easily conveyed by describing racism in social movements as different from "real" racism and white social movement activists as "good" people. These accounts stands in stark contrast to the general understanding of whiteness as a privilege, discussed in section 6.1.2, "Whiteness: the invisible norm".

From this understanding of racism as unintentional, it follows that anti-racist work in social movements, if needed at all, should primarily target the white self. Hence, Claudia argues that white people need to "do their part" and "above all listen more", Pablo states that white people need to "be aware" of their privileges and María says that there is a need to "make our racist practices visible". Such strategies may indeed hold a transformative potential by turning the gaze towards the white subject, but transformation is far from automatic. First, the way in which focus is put on individual change may bypass structural issues, including the way in which white bodies inhabit social movements as a consequence of intersecting privileges, rather than unintentional
racist behaviour. Second, racism is here framed as what Ahmed describes as a "bad practice which can be changed through learning more tolerant attitudes and behaviours" (2004, par. 19). White people should be made more self-conscious and critical. However, learning to see white privilege, and making it visible in social movements, does not necessarily involve unlearning that privilege (2004, par. 36). Indeed, as highlighted above, many of the activists already recognise white privilege at the conceptual level. Hence, there is a risk that an approach aiming at a greater white awareness becomes a mere act of self-reflection, leaving racial power relations unchanged. Contrary to what Beeman found, activists would then "talk the talk" on racism, but not "walk the walk" (2015).

Finally, several of the activists also argue that a lot of internal work is already in place, an idea that follows quite easily if one considers how white activists are portrayed as "good" people. Hence, María argues that although the feminist movement has far from solved issues related to racism, there is a real intent, at least. Moreover, she emphasises that a feminist perspective in itself "involves a constant critique of privileges and power relations", meaning that it can also question racism more easily. Claudia also insists that racism is being discussed within social movements, although it is far from solved and Pablo, referring to the Indignadxs as a white movement, says that it is an issue they are aware of and have "reflected upon". This idea that racism is already being tackled may justify no further action and consequently favour status quo.

In summary, the activists who employ the discourse of unintentional racism recognise that social movements may reproduce racism, but argue that they do so involuntarily. By highlighting its unintentional character, racism in social movements can be downplayed and presented as qualitatively different from "real" racism. Moreover, the white perpetrator can be exonerated. From this understanding follows that anti-racist work should target the white self and although such self-reflective approaches can have a transformative potential, they may also leave racial power relations unchanged.

6.2.3 Renegotiated racism: whiteness in social movements as anything but racism

All interviewees describe social movements, including their own spaces for political activism, as being predominantly white. In this context, when referring to a group she
belongs to, Marta says that she had never thought about it before, but "it's true that we are all Spanish". It should be noted that white is here reinterpreted as being Spanish and non-white as being migrant, eluding the (lack of) participation of racialised Spaniards. She continues by saying that she is not quite sure why this group is exclusively white, but finally reaches the following conclusion:

It's not because [these movements] are not accessible or permeable to [people of] a different origin, but rather I think it's because the [people of a] different origin have completely different circumstances from ours. So, I think that's the explanation. It is not at all a case of racism.

Marta claims that the fact that white bodies predominate in social movements is absolutely not a matter of racism, but rather due to the fact that migrants present completely different circumstances as compared to native Spaniards. Similarly, Daniel describes whites as being "omnipresent" in social movements, but argues that this is not linked with "skin colour", but with "origin and situation". He concludes that it is not "a racial issue [...] but rather a cultural issue". In both cases, the idea that race or racism might have anything to do with the fact that social movements are, according to the interviewees themselves, predominantly white is effectively dismissed. As argued by Bonilla-Silva, this is a central aspect of racism evasion, where whites "explain the product of racialized life... as non-racial outcomes" (2006, p. 63).

Moreover, in both the above-mentioned examples, the whiteness of social movements is presented as being about racialised "others" as different. This idea of migrants as lacking certain basic conditions and/or skills, preventing them from participating in social movements, is recurrent amongst the interviewees. Hence, Marta, to explain the lack of non-white bodies in social movements, repeatedly highlights the economic difficulties that migrants face:

[M]y personal theory is that it's true that people, well migrants, have different economic circumstances. So, obviously, if, for instance, you are worrying about what to eat, then you are not concerned about participating politically. So, I think that political participation, a lot of the time requires a minimum of basic conditions, and that in turn often corresponds with ethnicity or origin. That's what I think. That's why it's more difficult that they participate, because they have other, more urgent, problems than participating every week in a meeting.

Migrants are portrayed as lacking a certain economic stability, which hinders them from participating in social movements. Daniel, Raúl and Pablo also highlight the economic problems migrants might face as part of the explanation to why social movements are so white. Pablo further argues that language is a "giant problem" for migrants and says:
I think that how well you speak the language is a key issue. Because when the discourse gets elevated and people talk and there's a need to discuss an issue, if you don't speak it particularly well, then automatically, you will be [left out], no matter how horizontal the meetings are.

According to this quotation, migrants are seen as not being able to participate to the same extent as native Spaniards as their language skills hinder them from following a meeting with a complex discourse. Moreover, Pablo argues that there might be a certain level of disidentification amongst migrants, who possibly think that "this doesn't concern me" as movements such as the Indignadxs necessarily have focused on "our problems in our parliament". Daniel too highlights several limitations he considers important to explain the lack of migrants in social movements:

Starting with the training that you have received, your education, your environment etcetera, or even your perspectives in terms of whether you intend to stay here or go back etcetera. Your personal circumstances, and I think that where you have been brought up is obviously relevant as well, the things you have seen, the access to education that you have had etcetera. Right? I mean it's really difficult for a person that hasn't been able to study and who spends [...] the entire day working, to develop social concerns and start participating in a social movement, that's moreover being criticised by the media. I mean, it does require some time, maybe not that much time, but you don't develop [these concerns] naturally if you don't have that prior conscience.

Migrants are described as lacking the time, educational opportunities and a certain political conscience, all factors which are said to contribute to their limited participation in social movements. Raúl, presents a similar argument when speaking of the Roma:

So, I think that the Roma possess some very particular characteristics, culturally very particular, that I wouldn't be able to describe. But internally they have some very severe codes and rules, and that generates a very strong internal unity and it means that they can keep maintaining and reproducing their traditions and their culture in a very powerful way [...]. I have known Roma people that have participated in social movements, but really occasionally, really sporadically and really incidentally. Very little. Very little. Generally, the Roma have participated mainly to make the Roma people visible. But they haven't [...] they haven't mixed, they haven't participated in other kinds of social movements. What I'm saying is, I wouldn't be able to explain it, but I also think that the Roma culture is a, like I said, a very strong culture... but it's not a culture that's oriented towards general political participation.

Although it should be highlighted that Raúl also says that "Spaniards" generally have had "very anti-Roma views" making Roma participation in social movements more difficult, emphasis is still primarily put on Romani as culturally different. The Roma are described as a hermetic group which does not mix easily with others. They are also portrayed as belonging to a culture which does not promote political participation. This account is very similar to what Bonilla-Silva defines as cultural racism, one of the four frames of what he labels as colour-blind racism (2006, pp. 39-43).
In all the above accounts the whiteness of social movements is interpreted primarily in terms of an absence of racialised bodies, rather than a presence of white ones. This absence is explained by describing the racialised "others" as different as they are perceived as lacking certain fundamental skills and/or conditions. The problem can then be placed with the non-participating "other", rather than with the white activists or the social movement as such. As a consequence, the whiteness of social movements can be effectively disconnected from a discussion concerning racism or white privilege. Indeed, it can be interpreted implicitly or explicitly as due to anything but racism: economic circumstances, language skills, educational opportunities or cultural factors. Racism is effectively renegotiated as something else. Moreover, by placing responsibility with the non-participating racialised "other", white people can save face both individually (I am not a racist) and collectively (my social movement is not racist). If there is no racism, then the white subject is not implicated. As in the previous sections describing displaced and involuntary racism, this works as a strong white sincere fiction.

It should be highlighted that there are also a few accounts where social movements as such, rather than the racialised "other", are problematised. Raúl describes how participation in social movements requires controlling certain cultural and symbolic codes that end up expulsing some people, including migrants. He argues that:

They are a kind of invisible barriers, but if you don't control the cultural codes in Spanish social movements, that are very intellectual at times, there are intellectual hierarchies, you must have read Toni Negri to be able to discuss certain things... They expel certain people that can't keep up that type of discussions or discourses. [...] And, for instance, in social movements there are also dynamics of consumption, you consume entertainment, you consume music, you consume alcohol, parties, you consume clothing etcetera, and it's not easy to access, or it's not easy to share, [that] etcetera. So, I think this type of barriers don't help.

To some extent migrants are being described as different in this quotation as well, as they are portrayed as lacking certain skills, or cultural codes. However, rather than naturalising these codes as part of social movements, they are questioned, precisely due to their exclusionary nature. Social movements are critically described as impregnated with a specific organisational culture, including both intellectual and material aspects, favouring the participation of some people and limiting the access of others. Hence, rather than locating the problem exclusively in the racialised "other", focus is put on
internal mechanisms that reproduce certain power relations, marking an important difference with regards to the previous quotations in this section.

However, two important points should be made in this context. First, these accounts are not recurrent, but reproduced primarily by Raúl, and to a very limited extent by Pablo, who argues that personal networks in social movements may function in an exclusionary manner. In both cases, this narrative focusing on structural barriers in social movements is combined with the dominant discourse of placing responsibility with the racialised "other". Second, although these internal mechanisms could be interpreted as what Ahmed describes as habitual actions which make certain spaces white, the interviewees do not link them explicitly with whiteness (2007, pp. 156-57). Despite the fact that Raúl describes white privilege in a detailed way at the conceptual level, as discussed in section 6.1.2 "Whiteness: the invisible norm", it is not mentioned explicitly when discussing structural barriers in social movements. Rather, and despite mentioning migrants and Roma as groups that may be excluded due to these internal hierarchies, Raúl links the cultural codes he describes with class privilege:

So, I think that the social class is also expressed through cultural codes. […] The Roma have not had the same cultural socialization as the Spanish middle class, they have not gone to university, they have not read Marx, they have not read Bakunin, they don't use the same expressions and these are invisible and symbolic barriers that hinder a joint participation, even if you share the same goals.

Class privilege is seen as the main reason behind the structural barriers limiting the participation of the Romani, who are described as lacking these intellectual references, as they do not share the cultural codes of the middle class. There is no explicit analysis of how class and race may intersect in this case, beyond the idea that the Roma belong to the less privileged classes. Hence, although focus is put on structural barriers in social movements, the exclusion of racialised groups is again analysed without explicitly referring to racial power relations, besides a later mention of "micro-racisms". Moreover, the white subject is once more absent from the discussion of social movements as white. Ahmed argues that sometimes institutions may take the place of individuals as the perpetrator of racist power structures, hence allowing individuals to evade responsibility for collective forms of racism (2004, par. 19). In this case, despite a structural approach to power relations in social movements, racism is evaded along with white responsibility for exclusionary white habits. Hence, although there are important differences, both the accounts focusing on racialised "others" as different and the ones
highlighting structural barriers in social movements, tend to evade racism and leave the white subject unexposed. Whiteness in social movements is in both cases explained as anything but racism.

As racial power relations and white privilege are not seen as part of the problem, the discourse of renegotiated racism does not facilitate addressing racism internally in social movements. The dominant understanding of social movements as white due to the shortcomings of the racialised "others" clearly favours status quo as the problem is conveniently located outside social movements. The whiteness of social movements is then perceived as something that will disappear automatically with time, as the racialised "others" are assimilated in Spanish society. As expressed by Daniel when answering a question about whether social movements need to tackle the fact that they, according to his own understanding, are predominantly white:

I think that as we get people that, above all, have been brought up here, that might have come here with their parents when they were little, they've come to Spain and they have been brought up here, and they have their cousins here and so on... I mean, I think that little by little, just like in other places, [they will integrate in social movements].

According to this view, social movements can become more diverse once migrants, or the children of migrants, reach the same social and educational level as the white Spaniards currently integrating those movements. Raúl expresses a similar idea when discussing what he labels as "second generation immigrants" in social movements:

If the second generation manages to somehow reach the same level... as white Spaniards, etcetera etcetera, well, then maybe the only difference that's left is a visual one, precisely referring to whiteness or skin, and I think that's a social mark that will always be there. In social movements maybe that's not a problem.

Raúl continues by telling a story about a Black Spaniard, the son of migrants, who is now leading the protests against the immigrant detention centres in Madrid. The message implied both in the quotation and the story, is that once migrants, or the children of migrants, have reached the same "level" as native Spaniards, they will participate in social movements as equals. As argued by Goldberg in his discussion of assimilation, the non-white are here encouraged to "become white-like by adopting their values, habits, cultural expressions, aspirations and ways of being" (2015, p. 25). Such approaches leave racial power structures, and white privilege, completely intact. Moreover, the idea that assimilation will allow migrants to overcome the obstacles that are seen to hinder their participation in social movements ignores that race intersects
with socioeconomic status and educational level, making inequalities unlikely to just disappear. It also ignores that discrimination can be explicitly based upon skin colour. Finally, the accounts which focus on structural barriers in social movements also present limitations in terms of tackling racism internally, again as racism is not explicitly perceived as part of the problem. However, it could be argued that since this understanding involves a critique of structural and exclusionary barriers, it may facilitate making social movements generally more accessible. For instance, potential efforts to make social movements less classist might also favour the participation of non-whites, precisely due to the intersecting nature of race and class. However, internal racial power relations and white privilege are again most likely left intact by such efforts, unless racism is explicitly recognised and addressed.

In summary, activists who reproduce the discourse of renegotiated racism explain the whiteness of social movements in terms of racialised "others" as being different, lacking the necessary skills and/or conditions to participate. This discourse places the problem with the flawed non-participating "other", rather than with the social movement or the white activists. Structural racism in social movements can then be evaded and renegotiated as anything but racism. In a few cases, internal, structural barriers are also highlighted to explain the absence of non-whites in social movements, although without referring explicitly to racism or white privilege. The discourse of renegotiated racism has a limited potential to address racial power relations in social movements, precisely as racism and white privilege are not seen as part of the problem.

7. Concluding discussion

This study has examined how white social movement activists in Madrid, Spain, relate to race and racism, a previously unexplored issue in the Spanish context, where the significance of race has been rejected both politically and academically (Flores 2015, p. 238). Hopefully, the results will contribute both to a debate concerning race and racism in social movements and to an incipient discussion concerning whiteness in Spain.

The first part of my analysis has focused on how the interviewed activists understand race, whiteness and racism at a conceptual level. I have argued that race is an uncomfortable concept for most of the activists, who not only avoid the word or
renegotiate its significance, but also reject the relevance of race as such. These findings confirm the argument put forward by several authors that race is rejected as a relevant category in large parts of Europe (Knapp 2005; El-Tayeb 2011; Lewis 2013; Bilge 2013; Flores 2015). They moreover provide a certain empirical ground for sustaining that claim in the case of Spain. By contrast, whiteness is a virtually unknown term to the interviewees, possibly mirroring a lack of reflection concerning whiteness as a racial category in Spanish society more broadly. The fact that whiteness is perceived as invisible by the activists also reflects a privileged position. Their whiteness can go unnoticed as they, as put by Ahmed, inhabit bodies-at-home in a society oriented around that whiteness (2007, p. 160). These findings coincide with previous research highlighting that whiteness is not an issue whites tend to reflect upon unless being explicitly confronted with it (Feagin, Vera & Batur 2001, pp. 190-91). When the activists do reflect upon its meaning, they tend to define whiteness in terms of neutrality, normality and individual or structural privilege. As regards racism, the interviewees present two different understandings at a conceptual level. Whereas some of the activists interpret it in terms of individual attitudes and behaviours, others define racism as a structural problem, going beyond individual prejudice.

The second part of my analysis has focused on how the interviewed activists make sense of issues related to race and racism in the specific context of social movements – situations and spaces they identify with and consider their own. I argue that the activists recur to three prevailing discourses that I have named: displaced racism, unintentional racism and renegotiated racism. These discourses all serve the purpose of evading racism as part of social movements. Activists who adopt the discourse of displaced racism portray social movements as inherently non-racist, displacing racism to outside social movements. Interviewees employing the discourse of unintentional racism recognise social movements – and social movement activists – as racist, but argue that racist practices are involuntary. Finally, the discourse of renegotiated racism explains the whiteness of social movements as due to anything but racism as the interviewees highlight the various perceived shortcomings of the non-participating racialised "other". I have further argued that all the discourses imply serious limitations in terms of how internal and external anti-racist work can be framed in social movements.
Ahmed argues that to be against racism is not necessarily to transcend racism (2004, par. 48). My findings, based upon interviews with activists who all identify as anti-racists, corroborate that idea in at least three ways. First, for most of the interviewed activists, there is an important gap between the conceptual understandings of whiteness and racism generally and the way in which they make sense of these issues in the context of social movements. Activists can, for instance, identify white privilege at a conceptual level, but fail to use that knowledge to question, or even recognise, that privilege in their own spaces for political activism. Similarly, activists who have a structural understanding of racism at a conceptual level, still downplay its significance in social movements by describing it as different from "real" racism and/or explain the exclusion of racialised groups as caused by anything but racism. The only exception to this rule are the activists employing the discourse of displaced racism, where their general understanding of racism as an individual and extreme prejudice constitutes the very premise for their denial of racism in social movements.

Second, all activists engage in racism evasiveness to discuss racial issues in social movements. The activists who perceive social movements as inherently non-racist are precisely the ones who apply a more comprehensive framework of racism evasiveness. However, even the activists who recognise, to varying degrees, racism as an inevitable part of social movements make use of strategies to minimise its role by presenting it as unintentional or conceal its importance by renegotiating it as something else. Despite differences in the discourses that are being used, my findings largely coincide with research from the United States, showing how social movements activists engage in different forms of racism evasiveness in order to avoid confronting racism (Ernst 2010; Bilge 2013; Beeman 2015). My results are also in line with Frankenberg and Hughey, who demonstrate that progressive whites reproduce racist discourses despite their political ideas and anti-racist intentions (Frankenberg 1993; Hughey 2012).

Third, racism is also concealed, rather than transcended, by the activists' desire to see themselves as good white subjects. Indeed, all three discourses of racism evasiveness allow the activists to (re)produce a sincere fiction of the white self as a "non-racist" and "good" person. In the discourse of displaced racism, where the activists explicitly deny that they may reproduce racist practices, this sincere fiction is evident as activists build their identity as "good" (anti-racist) whites in direct contrast to the "bad" (racist) whites.
Similarly, the discourse of unintentional racism allows the activists to maintain the sincere fiction of being "good" people by underlining the involuntary character of their racist practices and distancing themselves from "real", intentional, racists. Finally, the discourse of renegotiated racism allows the activists to sustain the fiction of a non-racist self by placing responsibility with the non-participating racialised "other". These sincere fictions might be particularly strong amongst the whites in this study due to the fact that anti-racism is perceived as a fundamental political commitment for progressive left-wing activists. Consequently, admitting to being racist, or at least to being racist in the same way as others, could be experienced as an important personal contradiction. At the individual level, these white sincere fictions serve the purpose of concealing unwelcome aspects of the white self in a racialised society (Vera, Feagin & Gordon 1995, p. 297). At the structural level, they conceal and reproduce racial power relations by not acknowledging, or minimising, racism in order to maintain a positive self-image.

I have also discussed how the discourses employed by the activists to make sense of race and racism in social movements may influence the way in which internal and external anti-racist work can be framed. I have argued that despite some differences, they all present serious limitations in terms of challenging racial power relations. This is not surprising, given that the identified discourses serve the purpose of evading racism in social movements. Nonetheless, this inability to address racism matters. First and foremost as it affects the capacity that social movements, which are made up by activists such as the ones interviewed for this study, may have to address racial inequalities per se. However, it also affects their capacity to adopt an intersectional approach and address interrelated systems of inequalities, including racism. In that sense, it limits both their ability to forge broad political alliances under an inclusive movement identity and to effectively address multidimensional social problems.

This study offers some initial insights concerning how white social movement activists relate to race and racism in the Spanish context. However, many questions remain. One issue to explore by future research is how the ideas voiced by the interviewed activists relate to broader understandings of race and racism in Spanish society. My study also focuses exclusively on Madrid and it would be of interest to examine other parts of Spain, where both social conditions and the role played by social movements may differ substantially. It would also be relevant to investigate how migrants, Roma or other
racialised groups in social movements perceive race and racism and compare these understandings to the ones expressed by the white activists interviewed in this study.

Finally, this study, like any investigation, is a snapshot. It freezes a brief segment of time along with the particular ideas and understandings expressed in that very moment. Real life, however, is not static, but always in movement. We make new sense of the world all the time and new ideas may come along in the most unexpected ways. So, although the results of this study indicate a quite pervasive racism evasiveness, I would like to finish with the words that Marta used to close our interview, as they reflect precisely that movement and potential for change:

The truth is that I have found this really interesting, because… you never see yourself […] I have never seen myself as white, and the truth is that I take that with me, I take that with me as a gift, this reflection… So now I'll participate in different spaces and I'll be thinking "shit, I'm the white one here", you know? And what position does that give me? Does it give me any position? I have always lived like, I haven't paid any attention to that, […] it has never defined me in the spaces where I have been, but now I'll reflect upon it. We're white ones... and see if that really puts us in a different position. If you move feeling a different power because you are white.
8. References


Kvale, S 1997, *Den kvalitativa forskningsintervjun* [The qualitative research interview], Studentlitteratur, Lund.


SOS Racismo 2016, Informe anual 2016 sobre el racismo en el estado español [annual report 2016 concerning racism in the state of Spain], Tercera Prensa, San Sebastián.


9. Appendices

9.1 Appendix 1: Interview agreement information sheet

Entrevista de investigación: hoja de información

El estudio

- El estudio forma parte de un máster en género, interseccionalidad y cambio de la Universidad de Linköping, Suecia, y se centra en movimientos sociales, blanquitud y antirracismo.
- El objetivo del estudio es explorar las opiniones y experiencias de activistas de movimientos sociales en torno a cuestiones vinculadas con blanquitud, antirracismo y raza.
- La información de la entrevista sólo se utilizará para fines de investigación y podrá ser usada en el documento de la tesina u otros documentos académicos.

Metodología

- La información será recabada a través de una entrevista que durará en torno a una hora.

Confidencialidad

- El estudio es anónimo.
- No se utilizará tu nombre en el estudio, sino un nombre inventado.
- Tendrás la posibilidad de revisar la transcripción de la entrevista. Tendrás siete días para aprobar y/o complementar la información. Transcurridos los siete días sin aviso por tu parte, la transcripción se da por aprobada.

Participación

- Tú decides si quieres participar o no en el estudio.
- Puedes interrumpir la entrevista en cualquier momento.
- Puedes decidir no contestar a algunas, o a todas, de las preguntas.
- Puedes pedir que no se utilice el material de tu entrevista.

Preguntas

- Puedes hacer preguntas sobre el estudio antes, durante o después de la investigación.
- Si tienes preguntas después de realizar la entrevista me puedes contactar a través del correo electrónico: [correo electrónico] o por teléfono [número de teléfono].
- Si quieres, también puedes solicitar una copia del estudio final.

Consentimiento

- Dando tu consentimiento a la entrevista indicas que has entendido toda la información y que das tu consentimiento a participar en el estudio.
Research Interview: Information Sheet

The study

- This study is part of a master's degree in gender, intersectionality and change at the University of Linköping, Sweden, and it focuses on social movements, whiteness and antiracism.
- The aim of the study is to explore the opinions and experiences of social movement activists with regards to whiteness, antiracism and race.
- The information resulting from the interview will be used only for academic purposes and may be used in my thesis or in other academic documents.

Methodology

- The information will be generated through an interview that will last around one hour.

Confidentiality

- The study is anonymous.
- Your name will not be used in the study, but replaced with an invented name.
- You have the possibility of reviewing the interview transcription. You will then have seven days to approve or complement the information. After seven days, if you have not asked for changes, the transcription will be considered as approved.

Participation

- You decide if you want to participate in the study or not.
- You may interrupt the interview at any time.
- You can choose not to reply to some, or all, questions.
- You can ask me not to use the material from this interview.

Questions

- You can ask questions concerning the study before, during or after the investigation.
- If you have any questions after the interview, you can contact me via email: [email address] or phone: [phone number].
- If you wish to, you can also ask for a copy of the final study.

Consent

When you give your consent to participate in the interview you indicate that you have understood all the information provided and that you agree to participate in the study.
9.2 Appendix 2: Interview guide

Guión de Entrevistas

1. Presentación e introducción

   ○ Permiso para la grabación:
     ○ pedir permiso para grabar la entrevista y darles la hoja

   ○ Información sobre el estudio:
     ○ forma parte de un postgrado en interseccionalidad.
     ○ se centra en movimientos sociales, blanquitud y antirracismo.
     ○ el objetivo es explorar las opiniones y experiencias de activistas de movimientos sociales en torno a cuestiones vinculadas con blanquitud, antirracismo y raza.

   ○ Información sobre la entrevista:
     ○ durará en torno a una hora
     ○ puedes decidir no contestar a algunas, o todas, las preguntas.
     ○ puedes interrumpir la entrevista en cualquier momento

   ○ Información sobre la confidencialidad
     ○ El estudio sólo se utilizará para fines de investigación.
     ○ El estudio es anónimo: todos los nombres personales se cambiarán.
     ○ Hay posibilidad de revisar la transcripción, si quieres. En ese caso tendrás siete días para aprobar y/o complementar la información.

   ○ Consentimiento
     ○ Comprobar que hayan entendido toda la información.
     ○ Si hay acuerdo, se procede a la entrevista.

2. Antecedentes personales

   ○ ¡Descríbete brevemente!
   ○ Algunos datos personales relevantes: edad, profesión, estudios previos…
   ○ ¿En qué movimientos/espacios/organización has militado/estás militando?
   ○ ¿Por qué te involucraste en estos espacios? ¿Qué te ha motivado?

3. Las personas en los movimientos sociales

   ○ ¿Cómo describirías a la gente que milita en estos espacios? ¿Qué tipo de gente es?
   ○ ¿Dirías que es un ambiente diverso? ¿En qué sentido?
   ○ ¿Qué significa ser blanco/a en los movimientos sociales? ¿Qué papel jugamos?
4. Racismo
  o ¿Qué es racismo para ti?
  o ¿El concepto de "raza" es útil? ¿Cómo hablar de racismo si no hablamos de raza?
  o ¿España es racista? ¿En qué sentido?
  o ¿Crees que los movimientos sociales también reproducen algunos mecanismos racistas?

5. Movimiento sociales y racismo
  o ¿Cómo afectan cuestionas de raza/racismo al movimiento/organización/espacio? ¿Es un tema relevante a nivel interno? ¿O externo?
  o ¿Recuerdas alguna acción que se haya llevado a cabo relacionada con el (anti)rracismo? ¿Por qué es importante/no importante?
  o ¿Se habla de forma abierta sobre racismo en el movimiento/espacio/organización ¿Racismo dentro y fuera del movimiento? ¿Es suficiente? ¿Sería problemático hacerlo?
  o ¿Recuerdas algún incidente racista y/o de discriminación racial? ¿Cómo se abordó?

6. De aquí en adelante
  o ¿Cómo crees que deben los movimientos sociales abordar el trabajo antirracista de cara al futuro?
  o ¿Qué papel crees que podemos jugar lxs blancxs en el trabajo antirracista?

7. Cierre
  o Preguntas
  o Datos de contacto
Interview Guide

1. Presentation and introduction
   - Permission to record
     - Ask for permission to record and hand out the information sheet.
   - Information about the study:
     - Part of a master's degree in intersectionality
     - Focuses on social movements, whiteness and antiracism
     - The aim is to explore the opinions and experiences of social movement activists regarding whiteness, antiracism and race.
   - Information about the interview:
     - Lasts for about an hour
     - You can decide not to reply to some, or all, the questions.
     - You can interrupt the interview at any time.
   - Information concerning confidentiality
     - The study will only be used for academic purposes.
     - The study is anonymous: all personal names will be changed.
     - You may review the interview transcription, if you want to. In that case, you would have seven days to approve and/or complement the information.
   - Consent
     - Verify that they have understood all the information provided
     - If they agree, we proceed to the interview.

2. Personal Background
   - Describe yourself briefly!
   - Some relevant personal details: age, occupation, educational background...
   - What movements/spaces/organisations have you been involved in?
   - Why did you become involved in those spaces? What motivated you?

3. People in social movements
   - How would you describe the people that are involved in social movements? What kind people is it?
   - Would you say that it is a diverse environment? In what sense?
   - What does it mean to be white in social movements? What role do we play?
4. Racism

- What is racism to you?
- Do you think the concept of race is useful? How to speak of racism if we don't speak of race?
- Is Spain a racist country? In what sense?
- Do you think that social movements might reproduce some racist mechanisms?

5. Social movements and racism

- How do issues related to race/racism affect the movement/organisation/space? Is it a relevant issues internally? Or externally?
- Can you remember any anti-racist action that you have carried out? Why is that important/not important?
- Do you think people talk openly about racism in the movement/space/organisation? Internal and external racism? Is it enough? Would it be problematic to talk about it?
- Can you remember any racist incident and/or situation of racial discrimination? How was it dealt with?

6. From here on

- How do you think that social movements should deal with the anti-racist work in the future?
- What role do you think that white people should play in that anti-racist work?

7. Closing the interview

- Questions
- Contact details
9.3 Appendix 3: Translation of block quotations

4.2 Ethics and reflexivity

No sé, es curioso, porque viendo tu cara y viendo la mía, me ha parecido, cuando hablábamos, como estamos los dos hablando en clave de que somos blancos, pero tú eres mucho más blanca que yo, y tienes otro fenotipo. Yo... mi padre es de Cádiz, probablemente tenga familia musulmana o árabe o lo que fuera y yo tengo un fenotipo muy diferente y nos hemos considerado así. […] [C]uando dices blanco yo me siento menos identificado y de repente a ti te veo en el centro del discurso de blanco... Y me ha sorprendido un poco (Pablo 2017, 8 April).

I don’t know, it’s strange, because seeing your face and seeing mine, I have the impression, when we were speaking, we are both speaking like we are white, but you are a lot whiter than I am, and you have a different phenotype. I... my father is from Cádiz [in southern Spain], I probably have Muslim or Arab family or whatever and my phenotype is very different from yours and still we have considered both of us in that way […] [W]hen you say white I feel less identified and suddenly I see you right in the centre of the discourse of whiteness... And it surprised me a bit (Pablo 2017, 8 April).

6.1 Understandings of race, racism and whiteness

[M]e parece que a la hora de analizar discriminaciones etcétera, quizá el color no sea tan, tan relevante, sino solo como indicativo ¿no? Tú identificas a alguien con un color, que viene de una zona […] y le atribuyes unas características, pero creo que más bien culturales. La mayoría de la gente, los prejuicios que tienen son de este tipo de cosas (Daniel 2017, 6 April).

To me it seems like when analysing discriminations etcetera maybe colour isn’t that relevant, perhaps only as an indication, right? You identify someone with a colour, who comes from a particular territory […] and you assign certain characteristics to that person, but I think [these characteristics] are cultural, rather than racial. The prejudices most people have are related to that kind of things (Daniel 2017, 6 April).

Yo no utilizo raza porque lo asocio más a una cuestión biológica. Genético-biológica. De hecho, la idea de raza, a mí siempre me viene a la cabeza animales, ¿no? Las razas de los perros, etc. Y la parte étnica, la vinculo más a cuestiones culturales, y... yo creo que sí que hay un fuerte componente de racismo cultural o racismo étnico. De hecho, yo escucho mucho: “no soy racista, pero los rumanos...” Y allí, no veo que nadie diga la raza rumana, veo que te dicen, “es que los rumanos son...” y te hablan como de comportamientos. Por eso, lo vinculo a cuestiones culturales (Raúl 2017, 8 April).

I don’t use race as I associate it more with a biological issue. Genetic-biological. In fact, the idea of race, it always makes me think of animals, right? Dog breeds, etcetera. And the ethnic part, I associate that more with cultural issues, and... I think there certainly is a strong component of cultural racism, or ethnic racism. In fact, I often hear: “I’m not racist, but the Rumanians...” And there, I don’t hear anyone saying the Rumanian race, I hear them saying: “the Rumanians are...” and they speak as of behaviours. That is why I associate it with cultural issues (Raúl 2017, 8 April).

¿Raza? [silencio]. Difícil. Ehm... Ehm... Claro, es difícil, porque como tal... O sea, la especie humana como tal no tiene raza, ¿no? Entones más como categoría analítica como tal...pues, yo

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8 The shorter, and at times fragmented, in-text quotations will not be included in this appendix as they often consist of only a few words or a short sentence. The block quotations constitute the vast majority of quotations included in the document and their length allow the reader to better appreciate how the translations have been carried out.
qué sé... ehm...mmm, pufff. Pues no sé...conjunto de personas con unas determinadas facciones, color, no te sé decir (Claudia 2017, 17 April).

Race? [silence]. Difficult. Ehm... Ehm...Right, that's difficult, because as such... I mean, humans as such don't have any race, right? So, more like an analytical category... so, I don't know... ehm... mmm, pfff. Well, I don't know... a group of people with certain bodily features, colour, I'm not sure (Claudia 2017, 17 April).

Es lo que te digo, que a mí me cuesta ver la realidad en forma de... racial. Porque desde esos espacios yo creo que lo que se piensa es en las... en las... por decirlo de una manera, en las injusticias ¿no? En los daños que pueden sufrir las personas, independientemente de las razas. O sea, yo no pienso en que voy a mejorar mi barrio para los latinoamericanos, o voy mejorar mi barrio para los negros, o voy a mejorar...yo pienso que voy a mejorar el barrio para las personas. No veo la realidad tanto en... en razas (Marta 2017, 10 April).

Like I already said, I find it difficult to see reality in terms of... races. Because in those spaces I think that what one thinks about is the... the... so to speak... the injustices, right? In the harm that people may suffer, regardless of race. I mean, I don't think about improving my neighbourhood for Latin-Americans, or improving my neighbourhood for black people, or improving it... I think about improving the neighbourhood for people. I don't see reality in so much terms of... races (Marta 2017, 10 April).

Mmm...bueno, parece que da miedo ¿no? Utilizar la palabra raza. Porque...supongo que porque está asociada a lo mejor al racismo. […] [P]ues puede que cree la diferencia. Es como señalar la diferencia, creo (Marta 2017, 10 April).

Hmm... well, it seems like it makes you a bit afraid, doesn't it? To use the word race. Because... I suppose because it may be associated with racism. […] [Y]ou might create difference. It is like highlighting difference, I think (Marta 2017, 10 April).

Pues eso... pues, las diferencias... [silence]. Sería una categoría que sirva para visibilizar diferentes cuerp... O, eh, sí. Bueno, diferentes cuerpos en el sentido de...eh...color... y... hm. Color y origen. Origen... No tiene porque ser tema nacionalidad vinculado a esto. Sino... pues, eso. Que puedes ser española y ser negra. Pero allí estaría la raza (María 2017, 6 April).

Right... so, the differences... [silence]. It would be like a category that is useful for making different bodies visible. Or, eh, yes. Well, different bodies in the sense of... eh... colour... and hmm. Colour and origin. Origin... It doesn't have to be linked with the issue of nationality. Rather... Well, yes. You can be Spanish and black. But that would be race (María 2017, 6 April).

6.1.2 Whiteness: the invisible norm

Sandra: Y antes, cuando hemos empezado me has preguntado por la palabra blanquitud, allí en la hoja [de información]. ¿Qué es lo que te ha llamado la atención con eso?

Marta: Porque no la había escuchado nunca. Supongo que las palabras que conocemos es más hacia el otro, ¿no? Hacia la minoría […]. Que es como siempre te refieres a la integración desde tu posición. Nunca te ves tú como otro, otro actor allí, del panorama, supongo. Nunca me había sentido yo el objeto del estudio. Fíjate... Yo como persona blanca, me refiero (Marta 2017, 10 April).

Sandra: So before, when we started you asked me about the word whiteness, written there on the [information] sheet. What is it that caught your attention?
**Marta:** Because I had never heard it before. I suppose that the words that we know tend to be to refer to the others, right? To the minority [...]. It is as if you always refer to integration from your position. You never see yourself like the other one, like another actor on the scene, I suppose. I had never felt like the object of study. Now, think about that... Me as a white person, I mean (Marta 2017, 10 April).

[S]iempre creo que tenemos esa imagen [de la blanquitud] como contraste, como... Como que los que tienen raza son los otros, como el acento ¿no? los que tienen el acento son los demás... (Daniel 2017, 6 April).

*I think we always have that idea [of whiteness] as a contrast, as if... As if race is something others have, like speaking with an accent, right? It is everyone else that has an accent* (Daniel 2017, 6 April).

No. Porque el blanco es lo normal, y lo otro es lo que no es normal. Allí, el negro, el árabe, el morenito, bueno todas estas palabras... que sirven para nombrar lo que no es blanco. Desde allí, yo no percibo que soy blanco. Sí, sí. No, blanco es lo que es (María 2017, 6 April).

*No. Because whiteness is normal, and what is not normal is the other. There, the Black, the Arab, the Brown... well, all those words... that are used to denominate what is not white. From that position I don't perceive myself as white. Yes, yes. No, whiteness is what it is* (María 2017, 6 April).

A nivel general, creo que en el mundo occidental ser blanco es una especie de, como diría yo eso, es una especie de nivel o escalón social a partir del cual, vives... Me refiero... tienes cierto tipo de discriminaciones evitadas, no todas, pero cierto tipo. Ser blanco, es una situación visual, que socialmente es muy importante, fenotípica, del fenotipo de la apariencia de los rasgos, pero yo diría si me preguntas la definición, creo que hoy día ser blanco es un... es un nivel de clase social, o algo así, ¿no? […] No te evita todo tipo de discriminaciones, no te evita la discriminación de género o la opresión de género, no te evita otro tipo de discriminaciones, pero te evita muchas. […] En España desde luego te evita muchos problemas hoy en día a nivel policial, institucional y obviamente social. Entonces, sí, yo diría que la blanquitud, bueno es una especie de pasaporte, o clase social, para acceder fácilmente a determinados... espacios o a determinados circuitos. Pero no te lo garantiza todo (Raúl 2017, 8 April).

*Generally, I think that in the Western World being white is a kind of, how to put it, it's a kind of position or social rung from where you live... I mean... You avoid a certain type of discrimination, not all, but a certain type. Being white is a visual situation, that is socially very important, phenotypical, the phenotype of your bodily features, but if you ask me for a definition, I think today, being white is a... it's a position related to a social class or something like that, isn't it? […] It doesn't prevent you from suffering all types of discrimination, it doesn't prevent you from suffering gender-based discrimination, or gender oppression, it doesn't prevent you from suffering other types of discrimination, but it does prevent you from suffering a lot of it. […] For sure, in Spain today it does save you from a lot of trouble with the police, the institutions and obviously socially. So, yes, I would say that whiteness, well it's a kind of passport, or social class, to easily access certain... spaces or certain circuits. But it doesn't guarantee you everything* (Raúl 2017, 8 April).

6.1.3 Racism: individual prejudice versus structural discrimination

[Y]o sí que creo que hay racismo, comentarios racistas... Me encanta, vamos, lo popular que es el rollo de "yo no soy racista, pero..." […] En plan de, "yo no soy racista pero iban dos negros en el metro gritando" y es como que te molestará que estén gritando no que sean negros, ¿no? O sea, por ejemplo cosas muy sutiles, porque es lo que te digo, políticamente es incorrecto que te molesten los negros, pero en realidad están los comentarios, o sea tu cuando cuentas una
anécdota y parte de la anécdota es el origen de las personas que forman parte de ella es porque tú estás dando a entender... porque en tu cabeza el que sean de determinado país o determinada raza influye en la historia. No les estás viendo como personas, les estás viendo como pertenecientes a una raza o un país diferente al tuyo o... y para mí eso es racismo (Marta 2017, 10 April).

Y era brutal, o sea, era brutal. Sobre todo las personas más mayores en plan... mayores de 60 años, era brutal el racismo que hay. Y bueno, pues "que se vayan de aquí, nos están quitando el trabajo, vienen aquí a robar". Sobre todo hay mucho racismo con los rumanos, es brutal, aquí en Madrid sobre todo en los barrios de periferia (Claudia 2017, 17 April).

And it was brutal, I mean, brutal. Especially elderly people, like... older than 60 years, the amount of racism was brutal. Well, like "they should all go home, they are taking our jobs, they come here to steal". Above all there's a lot of racism against Rumanians, it's brutal, here in Madrid, in the suburbs (Claudia 2017, 17 April).

Y luego también, hay una cosa muy curiosa, cuando hay problemas de convivencia en el barrio, pues claro, las personas que tienen el filtro racista, automáticamente gestionan eso así: "Es que los marroquíes" no sé qué, "porque siempre discuto con Mohammed", por ejemplo. Es que a lo mejor la persona que discute con Mohammed discute también con Maruja, pero sólo te cuenta que ha discutido con Mohammed, solo le da importancia a esa parte de la convivencia y eso también pasa. Que hay conflictos en el barrio, y [...] las personas que tienen ese filtro racista, pues todos los conflictos los pasan por problemas de... de... de conflictos raciales (Marta 2017, 10 April).

And then, there's something curious, when there are problems of coexistence in the neighbourhood, well of course, the people who have a racist filter automatically handle it like this: "Because the Moroccans" and so on, "because I always argue with Mohammed", for instance. I mean maybe the person who argues with Mohammed discute también con Maruja [a common Spanish name], but they will only tell you that they argued with Mohammed, they only consider that part of the coexistence important, so that happens too. There are conflicts in the neighbourhood and [...] the people that have that racist filter, well, they interpret all conflicts as... as... as racial conflicts (Marta 2017, 10 April).

[O] sea cuando digo que no hay racismo me refiero a una cosa generalizada. Obvio que luego hay gente que tiene unas ideas muy extremas, muy extremas, que si que se pueden centrar más en eso ¿no? Movimientos neonazis etc. [...] Y luego hay otra cosa más... que creo que, allí yo haría una reflexión, esto es una cosa muy personal, pero muchas veces, ni siquiera detrás de cada insulto, hay racismo de verdad. [...] Si hay dos niños que se están peleando y un niño es de otro color, es que lo tienen a huevo ¿no? para, para decirle algo, le va a dar con todo, si tiene la nariz grande se va a meter con su nariz, y si es negro y ha habido comentarios negativos de los negros pues le va a decir algo de los negros ¿no? Entonces... ¿Es racismo eso? Hombre, está muy feo obviamente, pero creo que a la hora de analizarlo también hay que tener un poco la
sensatez de decir, es que no todo es... [...] No veo una sensación profunda allí de desprecio hacia otras razas, muchas veces (Daniel 2017, 6 April).

[S]o when I say that there's no racism, I am speaking generally. Obviously there are people with really extreme ideas, really extreme, that might be focusing more on that, right? The neonazi movements, etcetera. And there's another thing... I think that, and here I would analyse, this is a very personal thing, but a lot of the time there isn't even real racism behind every insult [...] If there are two kids that are fighting and one is of a different colour, then it's really easy, right? To say something, they will use everything, if the other kid has a big noose he'll pick on his noose, and if he's black and there have been negative comments about black people then he'll say something about black people, right? So... Is that racism? I mean, it's really ugly, obviously, but I think that when we analyse if we need some common sense, not everything is... [...] A lot of the time I don't see a profound sense of contempt for other races (Daniel 2017, 6 April).

[R]acismo sería como una especie de, es como una especie de arquitectura social, que... marca ciertos caminos para ciertos grupos sociales e imposibilita otros a otros grupos sociales. [...] Como de ciertos caminos que ciertos grupos pueden caminar o transitar y otros no, entonces, pues es una especie, el racismo es una especie de discriminación muy invisible, muy simbólica, que facilita y reproduce que ciertos grupos sociales sigan teniendo acceso a ciertos recursos sociales y tengan la vida más fácil, y otros grupos sociales tengan la vida más difícil (Raúl 2017, 8 April).

Racism would be like a kind of, it's like a kind of social architecture, that... marks certain paths for certain social groups and make other [paths] unavailable for other social groups. [...] Like certain paths that certain groups can walk or follow and others can't, so it's a kind of, racism is a kind of discrimination that is very invisible, very symbolic, that facilitates and reproduces the continued access of certain groups to certain social resources, making their lives easier, and the lives of other social groups more difficult (Raúl 2017, 8 April).

Bueno, se nota en la representación institucional, que no nos podemos imaginar un gitano metido allí [en el parlamento], porque sería, me produce hasta risa, con todo lo de racista que tenga la visión [...] [S]ería algo inimaginable y eso es de un racismo atroz. Y se nota en el discurso habitual del que viene de fuera y nos quitan las subvenciones y demás, se nota en que no están ni siquiera en los movimientos sociales o no están igual de representados [...] Se nota en la segregación urbana, se nota que hay sitios que son para negros, sitios que son para gitanos [...] Se nota en... supongo que se nota en todo, a nivel laboral se nota, los que ejercen determinados trabajos... (Pablo 2017, 8 April).

Well, you can see it in terms of institutional representation, that we can't imagine a Roma getting into [parliament], because it would be, it even makes me laugh, however racist that image may be [...]. [I]t would be unimaginable, and that indicates an outrageous racism. And you can see it in the usual discourse of people coming from abroad and taking our subsidies and so on, you can see it in that they are not even part of social movements, or not represented to the same extent [...]. You can see it in the urban segregation, you can see that there are places for black people, places for Roma people [...] You can see it... I suppose you can see it in everything, in the labour market, the ones that do certain jobs... (Pablo 2017, 8 April).

6.2.1. Displaced racism: social movements as inherently non-racist

O sea para mí es muy difícil también que si gente que está participando activamente en un centro social, porque tienen una determinada consciencia etcétera, abiertamente vaya a haber un tema racista, así...Yo no lo he visto, y se me hace complicado (Daniel 2017, 6 April).
So, it seems unlikely to me that if people are actively participating in social movements, because they have a certain awareness etcetera, that there would be an openly racist issue, like that. I haven't seen it, and it comes across as difficult (Daniel 2017, 6 April).


Yes! [with emphasis]. Of course. Yes, yes. Totally yes. Yes, of course. Yes, because besides, I mean, by definition, a libertarian movement is always absolutely anti-racist, anti-fascist. So, how could they not be welcome? That would be a brutal incoherence (Marta 2017, 10 April).

Marta: [Y]o cuando estoy en una asamblea y como te digo sí que es verdad que hay gente latinoamericana, yo no me veo como soy una blanca, que estoy hablando contigo que tu eres latinoamericana, es que esos filtros como que no los tengo […]

Sandra: ¿Tú crees que la persona latinoamericana lo pensaría de otra forma?

Marta: Yo creo que en los espacios en los que yo me muevo, creo que no. […] Esa persona, que es de Perú, y yo, tenemos el mismo objetivo, que es mi barrio. Entonces dudo mucho que a esa persona le esté preocupando que yo sea española o no, porque como yo estoy en el mismo barco, no creo que esté pensando eso. Y de estar pensando eso, eh... sería igualmente un problema de racismo, ¿no? […] Me han parecido que siempre han sido relaciones muy afectivas y muy del tuyo a tu y de igual a igual, sabes? (Marta 2017, 10 April).

Marta: When I am participating in a meeting, and like I said there are Latin-Americans, I don’t see myself as a white person talking to you, who are Latin-American, I don’t have those filters.

Sandra: And do you think the Latin-American person would see it differently?

Marta: In the spaces where I'm participating, I don't think so. […] That person, who's from Peru, and I, we have the same goal – my neighbourhood. So, I very much doubt that that person is worrying about whether I'm Spanish or not, because since I'm in the same boat, I don't believe they're thinking that. And if they're thinking that, eh... that would also be a problem of racism, wouldn't it? […] I have always found the relations very affectionate and very equal, with all of us being on the same level (Marta 2017, 10 April).

Yo no me he encontrado con personas racistas en centros sociales. Por ejemplo, […] todos los años que he trabajado en [name of workplace], si me he encontrado con opiniones racistas etc., por lo que comentaba, de que mucha gente vive la inmigración como un problema, de fíjate, o sea como que casi: "mira que vienen en lugar de morirse de hambre en su país" ¿no? O sea como nadie va a decir eso abiertamente, pero sí como que se escuchan ¿no? Como, pues eso, como más opiniones que pueden tener unos tintes racistas. Pero en los centros sociales, la verdad no, no las he escuchado (Daniel 2017, 6 April).

I have not encountered racist people in social movements. For instance, […] all those years that I worked for [name of workplace], I did encounter racist opinions etcetera, like I said, that a lot of people consider immigration to be a problem, almost like "they are coming here instead of dying from hunger in their own countries", right? I mean, no one will say so openly, but you do hear it, right? Like opinions that may have a racist undertone. But in social movements, to be honest, I've never heard those opinions (Daniel 2017, 6 April).

Es que yo creo que depende de cómo vayan también evolucionando otras cosas... […] Yo creo que no es descartable que haya un incremento de racismo en España cuando convenga tapar
cualquier cosa y los medios de comunicación empiecen un poco... […] Pero si hay algún giro, si hay un aumento del racismo, me parece que se debería abordar más. Si no hay... O sea, que cómo me gustaría que se abordase? pues me gustaría que no hubiera opiniones racistas en España y que en los centros sociales tampoco se trate... ¿no? Que no haya nada que solucionar (Daniel 2017, 6 April).

So, I think that also depends on how other things evolve... [...] I think that you can’t rule out an increase in racism in Spain, whenever they need to cover something up and the media starts... [...] But if there’s a change, if racism increases, I think [social movements] ought to deal with it. If there’s no change, then, how would I like them to deal with it? I mean, I would like racist opinions not to exist in Spain and social movements not having to deal with it, right? I would like there to be nothing to solve (Daniel 2017, 6 April).

6.2.2. Unintentional racism: social movements and activists as involuntarily racist

Que lo hemos aprendido. Como lo hemos aprendido, entonces es inevitable que esté. O sea que, si no se hace un ejercicio de revisar, pues al final, sin querer lo reproducen... inconscientemente lo reproducen, de esas formas. Creo que los mecanismos son inconscientes, no conozco un movimiento feminista que se declare racista... [risa]. Esa no es la idea, sería incoherente [...] pero creo que sutilmente se nos escapa, a veces (María 2017, April 6).

We have learnt it. And since we have learnt it, it’s inevitably there. I mean, if you don’t make an effort, in the end, without wanting to, you reproduce it... Unconsciously, you reproduce it, like that. I think that the mechanisms are unconscious, I don’t know any feminist movement that declare itself racist... [laughter]. That’s not the idea, that would be incoherent [...] but I think that in a subtle way it slips through, sometimes (María 2017, April 6).

No es que no esté atenta porque no quiera estar atenta, sino porque, más porque claro, porque al final, yo qué sé, o sea, como que, pues, como lo consideras normal al fin y al cabo no me doy cuenta de verdaderamente cuando alguien se está sintiendo mal o se está sintiendo atacado, entonces, como que, doy las cosas un poco por hecho (Claudia 2017, 17 April).

It’s not like I don’t pay attention because I don’t want to pay attention, but because, because obviously, because in the end, I mean, well, it’s like, I mean, since you consider it normal, in the end I don’t realise when someone is really feeling bad or feeling attacked, so, it’s like, I take things for granted a bit (Claudia 2017, 17 April).

Es un discurso obviamente [...] racista... pero no es racista en la clase de... o sea, como podemos entender la palabra racista habitualmente, no es un racismo de decir, todos son unos... o sea [es] un racismo como el que creo que hemos contextualizado dentro de movimientos sociales (Pablo 2017, 8 April).

It’s a discourse that’s obviously [...] racist... But it’s not racist in the sense, I mean, like we normally understand the word racism, it’s not racist in the sense of saying, they are all... I mean, it’s a kind of racism that I think we’ve contextualised in social movements (Pablo 2017, 8 April).

[D]entro del espectro de lo racista pues no es lo mismo querer que todos los negros acaben en un horno crematorio a que a considerar que, en este racismo cotidiano, por como tú hablas, tienes un poco más de razón que el que está ahí que es de otro lugar, ¿no?... (Pablo 2017, 8 April).

Within a spectrum of racism, it’s not the same thing wanting all blacks to end up in a crematory oven, as considering, as part of this daily racism, due to the way you speak, that your argument
carries a bit more weight than the person next to you, who is from somewhere else, right? (Pablo 2017, 8 April).

[Es que eres ahora una islamófoba, a tomar por culo, joder... También, pues sí, pues sí, pues sí, pero claro, una cosa es que lo sepa, desde seguramente mi práctica lo soy, desde lo que se me escapa, porque no es desde la intención, pues claro que sí, pero claro te lo señalan desde la agresión, no desde todas somos islamófobas... (María 2017, 6 April).

So now you're Islamophobic, fuck that... So, yes, yes, yes, but I mean, one thing is to know that, in practice I most probably am, because it slips through involuntarily, because it's not intentional, so of course I am, but they tell you so in an aggressive manner, not considering that we are all Islamophobic (María 2017, 6 April).

So ya es un discurso de racismo. Eh... en clave diferente, es que lo quiero excusar porque estoy pensando en mis compañeras tampoco es que... esa frase, aunque la dijeran es un contexto muy concreto el de la lucha saharaui [...] (Pablo 2017, 8 April).

So, that is a racist discourse. Eh, in a different sense, I mean I want to excuse them because I'm thinking about my friends, and it's not like... that phrase, even if they said it, they did so in a very specific context, that of the Saharan struggle (Pablo 2017, 8 April).

6.2.3 Renegotiated racism: whiteness in social movements as anything but racism

Que no es porque no sean [movimientos] accesibles o permeables para otros orígenes sino que creo que es porque los otros orígenes tienen otras circunstancias totalmente diferentes a las nuestras. Entonces...creo que esa es la explicación. Para nada es una situación de racismo (Marta 2017, 10 April).

It's not because [these movements] are not accessible or permeable to [people of] a different origin, but rather I think it's because the [people of a] different origin have completely different circumstances from ours. So, I think that's the explanation. It is not at all a case of racism (Marta 2017, 10 April).

Mi teoría personal es que es cierto que las personas, bueno, migrantes, tienen otras circunstancias económicas. Entonces, claro, igual si estás preocupado por comer, no estás preocupado por militar en un espacio. O sea que, yo creo que la militancia, muchas veces corresponde con un mínimo de condiciones básicas, y eso muchas veces corresponde a su vez con la etnia o con el origen. Eso creo. Por eso cuesta más que participen, porque tienen problemáticas mucho más urgentes que estar todas las semanas en una asamblea (Marta 2017, 10 April).

My personal theory is that it's true that people, well migrants, have different economic circumstances. So, obviously, if, for instance, you are worrying about what to eat, then you are not concerned about participating politically. So, I think that political participation, a lot of the time requires a minimum of basic conditions, and that in turn often corresponds with ethnicity or origin. That's what I think. That's why it's more difficult that they participate, because they have other, more urgent, problems than participating every week in a meeting (Marta 2017, 10 April).

El manejo del idioma, creo que es algo clave. Porque en un momento en el que el discurso se eleva que la gente habla tal y hay una necesidad de debatir un tema y si tu no [lo] manejas especialmente bien, pues automáticamente, quedas [al margen], por mucho que las asambleas sean horizontales (Pablo 2017, 8 April).
I think that how well you speak the language is a key issue. Because when the discourse gets elevated and people talk and there's a need to discuss an issue, if you don't speak it particularly well, then automatically, you will be [left out], no matter how horizontal the meetings are (Pablo 2017, 8 April).

[D]esde la formación que has tenido, la educación, el entorno etc., como incluso también las perspectivas de si tienes idea de quedarte aquí, si tienes idea de volver etc. Las circunstancias personales, y también claro que creo que tiene mucho que ver, donde te has criado, las cosas que has visto, el acceso a educación que has tenido etc. ¿No? Pues es muy difícil también que una persona que no ha podido estudiar y que se pasa [...] trabajando desde que se levanta hasta que se acuesta, que le surjan unas inquietudes y que se ponga a participar en un centro social, que además resulta que los medios de comunicación están criticando. O sea que te requiere un tiempo, creo que te requiere una cierta preparación para enfrentarte a la información, y también un cierto tiempo, que a lo mejor en tiempo no es tanto, pero no es lo natural que te surge [la inquietud] si no tienes esa conciencia previa (Daniel 2017, 6 April).

Starting with the training that you have received, your education, your environment etcetera, or even your perspectives in terms of whether you intend to stay here or go back etcetera. Your personal circumstances, and I think that where you have been brought up is obviously relevant as well, the things you have seen, the access to education that you have had etcetera. Right? It means it's really difficult for a person that hasn't been able to study and who spends [...] the entire day working, to develop social concerns and start participating in a social movement, that's moreover being criticised by the media. I mean, it does require some time, maybe not that much time, but you don't develop [these concerns] naturally if you don't have that prior conscience (Daniel 2017, 6 April).

Entonces yo creo que la población gitana tiene unas características muy especiales, culturalmente muy especiales, que yo no sé describir. Pero internamente tienen unos códigos y una normas muy fuertes, que eso hace que tengan una cohesión interna muy fuerte, que sigan manteniendo y reproduciendo tradiciones y su cultura de una manera muy fuerte [...] Si he conocido gente gitana que ha participado, pero muy puntualmente, muy esporádicamente y muy circunstancialmente en movimientos sociales. Muy poco, muy poco. En general la gente gitana que ha participado fundamentalmente en visibilizar al pueblo gitano. Pero no se [...] no se ha mezclado, no ha participado en otro tipo de movimientos sociales. Quiero decir, no te sabría explicar, pero creo que la cultura gitana además es una cultura, ya te digo, muy fuerte...pero no es una cultura muy orientada a la participación política general (Raúl 2017, 8 April).

So, I think that the Roma possess some very particular characteristics, culturally very particular, that I wouldn't be able to describe. But internally they have some very severe codes and rules, and that generates a very strong internal unity and it means that they can keep maintaining and reproducing their traditions and their culture in a very powerful way [...] I have known Roma people that have participated in social movements, but really occasionally, really sporadically and really incidentally. Very little. Very little. Generally, the Roma have participated mainly to make the Roma people visible. But they haven't [...] they haven't mixed, they haven't participated in other kinds of social movements. What I'm saying is, I wouldn't be able to explain it, but I also think that the Roma culture is a, like I said, a very strong culture... but it's not a culture that's oriented towards general political participation (Raúl 2017, 8 April).

Son una especie de barreras invisibles, pero al no manejar los códigos culturales de los movimientos sociales españoles, que a veces son muy intelectuales, y son jerarquías intelectuales, tienes que haber leído a Toni Negri para poder hablar de determinadas cosas... Pues expulsan a cierta gente que no puede mantener ese tipo de discusiones o discursos. [...] Y por ejemplo, dentro de los movimientos sociales se dan dinámicas de consumo, de consumo de ocio, de consumo musical, de consumo alcohólico, de fiestas, de consumo de ropa etc. que no es
fácil acceder, o que no es fácil compartir etc. Entonces yo creo que son este tipo de barreras que no facilitan (Raúl 2017, 8 April).

They are a kind of invisible barriers, but if you don't control the cultural codes in Spanish social movements, that are very intellectual at times, there are intellectual hierarchies, you must have read Toni Negri to be able to discuss certain things... They expel certain people that can't keep up that type of discussions or discourses. [...] And, for instance, in social movements there are also dynamics of consumption, you consume entertainment, you consume music, you consume alcohol, parties, you consume clothing etcetera, and it's not easy to access, or it's not easy to share, [that] etcetera. So, I think this type of barriers don't help (Raúl 2017, 8 April).

Entonces, creo que la clase social también se expresa en códigos culturales. [...] [Los gitanos] no han tenido una socialización cultural igual que las clases medias españolas, no han ido la universidad, no han leído a Marx, no han leído a Bakunin, no utilizan las mismas expresiones y esas son barreras invisibles y simbólicas que, compartiendo objetivos, impiden a participación conjunta (Raúl 2017, 8 April).

So, I think that the social class is also expressed through cultural codes. [...] The Roma have not had the same cultural socialization as the Spanish middle class, they have not gone to university, they have not read Marx, they have not read Bakunin, they don't use the same expressions and these are invisible and symbolic barriers that hinder a joint participation, even if you share the same goals (Raúl 2017, 8 April).

Yo creo que en la medida en la que haya sobre todo gente que se haya educado aquí, o sea que a lo mejor han venido con sus papas de pequeño, ha llegado a España y se ha criado aquí, y tienen su primo que no sé qué... o sea, creo que poco a poco, pues como pasa a lo mejor en otros sitios [se irán integrando] (Daniel 2017, 6 April).

I think that as we get people that, above all, have been brought up here, that might have come here with their parents when they were little, they've come to Spain and they have been brought up here, and they have their cousins here and so on... I mean, I think that little by little, just like in other places, [they will integrate in social movements] (Daniel 2017, 6 April).

Si esas segundas generaciones consiguen llegar de alguna manera a equipararse... con la gente española blanca etc. etc. pues a lo mejor ya la única diferencia que queda es una referencia visual, precisamente de blanquitud o de piel, que yo creo que es una marca social que va a estar siempre. Dentro de los movimientos a lo mejor no es problemático (Raúl 2017, 8 April).

If the second generation manages to somehow reach the same level... as white Spaniards, etcetera etcetera, well, then maybe the only difference that's left is a visual one, precisely referring to whiteness or skin, and I think that's a social mark that will always be there. In social movements maybe that's not a problem (Raúl 2017, 8 April).

7. Concluding discussion

[La verdad es que me ha resultado súper interesante, porque claro, ..., tú nunca te ves, [...], yo nunca me he visto como una blanca, y la verdad es que me lo llevo, me lo llevo de regalo, la reflexión esta de... claro ahora voy a estar en los espacios y voy a estar pensando "ostras, yo aquí soy la blanca, tío," ¿sabes? ¿Y qué posición me da eso? ¿Me da alguna posición? Yo siempre lo he vivido como, no he puesto atención en eso, [...] nunca me ha...definido en los espacios en los que he estado, sí que ahora lo voy a pensar. Es que somos los blancos..., y ver si eso realmente nos pone en otra posición. Si tú te mueves sintiendo otro poder diferente porque eres blanca (Marta 2017, 10 April).
The truth is that I have found this really interesting, because... you never see yourself [...] I have never seen myself as white, and the truth is that I take that with me, I take that with me as a gift, this reflection... So now I'll participate in different spaces and I'll be thinking "shit, I'm the white one here", you know? And what position does that give me? Does it give me any position? I have always lived like, I haven't paid any attention to that, [...] it has never... defined me in the spaces where I have been, but now I'll reflect upon it. We're white ones... and see if that really puts us in a different position. If you move feeling a different power because you are white. (Marta 2017, 10 April).