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EN LA SUCURSAL DEL CIELO (IN THE BRANCH OF PARADISE)

Geographies of Privilege and Black Social Suffering in Cali, Colombia

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Introduction

Every year, the city of Santiago de Cali celebrates the Festival Petronio Álvarez to honor the Black roots of Colombia. In August, the city is turned into a stage where local residents and tourists from Colombia and beyond 'consume' Black culture in the form of music, dance and ethnic food. The festival is named after Black musician and composer Patricio Romano Petronio Álvarez Quintero, whose songs brought the Pacific to the forefront of Colombian music in the 1950s.[1] During the festival, Blacks play prominent roles in public spectacles, and Black cultural practices are displayed in primetime TV shows as part of the city's cultural heritage. At least during the week-long festival, Cali becomes a stage where Blackness and cultural diversity are 'ethno-marketed' by the city government as a way to attract national and international tourism. As cultural critic Mateo Cárdenas highlights, by turning 'ethnicity' into a marketing strategy the local political and economic elite sells Cali as a city free of racism and tolerant of difference. During the Petronio Festival, 'everyone (*Mestizos* and Blacks) can be displayed in multicultural postal cards to promote the city as a cultural touristic destination (Cárdenas 2012 86)'. Indeed, on the streets, individuals from all racial and class backgrounds shift from erasing blackness ('We are all Colombians') to reclaiming their African roots ('We all came from Africa'). The week-long festival hides yet another reality this article aims to unveil: behind the image of Cali as a multicultural city lies a deeply racialized urban setting in which Blacks[2] are the main victims of police brutality, have higher poverty rates and have lower rates of access to health care, schooling, employment and housing. How is it that the city celebrates Blackness as part of its identity, yet at the same time devalues Black lives in everyday life? What seems like a paradox of the city's and the nation's narratives of (racial) belonging

is in fact its *raison d'être*. In this chapter, we argue that the shared acceptance of ordinary Black disposability not only indicates that Black lives are unworthy, but also that mundane Black suffering makes it possible to imagine Cali as a multicultural polis and as a 'cultural commodity' (Kanai 2014; Cárdenas 2012).

This reasoning may be counterintuitive if we consider the 'racially democratic' horizontal community constituted by the ephemeral participation of individuals from various races and social classes in Cali's most famous festival. Still, what enables Cali to be exceptionally imagined as a 'multicultural city' is the exclusionary presence of Blackness from urban life. The spectacular display of Black culture in an exceptional moment also renders visible not only Black mundane invisibility but also normalizes White/*Mestizo* belonging to the city. To be sure, Whiteness is not celebrated by the cheerleaders in the festival, nor is it invoked in the context of everyday life in Cali. It is not needed. As some Latin American scholars have argued, Whiteness is an unmarked/universal category and the celebration of *Mestizaje* is yet another way to promote Whiteness. To evoke *Mestizaje* in Colombia, as in most of Latin America, quite often means to claim an affiliation to something else other than being Black or Indigenous (for a critique, see Wade 1993; Hale 2006). In Cali, the Black subject is placed in an absence–presence schema in which they are rendered both invisible by the racial structure of privilege the city conveys and hyper-visible in the folkloric narratives of racial encounters and racial mixture present in moments like the Petronio Festival. Whiteness, on the other hand, is promoted through the anti-Black system of privilege that the discourse of *Mestizaje* cancels out in everyday life. As we elaborate below, the vast gray zone of *Mestizaje* does not authorize the negation of Whiteness as a category of analysis and as a system of privilege. As a social construct, Whiteness is lived and reproduced through multiple ways and the daily denial of racism/celebration of *Mestizaje* is certainly one of them. As sociologist Mara Viveros has suggested in the case of Medellin – Colombian's second largest city, in Colombia Whiteness must be understood by taking into consideration the invisibility of Whiteness, or its hidden constituency behind the 'normative domination' that turns racial discourses superfluous (2013, 97).

If, from the perspective of Cali's *Mestizo/White elite*, neither Whiteness nor race exists, how can we account for the sharp racial divide within the city? We take up this challenge by providing a race-centered analysis of the geographies of death and opportunities within the city. One could argue that in Cali, as in most of Latin America, lines of poverty and social marginalization are racially blurred. We certainly do not argue that race is the only category that explains patterns of residential segregation, illiteracy, poverty and unemployment. We argue, instead, that in a (post-slavery) society with a legacy of racial domination, race informs how such vulnerabilities are distributed and lived in the urban space: our claim is hardly new. Scholars have consistently identified a pattern that strongly correlates dark–skinned people with higher

rates of poverty, unemployment and illiteracy (Paixão and Carvano 2008; Per-reira and Telles 2014). These findings ring particularly true to Cali where – although statistics also show that there are Whites/*Mestizos* subjected to similar conditions — racial belonging significantly increases the risks of gendered poverty, illiteracy and homicide (Urrea and Quintin 2001; Posso 2008).

Before mapping the sociodemographic situation in Cali, we first outline the main trends within the debates on race and racial relations in both Colombia and Latin America. Rather than attempting to be exhaustive, our aim is to situate Cali's racial order within the larger 'racial common sense' that informs conceptions of citizenship and access to the city. Whereas poverty and privilege are hardly articulated in everyday conversations in terms of racial belongings, spaces of social exclusion and spaces of privilege are deeply racialized. To sustain our claims, we provide a space-based descriptive analysis, with a qualitative approach, of patterns of social exclusion in the city. Before proceeding with the article, a note on methodology: the map-based data on family income, illiteracy and violent deaths are derived from the city of Cali's 2005–2010 Atlas of Violence, by the Observatorio Social, which combines the 2005 Colombian national census with the city's household surveys to predict space-based patterns of social vulnerability. The employment and occupation figures are from the 2012 Quality of Life National Survey in combination with disaggregated data from the 2005 Census.

Based on the overlapping of these socioeconomic variables in relation to race, place of residence, gender and class status, our secondary/qualitative analysis suggests the existence of intersecting factors in enforcing Cali's unequal social order: (a) wealth distribution and poverty are place specific; that is, they are highly concentrated in areas with homogeneous socioeconomic demographics; (b) class, gender, place of residence and racial belonging interact to predict vulnerabilities to poverty, unemployment and violence; and (c) although focusing only on race is insufficient to explain urban inequalities in Cali, race plays an important role in defining one's place of living and in deepening social vulnerabilities, particularly on female poverty and homicidal violence among youth. Thematic maps are presented in the following order: we first provide general data on income distribution, illiteracy among youth, professional occupation and homicides and then provide an analysis of the significance of race in the city's spatial dynamics. It is our belief that the gradual unfolding of data (poverty, homicidal violence, and then racial segregation) serves us better in unveiling the cumulative and overlapping geographies of race and privilege in Santiago de Cali.

'We Are All Blacks'

Although we do not aim to revisit the abundant literature on race and race relations in Latin America, it is worth highlighting the main trends and Colombia's

positioning in this debate. Most of the current literature contests the celebratory approach of racial mixing on the continent opened up by the work of Gilberto Freyre (1978), in Brazil, and José de Vasconcelos (1966), in México. Their approach denied the existence of racism and recognized the contribution of Blacks and Indigenous groups to the formation of a national identity. They also advocated that because of the fluidity of racial categories (in contrast to the rigid racial schema in the US and South Africa), it was impossible to distinguish who was Black and who was White. Therefore, these scholars argued, everybody would have a 'foot in the kitchen' or could claim to have 'African roots'. In recent years, and not surprisingly in the wake of current debates concerning affirmative action policies in the region, some scholars have resurrected the racial ambiguity approach, arguing for an understanding of Latin American racial system on its own. They recognize the role of race in social inequalities in Latin America but also argue that the poor are discriminated against for being poor, not because of their racial identities as Black or Indigenous. Others argue that *Mestizaje* is indeed an alternative mode to the US-based obsession with racial binaries (De la Fuente 1995; Bourdieu and Wacquant 1999; Fry 2000).

An alternative analytical framework recognizes the specificities of 'racial formations' in Latin America – as opposed to overtly discriminatory policies and rigid racial classifications that exist in the US. At the same time, this framework also maintains that race is indeed a defining factor in the ways Latin American societies are organized (Twine 1997; Hale 2006; Paschel and Sawyer 2008; Wade 2008). This latter body of scholarship suggests that contrary to the myth of racial uncertainty and ambiguity concerning racial identities, the very negation of race as a social organizing category reveals a 'hyperconsciousness' of its presence in everyday life. As João Costa Vargas puts it in his recent study on Brazil,

> the hyperconsciousness/negation of race dialectic is both an effect of the racial democracy myth and the evidence that the myth is just this – a myth with little, if any, correspondence in how Brazilian society is structured by resources and power differentials.
>
> *(Vargas 2004, 445)*

In that sense, the diverse ways people define themselves in Latin America should not lead one to downplay the role of race, and particularly skin color, as marker of difference. To the contrary, they reveal that there is a general awareness of what categories should be avoided or embraced, even if it requires extraordinary creativity as indicated in the multiplicity of terms for racial classifications in the region. Similar to most of Latin America, the racial classification system in Colombia is diverse and creative. To avoid association with Black and Indigenous groups, Colombians often place themselves in a shadow zone of classification, one that potentially allows any individual to move around the Black–Indigenous–White

racial taxonomy. Still, the 'coexisting process of *Mestizaje* and discrimination' indicates that while there may be some room for negotiating ones' identity, some marked bodies (Black/Indigenous) cannot escape from the racial knowledge that structures racial relations in the country (Wade 1993, 18; also Mosquera and León 1991; Arboleda 2007). More recently, the Colombian state has shifted its discourses from negating racism (the 'We are all Colombians') to the affirmation of multiculturalism and the promotion of Black/Indigenous identities. The 1991 Constitution recognized, at least formally, the 'right to difference' to the historically discriminated Indigenous and Black population and granted collective land rights access mechanisms to both groups.

Although this shift represented a significant change in state practices, as it formally recognized the existence of racial discrimination, the state-sanctioned multicultural 'ethnic politics' produced a specific (rural-based) type of racial identity; that is, only 'authentic' Blacks and Indigenous groups who continue living in rural areas were entitled to such policies. The fast-growing Black urban population remains outside of the realm of state-promoted multicultural policies. They are not considered Black because they are not *in* rural areas of the Pacific coast, they do not retain a 'Black' culture, and they are 'integrated' in the Colombian society (for a critique, see Agudelo 2004; Valencia 2011; Cárdenas 2012). How might we understand the fate of Black urban life in a multicultural society that recognizes the right to difference only to those 'authentically' rural Blacks? While we should be cautious not to regard multiculturalism as a top-down process, the state has historically played a key role in defining and carrying on ethnic–racial projects (slavery–racial democracy-multiculturalism) in Latin America. In the case of Colombia, readers should consider that the country's 'geography of race' (see Wade 1993) — in which the Pacific coast has historically been imagined as Black, the lowlands in the Amazon as Indigenous, and the country's main urban centers as White — has had a profound impact in the ways the state is present/absent in such regions. Likewise, while we are cautious not to reify the urban/rural dichotomy deployed by the Colombian multicultural state to define 'authentic Blacks', we call attention to the structural violence (sanctioned or tolerated by the state) that turns Colombia's 'Blackest' city into an anti-Black space.

Thus, in trying to locate the work of race in producing Cali's spatial order, we cannot dissociate the city's racial animus to the state-coordinated ethnic–racial policies that affect Black lives in the rural/urban continuum. As we hope to make clear below, there are several ways through which the state is involved in the systemic racism found in Cali: it facilitates processes of territorial disposition (Cali is the main urban center for the 2 million and counting internally displaced Black population due to the paramilitary-state-guerrilla war), it designs urban planning and housing policies that further segregate the Black population in the economically depressed and environmentally hostile areas of the city, and it fails in providing access to basic citizenship rights; all the while

the deprived population is subjected to hyper-surveillance and incarceration by racially biased law-enforcement policies. Regardless of intentionality, these racialized practices can be regarded as 'state-produced vulnerabilities to premature death' (Gilmore 2007, 247) because the state creates conditions that precipitate these *living-in-death conditions*. Here we regard 'premature death' as a category that reveals much more than a medical terminology. It is the axis of power where race, class and gender-based vulnerabilities overlap in defining one's life span. These life-shortening policies – expressed in unemployed/oversupplying Black population, lack of access to housing and health care, and astonishing premature death by homicide – produce spaces as much as they are spatially produced. Before situating Cali within these *spatio-necropolitical dynamics*, we begin by analyzing the work of race in producing the city's spatial order. We do so not because other factors are not equally important in predicting social suffering but rather because a contextualized focus on racism and its outcomes is a much-needed approach to challenge Cali's (and Latin American) long-standing denial of race as a tool for maintaining urban inequalities.

Racial/Spatial Order

In 'Demonic Ground', geographer Katherine McKittrick argues that 'Black matters are spatial matters' (2006, xii). If this assertion is correct, and given the current challenges for Black urban life, it is reasonable to argue that urban matters are also Black matters. Some scholars have been vocal in asserting the centrality of race in understanding the urban question. They have argued that the 'polis', understood as the imagined community of equals and the political-juridical space for the exercise of the citizenry, is a racialized disposition. Race, they argue, is not only inscribed in urban space — through residential segregation, police violence and unemployment, for instance; its resulting spatio-social relations of domination also create conditions of possibility for the city to come into being as a non-Black spatiality (Martinot and Sexton 2003; Rutland 2011; Alves 2018). This perspective is particularly relevant to understand the current spatial ordering of Latin American cities in general and Colombian cities in particular because they have hardly been theorized in terms of racial segregation. Hegemonic explanations for space-based inequalities are usually conditioned to class status, as the urban poor are quite often conceived as a raceless, genderless subject (Scaparci et al. 1988; Caldeira 2000; Davids 2011; Janoschka and Sequera 2016). Some scholars have maintained that urban settings in the region are indeed racially divided. The pattern of residential segregation, they contend, can be explained not only in terms of class inequalities, but also in terms of state policies and individual choices that directly or indirectly deny the 'right to the city' to Blacks and Indigenous populations (Rolnik 1989; Vargas 2005; Hoffmann 2010; Ströbele-Gregor 2011; Garcia-Serrano 2013). This is particularly true of Colombian cities such

as Cali, Cartagena and Bogotá where some scholars and news commentators have documented racial anxieties that associate Black migrants as criminals and disease-bearing (Arboleda 2007; Deávila 2008; Zeiderman 2013). There are widely documented cases of discrimination against Black tenants seen as delinquents, or the refusal of taxi drivers to pick up Black passengers for fear of being robbed.

The growing literature on racism, poverty and spatial segregation in Colombia has focused on diagnosing patterns of discrimination with very few considerations of how and why some racial groups profit from such dynamics. Why, despite the lack of overt anti-Black racial policies, are Blacks the poorest among the poor and light-skinned individuals? Why has Whiteness been relatively neglected in sociological analyses of urban inequalities in Latin American and Colombian cities? A possible answer lies in the difficulty of locating who is 'White' and who is 'Black' in Colombia's racially mixed society. Although Colombian society identifies Black bodies through processes of violent interpellation, Whiteness escapes categorization. In order to locate the White subject within the system of racial domination in Latin America, one has to study it in contextual/relational terms by taking into consideration the *Mestizaje* paradigm. For instance, a White(ned) *Mestizo* may not be 'quite white' in another context and yet she/he profits from what some Latin American scholars name as 'pigmentocracy', that is, a chromatic privilege for being light-skinned in a society that places dark-skinned individuals at the bottom of the social ladder (e.g., Bonilla-Silva 2009).[3] Evidence of such chromatic privilege is what emerges from research on skin color and social inequalities in Colombia, Brazil, Mexico, Guatemala, Peru, Dominican Republic and Bolivia, by Project on Race and Ethnicity in Latin America (PERLA). PERLA researchers have identified a mismatch between individual self-identification in the national census and their socioeconomic status measured by national household surveys with interviewer classification. Disproportional inequalities in education attainment and health conditions, two major challenges in 21st-century Latin America, indicate that phenotypical ascriptions, rather than just racial ancestry, influence access to citizenship rights. In a region in permanent denial of racism, and with a supposed ambiguity in racial classification, color-based discrimination indicates the existence of racial pigmentocracy (Telles and Steele 2012; Perreira and Telles 2014; Telles et al. 2015).

In this chapter, we argue that this pigmentocracy is spatially coded in Cali's uneven geographies of opportunities and social suffering. Our argument will only make sense if the reader is willing to accept the fact that, insofar as racial interpellation is concerned, the biological reality of racial mixture is irrelevant. Within the context of Latin American mode of racial relations, no one is asked about the percentage of 'European' or 'African' genes she/he has before others discriminate against them or grant them certain privileges. While other cultural/biological traits certainly have a place in the ways race is conceived, the

'symbolic purchase' of lighter skin color is a defining feature of racial privilege in the city. The darker the skin color, harder the access to the city. According to social scientist George Lipsitz, Whiteness is a diffused, at times invisible, and hyper-aggressive system of power that confers structural advantages to light-skinned individuals. Within the US, Lipsitz argues, Americans are encouraged to 'invest' in Whiteness because it has a

> cash-value: it accounts for advantages that come to individuals through profits made from housing secured in discriminatory markets, through the unequal educational opportunity available to children of different races, through insider networks that channel employment opportunities to relatives and friends of those who have profited most from present and past racial discrimination, and especially through intergenerational transfer of inherited wealth that pass on the spoils of discrimination to succeeding generations.
>
> *(Lipsitz 2006, p. vii)*

Although the US and Latin American racial formations follow different trajectories, Lipsitz's analytical framework is particularly relevant for this article because the assertion that Whiteness is a 'cash value' holds particularly true to the region's obsession to erase Blackness, the celebration of *Mestizaje* notwithstanding. Within this context, it is not so much that Blacks are erased from the city, but ultimately their participation in it is only made possible through a dialectical relation of celebration of Blackness as culture and its disposability as marked bodies. The normalized devaluation of Black lives in Cali (exploited in low-paid jobs, segregated in informal urban settings and killed at alarming rates) is the other side of the chromatic privilege conferred to light-skinned /White(ned) *Caleños*.

Black Exploitation/White *Mestizo* Accumulation

The week-long *Petronio Festival* (referenced at the opening of this article) seems to be an exceptional moment in which the two cities, the predominantly Black borough known as *Aguablanca* and the predominantly White *Mestizo* boroughs located in the north–south axis, come together in the name of the multicultural polis. The exceptional presence of Blacks on the stages cancels, however, the day-to-day humiliation they endure in ordinary interaction – as domestic servants, garbage collectors, street vendors and so on – with privileged White *Mestizos*. Nothing can better illustrate the ordinariness of racial/gender subordination than the racial/gendered economy of domestic work in Cali. Scholars Vicenta Moreno Hurtado and Dermbay Mornan (2015, 103) have argued that the kitchen of White *Mestizo* elites in Cali is 'a stage of racial domination', a place where unskilled and illiterate Black domestic servants are exploited. Black

women's exploitation enables the reproduction of the city's racial order; their work creates the possibility for White women to participate in the city's economy outside the domestic sphere. However, Black women's subaltern position further marginalizes them into a permanent status as surplus labor.

In the city's gendered division of work, domestic service, childcare, or street vendors are 'natural' positions for Black women. Take for instance how Spain's Magazine *Hola* portrayed Black and White women in one of its issues dedicated to Santiago de Cali. On June 2011, *Hola* featured the family of Cali's socialite Sonia Zarzur with her two Black maids standing in the back with uniforms. The disposition of four generations of the White upper-class family (the photo portrayed Zarzur herself, her daughter, her grandmother and her great-grandmother) with two Black servants in the background was neither incidental nor fictional. First of all, the photo can be understood in relation to an insidious regime of representation that feminist scholar Patricia Hill Collins has named as the 'controlling image' of Black women. As she argues, 'portraying [Black] women as stereotypical mammies, matriarch, welfare recipients, and hot mommas has been essential to the political economy of domination fostering Black women's oppression' (1999, 142). Second, this pathological representation is a constitutive aspect of Cali as a city organized around racial gendered injustices. The White family portrayed in the picture belongs to one of the city's traditional business families, and the two Black women are, in fact, their domestic servants. If we consider the assertion that domestic work is not just an occupation but a continuum of a racial/gendered domination that one can trace from the plantation to the kitchen (Posso 2008; Hurtado and Mornan 2015), the picture raises the following question: What do the four generations of White women portrayed in *Hola* reveal about the racialized gender division of labor in the city and its spatial order?

In the aftermath of the publication of the picture of Black servants and White *Patronas* (patroness or mistress), Black activists launched a social media debate about racism in Colombia. Critics of the photo argued that it illustrated the city's enduring colonial history: from the Spanish conqueror of Colombian Andeans to its recent control of sugarcane crops, Colombian's lands are overly concentrated in the hands of traditional Spanish-heritage families to which Blacks and the Indigenous populations are servants and employees.[4] Those supporting the publication argued that the images were harmless and that critics were oversensitive or 'reading too much' where there was no racism. In response to *Hola*'s picture, *Revista Soho,* a rival magazine, published on its cover page a picture depicting young Black women standing nude. In the news, Black women passed from being domestic servants to become readily accessible sexually objects. In both depictions, they were reduced to their physical bodies, devoid of any characteristic but sexual/physical attributes. Even in moments when it became too explicit to be ignored, the underlying belief in Black inferiority still informed the counterarguments as the alternative

magazine's response and Sonia Zarzur, the White socialite portrayed in the magazine, illustrate. Apologizing for her 'unintended' racism, she contended she just wanted to show that 'in Cali we work with people of color' (Semana 2011). Yet, her response could not be better placed if we are to understand not only how the 'possessive investment in Whiteness' sustains relations of domination but also how job opportunities are inaccessible to Black women unless they fulfill the expected position reserved to them. In the next section, we present a descriptive analysis of socioeconomic data. What do they tell us about the city's spatial/racial order?

Mapping Social Inequalities in Cali

Home of 2.4 million people, Santiago de Cali is Colombia's third largest city. According to the 2005 Census, the city's population is comprised of 73.3% White/*Mestizo*, 26.2% Black and 0.5% Indigenous. Its dynamic service economy and agricultural industry make Cali one of the fastest-growing economies of the country. Cali recorded an average of 3.5% growth during the past decade, and by 2010, it was responsible for 10.2% of the Colombian GDP (Otero 2014). Thus, the city is considered one of the most promising centers for the expansion of Colombian economy. A railway is under construction to link the city to the port of Buenaventura, the largest in the country, and the city has passed through a process of urban renewal through opening larger avenues, building new shopping centers, cracking down on small businesses, pushing out drug addicts, shutting down clandestine buses and introducing the bus rapid transportation system.

Cali is also a city of hope to thousands of Blacks displaced from their traditional territories by the military/mining corporations/guerrilla war. According to the Colombian Ministry of Justice, Cali is the first destination of displaced populations in Colombia. In a single year (i.e., 2011), the city received at least 85,000 individual victims of mega-development projects and the military/guerrilla war (Alcaldía 2012). While violence and social exclusion in Cali are strongly related to the shifts in the Colombian economy (a comprehensive analysis of the impact of the Free Trade Agreement with the US signed by ex-president Álvaro Uribe in 2006 is still needed) and to the internally displaced population due to the state/paramilitary/guerrilla war for strategic mineral resources in the Pacific basin (Escobar 2003; Cárdenas 2012; Ojeda 2013; Vergara-Figueroa 2013, 2017), these dynamics are only part of the enduring colonial structure of racial domination in Colombian society. The state is a key actor in the reproduction of the country's unequal racial order to which Cali's pattern of exclusion is just an example. The city government's apparently neutral official policies such as drawing a highway dividing the city into two or transferring a landfill site to a predominantly Black neighborhood are examples of how the state enacts and facilitates racial

privilege and racial dispossession in Cali. Still, these government practices are hardly the only ones affecting the lives of the Black urban poor, and there are other spatially based inequalities that disproportionally shorten Black lives. Given the hard-selling argument developed here – that is, that race is a fundamental factor to predict one's life chances in the city – we intentionally leave 'race' aside for a while until we unpack the vulnerabilities among class, age, educational and occupational status that negatively impacts the marginalized population of the city. It is the intersection of all these variables that the reader should have in mind as we proceed to present the racial make-up of Cali in the final section.

For administrative purposes, the territory of Cali is classified into 22 boroughs known in Spanish as *Comunas*. Social stratification in Cali, as in Colombia as a whole, is based on a scale from 1 to 6, where 1 represents the poorest and 6 represents the richest social groups. For the purpose of this article, we use the Colombian Census (DANE 2005) definition of *Comuna,* as set of neighborhoods that are relatively homogeneous in socioeconomic features. Because the data available for this analysis are based on the macro-scale (the *Comuna* level), rather than on the smallest geographic unity for census purpose (i.e., the *barrio* level), it presents some important limitations. First, because it tends to overlook dissimilarities within each *Comuna* not only in terms of socioeconomic strata but also in terms of racial composition. Second, data on racial identity on census are based on self-identification; there are fair beliefs among researchers of race relations in Latin America that census data present serious discrepancies between the color and the self-proclaimed identity of individuals (e.g., Telles et al. 2015). Although such limitations bring potential misinterpretations, *Comunas* are relatively homogeneous spatial unities as internal dissimilarities in the micro-scale are not as significant as are the differences noted between *Comunas*/boroughs on the macro-scale, in terms of socioeconomic and racial background.[5]

The maps (Figures 8.1 and 8.2) show the municipality of Santiago de Cali with the five clusters represented by different gray tones to reflect the spatial distribution of wealth/poverty and the incidence of violent deaths in the 2005–2010 period, respectively. While we will discuss the pattern of homicidal violence below, it is worth noting here that the darker area in Figure 8.1 represents the wealthiest and safest sectors (strata 6), where homicides are lower in comparison to the lighter areas of eastside Cali[6]. *Comunas* 2, 19, 17 and 22 in the south–north axis configure a 'corridor' where residents with better life conditions reside. There is also a correlation between wealth/poverty distribution and access to the city's facilities: the north–south axis houses the main sites of tourist leisure, universities, malls, parks, hospitals, libraries, stadiums and cinemas. Besides being the safest side of the city, in these areas visitors find best air quality due to a major presence of trees and enjoy the best quality of drinkable water, a privilege in Cali's infamous water system.

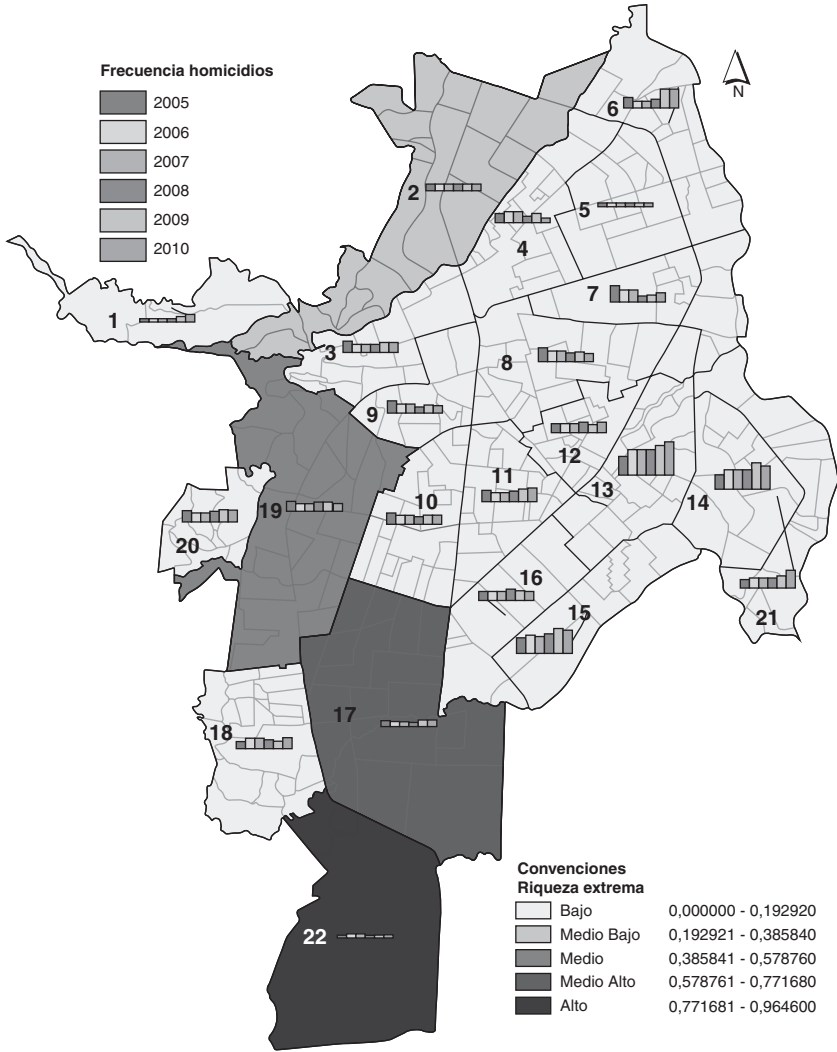**FIGURE 8.1** Housing discrimination in Colombia 'Apartment for renting, but not for Blacks'.

Source: El Espectador, July 8, 2015. Available atwww.elespectador.com/noticias/bogota/oscuro-panorama-del-racismo-articulo-261845.

FIGURE 8.2 Picture of 'The most powerful women of Cali', by *Hola* Newspaper.

Source: Revista Hola, Available at:www.larepublica.pe/06-12-2011/foto-de-revista-hola-causa-polemica-e-indignacion (Accessed December 6, 2011).

Figures 8.3 and 8.4 indicate that there is a spatial concentration of poverty and homicidal violence in *Comunas* 1, 6, 13, 14, 15, 16 and 20 (in the lowland eastside) and C*omuna* 21 (known as Siloé in the highlands*)*. According to the City of Cali's Department of Planning, the population of the city was distributed as follows in terms of socioeconomic strata in 2010: 53.27% lived in strata 1 and 2, 37.69% lived in strata 3 to 4 and 9.05% lived in strata 5 and 6. If we stick with

Frecuencia homicidios

2005
2006
2007
2008
2009
2010

Convenciones
Riqueza extrema

Bajo	0,000000 - 0,192920
Medio Bajo	0,192921 - 0,385840
Medio	0,385841 - 0,578760
Medio Alto	0,578761 - 0,771680
Alto	0,771681 - 0,964600

FIGURE 8.3   Corridor of wealth.
Source: Cali en Cifras 2010. Departamento de Planeación Municipal/Observatorio Social.

the Colombian measure of access to economic opportunities, that is, the 1–6 strata classification (in a 1–6 range in which 1 is the poorest and 6 the wealthiest population), it becomes clear that poverty and wealth are highly concentrated and sharply divide the city into zones of exclusion and privilege. Given the high proportion of *Caleños* living in socioeconomically deprived neighborhoods, it is reasonable to argue that poverty in Cali seems to be the result of a convergence of factors, among them class-based discrimination and spatial segregation. It is
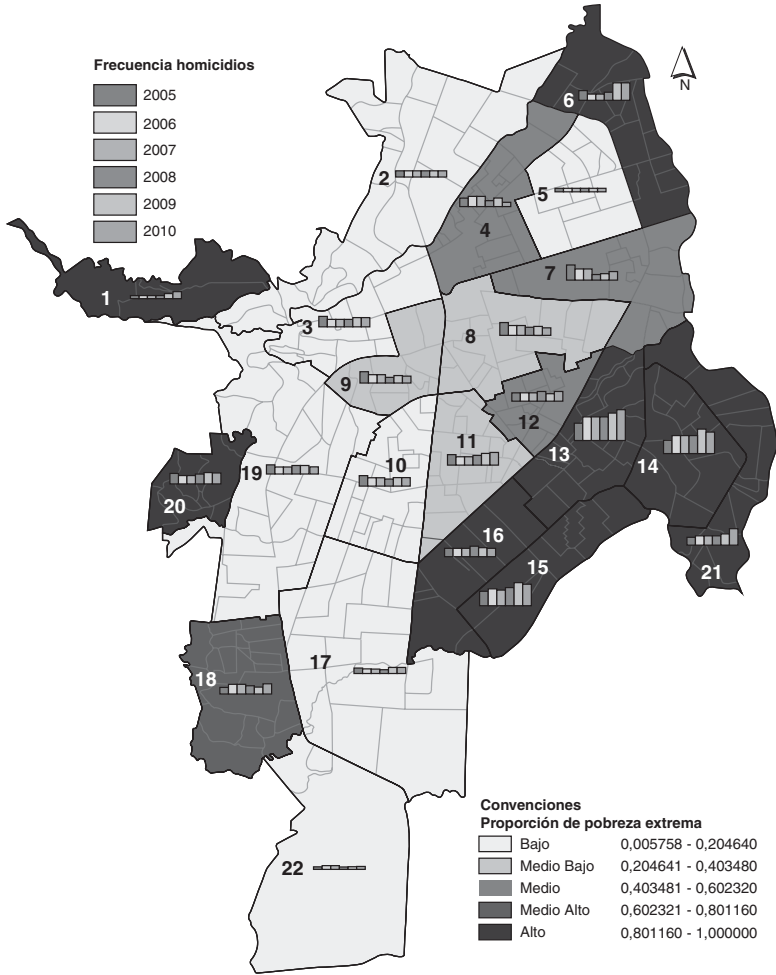
FIGURE 8.4 Poorer areas of the city.
Source: Cali en Cifras 2010. Departamento de Planeación Municipal/Observatorio Social.

also reasonable to argue that spatial polarization deepens poverty and poverty-concentrated zones, and in turn, it feeds stereotypes of urban crime and vice that further marginalize and disempower impoverished communities.

Unlike the north–south axis, the worst sector of the city in terms of living conditions houses not only the highest homicide rates, but also poor air quality, open sewage of disposable waters and unpaved roads making these areas particularly life-threatening. A case in point is that Cali's main waste disposal plant is located within *Comuna* 13 in the district of *Aguablanca*. The city government has proposed to move the *Basurero Navarro*, as it is known, to surrounding municipalities. However, it remains only a promise because no city wants to

receive Cali's waste. *Comuna* 13 remains the landfill in which *Caleños* deposit their trash, and the *Basurero Navarro* – which has been active for 25 years – continues to be a source of both diseases and income to poor unemployed families working as recycling collectors. When compared with map 1, map 2 helps us to locate the classic class divide in the urban space.

Educational researchers have found a direct relationship between schooling practices and the reproduction of class division of labor in capitalist societies. Working-class children receive working-class jobs not only because they embrace a counter-school culture that praises hard-working masculinity, thus making them 'complicit' to their own fate (Willis 1977, 4), but also because the school itself reproduces class subordination (Bourdieu and Passeron 1990). While a comprehensive participation in such debate is beyond the scope of this article, one cannot underestimate the role of education in reproducing class disadvantages and privileges. Unequal access to educational opportunities places subordinated groups in greater disadvantages in the highly competitive service-based economy of Santiago de Cali and feeds a vicious circle that reproduces the city's class structure. Contrary to many countries throughout Latin America, it was not until 2012 that the Colombian government adopted a program of free access to education as part of its official policies. Although it is too early to measure its impact on the city, official statistics reveal that the private sector is the main gateway to formal education in the country and Cali in particular. In practice, this means that only those who can afford to pay for private schools – from kindergarten to college – would have access to this basic right.

The following map (Figure 8.5) shows teenage illiteracy in Cali from 2005 to 2010. The *Comunas* are classified according to illiteracy rates indicated in the thematic map by four clusters ranging from low illiteracy to high illiteracy. Consistent with the previous maps, it indicates the same geographical pattern of low-income neighborhoods, frequency of homicides and illiteracy. That is, *Comunas* with high levels of illiteracy (20, 15, 14, 3, 1), moderate illiteracy (21, 16, 13, 7, 18, 6, 4, 8, 12, 11), and low illiteracy (2, 5, 10, 17, 19, 22) are also those ranging from worst to high living standards and higher to lower rates of homicides. While teenage illiteracy is a clear challenge to the entire city, the affluent north–south corridor (see previous map) is the area with the lowest rates. In *Comuna* 22, for instance, 1.2% of youth are illiterate, compared with 5.1% in *Comuna* 14. The same pattern of exclusion can be seen when *access to primary education is considered. The* number of out-of-school children is higher in the same hyper-poverty areas delineated in Figure 8.2, except in *Comuna* 22, an affluent district in south Cali.[7] *Comunas* 15 and 14 present the highest rate of out-of-school children (i.e., 6.5%). If we take into consideration the weight of formal education in Cali's fast-growing service economy, we should not underestimate that these statistics determine the quality of life for the marginalized youth living in the outskirts of Cali.

Besides the highest levels of illiteracy, the neighborhoods with concentrated poverty are also the ones with highest rates of unemployment and unskilled labor. These zones of poverty participate in the city's economy by providing cheap labor
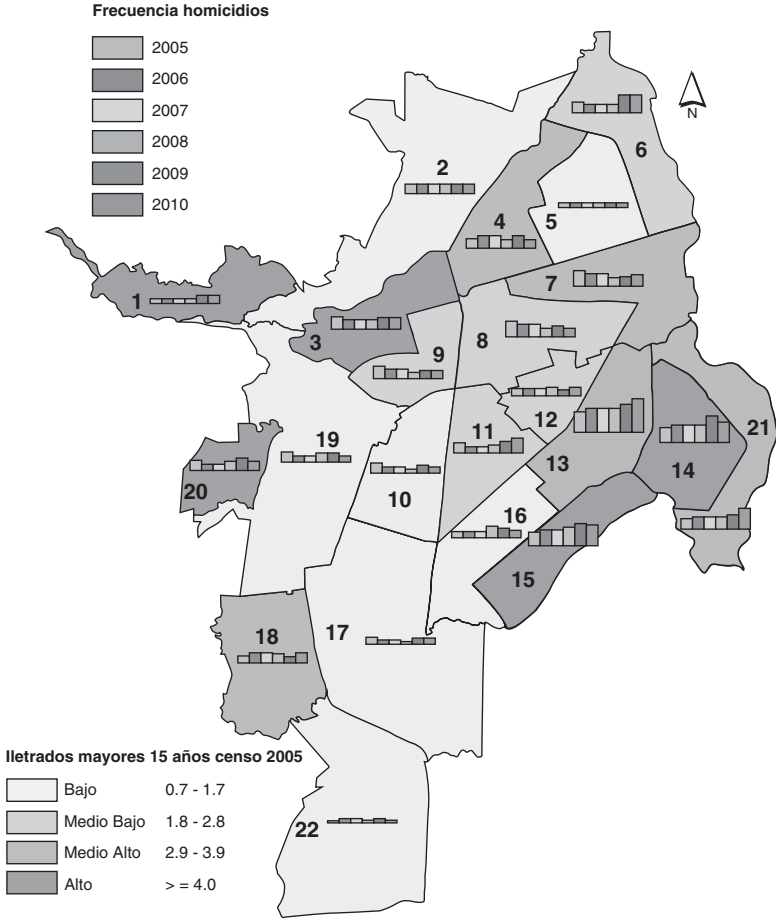
FIGURE 8.5 Frequency of homicides.

Source: Cali en Cifras 2010. Departamento de Planeación Municipal/Observatorio Social.

as garbage collectors, bus drivers and domestic servants in the well–off parts of the city. They comprise surplus that ultimately enables the elite to 'choose' those to be overexploited, an 'opportunity' in the face of other uncertain sources of incomes, such as street vendors. While 12% of the city's population was unemployed in 2008, the unemployment rate was 22% among those living in the eastside of the city (*Comunas* 1, 6, 13, 14, 15, 16, 20). Gender disparities in unemployment can be seen, as well. For instance, unemployment among women was 25.7%, whereas only 19.5% of men were unemployed (Department of Planning 2009).

This leaves us with the following questions: what is the face of urban poverty in Cali? What role does race play in structural urban inequality? When race is

isolated, all socioeconomic categories reveal the significance of racial discrimination in deepening social exclusion. Combining the 2005 Census and household survey data from strata 1 and 2, Cali's Department of Planning estimates that 41.4% of the city's population and 73% of those residing in the eastside *Comunas* of *Aguablanca* (the lowest stratum) are Black.[8] Racism also affects occupational status in the city. For instance, Blacks account for 25.7% of unemployment among the population in *Comunas* of eastside, and Black women represent 43.1% of single-parent households in these zones. The popular figure of the Black woman selling *el Chontaduro* (a typical Colombian fruit) or *Arepas* (corn patties) at traffic lights to make a living provides a lens to identify the face and gender of poverty in the city. Subaltern positions like street vendors and maids are most likely occupied by Black women and reproduced through an intergenerational cycle of domination to which *Hola* Magazine's portrayal of four generations of White *Patronas* is just the other side. The precariousness of Black life vis-à-vis the job market is made even more salient when we consider that at least 52.4% of the city's Black population work in the informal job market and 47.1% fall into the category of self-occupation, which generally means precarious/cheap labor at home or on the streets (Zuluaga 2013). Our hypothesis is that due to the structural gap in educational opportunities, Blacks are most likely to be unskilled workers and are thus more likely to live in poverty. Although studies have shown that unemployment and salary differences prevail even among highly qualified Black individuals, this hypothesis is particularly relevant for Cali, where only 6% of Black youth and 13.4% of youth in general have access to college education, and an estimated 55,000 youth are excluded from higher education every year. In addition, illiteracy rates among Blacks are 24.6% higher than illiteracy rates among Whites. Tables 8.1 and 8.2 show years of education, average income and the jobs performed by Black men and women in 2012.

TABLE 8.1 Years of education, per capita income and salaries by ethnic group, Cali, 2012

Ethnic/racial group	Years of education			Per capita income					Salary
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
Indigenous	6.1	5.8	6.3	235.922	229.513	242.403	607.932	590.693	636.203
Proportion[a]				1.8	1.8	1.8	1.5	1.6	1.4
Blacks	7.4	7.3	7.5	387.392	417.909	358.045	840.335	913.865	725.292
Proportion[b]				1.1	1.0	1.2	1.1	1.0	1.3
Without ethnic identification	7.7	7.5	7.9	428.422	423.513	433.073	930.771	939.055	918.971
Total	7.6	7.4	7.8	413.998	411.340	416.531	909.064	920.162	893.043

Source: Encuesta Nacional de Calidad de Vida/DANE 2012. In: Zuluaga, Blanca. 2013. "Sobre los grupos étnico-raciales en Colombia". *Boletín Polis*. no. 13. p. 7.

a   Salary of individuals not belonging to ethnic groups on income of Indigenous.
b   Salary of individuals not belonging to ethnic groups on income of Blacks.

TABLE 8.2 Occupations by ethnic group

Occupation	Without ethnic identification	Indigenous	Afro-descendents
Worker or employee of private company	39.0	21.7	31.3
Worker or government employee	4.5	3.4	6.0
Domestic worker	2.0	3.4	3.9
Freelancer	1.9	1.0	1.4
Self-employed	39.1	42.5	47.1
Employer	3.0	2.6	1.9
Worker of a farm, land or plot	3.3	10.8	3.3
Unpaid worker	2.2	6.7	1.6

Source: Encuesta Nacional de Calidad de Vida/DANE 2012. In: Zuluaga, Blanca. 2013. "Sobre los grupos étnico-raciales en Colombia". *Boletín Polis*. no. 13. p. 7.

As illustrated in the table, while Black women are overwhelmingly concentrated in subaltern positions as domestic servants or street vendors, Black men's main occupations are construction workers or street vendors. This data reveals that both Black women and Black men's economic positions in Cali are indispensable to the reproduction of the city itself. The image of poor Black men and women working as unskilled laborers may not be a complete narrative of Cali's socioeconomic structure, but it is an image that speaks volumes about the intersection of class, gender and race in (re)producing spatial patterns of domination. This intersection is particularly visible in the realm of formal education where class, race and age vulnerabilities interact: poor and predominantly Black youth are most likely to reproduce their parents' life path; lack of access to educational opportunities results in low-paid jobs and vice versa; and denying access to education reflects family income, intergenerational social mobility, quality of life and so on.

The ultimate expression of Cali's social ineqality is the right to live. Like the other vulnerabilities outlined above, violent death is strongly correlated with space, socioeconomic background, educational opportunities, gender and age in Santiago de Cali. Cali has a spatial pattern of deadly violence that is overly concentrated in the poor east lowland and the hill sides of the city, and among youth, as illustrated in Figures 8.1–8.3. The city's current homicide rate is 81 out of 100,000 inhabitants, which places it as the most violent urban area in the country – Bogota's rate is 23/100,000 and twelfth in the world. Being young, male, poor and living in hill sides of *Siloé* and/or in the east lowlands of *Aguablanca* is a deadly combination. The map below provides a geographic and spatial representation of violent deaths in the city. Like in the previous maps, the corridor composed of *Comunas* 22, 17, 19, 2, 4 and 5 is the safest area of the city, opposed to the deadly geography of *Comunas* 15, 14, 13, 21 and 6. In these areas, homicide rates are as high as 95/100,000, whereas in the lighter areas of the city, the rate is only 13/100,000 populations (Figure 8.6).

Número de Homicidios por Comunas
2010
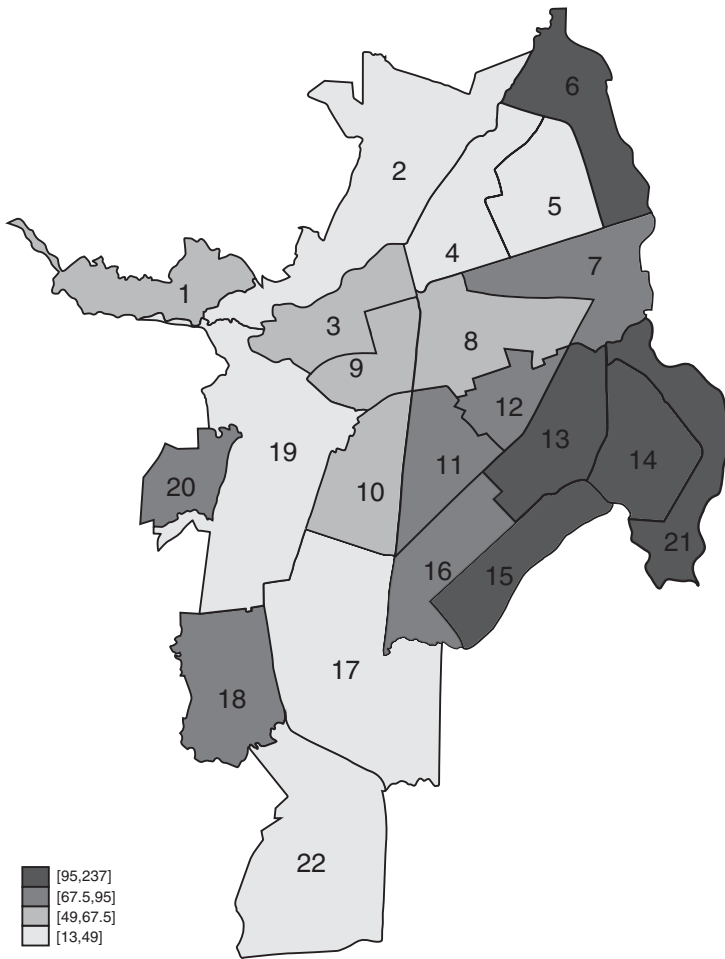
FIGURE 8.6   Homicides by boroughs in 2010.
Source: Cali en Cifras 2007. Departamento de Planeación Municipal. Homicidios/Observa-torio Social.

Although the city's historically high rates of homicides are the result of com-plex and multifactorial phenomena (the armed conflict and narcotraffic are just two examples), the spatial dynamics of youth homicides is strikingly consistent with and follows the same spatial patterns of access to educational opportunity and general living conditions. State responsibility should not be overlooked in this context. For instance, the state's brutal police force harasses marginalized

youth, and the state itself creates territories of violence in which gang and para–military groups compete for the control of such territories. It also creates the conditions for persistent patterns of premature death among the young, poor, Black population living in the outskirts of the city. Premature death has received considerable attention from scholars concerned with patterns of mortality that are not resulting from the natural processes of birth, aging and dying, but rather result from cumulative and converging vulnerabilities along class, gender, age and race (Batista 2003; Gilmore 2007). In Cali, researchers have identified a persistent pattern of premature death that targets mainly young Black men who are residents of the city's hyperperiphery (Moncada 2010; Urrea et al. 2015).

Consistent with our analysis, their findings show that *Comunas* 7, 13, 14, 15 and 21 (the dark clusters in map 2) are the ones with the highest proportions of premature deaths. Although the available data do not allow us to locate the specific 'hot–spot' within the *Comunas* where homicide rates are higher, it clearly demonstrates the overlapping between violent deaths and the uneven distribution of opportunities. We can read from the map above that vulnerability to premature death tends to overlap with other social vulnerabil–ities: class, gender, place of living, educational opportunities and race. Let us unpack this final category: While the city's homicide rates are particularly high among youth between the ages of 15 and 24, it is significantly higher among the Black population living in *Aguablanca*, for instance, where 9% of Blacks between the ages of 20 and 24 were killed in 2005 alone. Furthermore, Blacks appear to be the main victims of premature death regardless of their age. Even Black women experience the risk of premature death, although homicide rates are historically low for women; the homicide rate for Black women is twice that for White/*Mestizo* women. Between 2005 and 2010, of all deaths of Black men in Cali, 49.5% died before 50 years of age. Among the White/*Mestizo* population, this rate is 34.1%. Likewise, of all deaths of Black women in the same period, 21.8% died before 50 years of age, whereas among White/*Mestizo* women the rate was 14.7% in the same age range (Urrea et al. 2015, 165). At first glance, the statistics suggest that Cali is a very violent city where no one is safe and where the poor are most likely to be killed. However, it also shows that the city is particularly deadly to the Black population. Even when sharing the same place of residence with other 'poor' individuals, Blacks are significantly more likely to have their lives shortened by premature death. Being male, poor and Black is the most lethal condition in the city.

Black in the City

The data above clearly indicate that spatial segregation fuels urban inequal–ities, and urban inequalities are deeply informed by class, gender and race. In Santiago de Cali, a city supposedly free from racism, racial segregation creates distinct social conditions for Blacks and Whites/*Mestizos*. The map be–low uses data from the 2005 Colombian national census to identify the spatial

distribution of the black population in the city. In the darker cluster, the Black population density is above 50%, falling to up to 30% in the green intermediary area, and to below 10% in the yellow areas composed of *Comunas* 22, 17, 19 and 2. Taking into consideration that Blacks represent 26% of the city's 2.4 million people, the map shows an unbalanced distribution of them, with a high concentration in the eastside of the city. Indeed, the worst social indexes are seen in *Comunas* 13, 14 and 15, where we also see higher proportions of Blacks. Conversely, as the Black population decreases, living conditions increase dramatically, such as in *Comunas* 22, 17, 19 and 2, where we see the most advanced neighborhoods. As seen in the previous maps, these areas are classified as economic strata 5 and 6 (in the 1–6 strata/1 being the poorest ones). Figure 8.5 demonstrates that the gradual color shifting in the map from extreme poverty to middle income and to affluent districts is consistent with the 'chromatic privilege' we discussed earlier: the lighter and darker areas, with an intermediary mixing, illustrate the spatial/racial continuum between privilege and social exclusion in the city.[9] The lighter/yellow area in the south–north axis forms a corridor that divides the city not only between the 'haves' and the 'have-nots' (maps 1 and 2), but also reveals a depressing concentration of poverty and homicidal violence (map 4) among the predominantly Black (in the eastside) and Indigenous (in west hill side) *Comunas*.

The spatial concentration of darker and lighter skinned populations in opposite sides of the city suggests that contrary to mainstream portrayal of Cali as a society free of racism, the city is indeed racially segregated. Scholar Olivier Barbary (2004) has argued that although Cali has a 'racist racial order', the US 'racial-ghetto' approach is not useful in understanding the city's pattern of residential segregation, because there is a spatial continuum among different racial groups within the poorest areas of Cali. Disaggregating micro-data from the city's household survey for 2000, Barbary argues that spatial segregation in Cali occurs on the micro-scale, with Blacks forming racial enclaves within the *Comunas* based on their economic conditions and cultural affinities. We agree that the US 'racial-ghetto' approach may not be a compelling explanation for Cali when we take into consideration the heterogeneous demographic composition of the hyper-poverty *Comunas,* as rightfully noticed by this author. Race is not the only variable in the production of these territories of exclusion, as there are poor Whites, and a large light-skinned *Mestizo* population, living in similar conditions as Blacks. Still, although our secondary data analysis does not authorize us to make bold claims, rather than denying Cali's 'racial apartheid', we highlight that although racial lines may be blurred in socially depressing territories, the areas of privilege are unmistakably White/*Mestizo.* The fact that Blacks are spatially isolated even *within* the racially mixed borough of *Aguablanca* – confirming the racial clusters noted by Barbary – suggests not only that racial segregation in Cali is consistent with the gradual chromatic privilege we discussed above, but, more importantly, that Blacks face significant disparities even in relatively racially mixed urban spaces.

By overlapping maps 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5, we can finally identify a consistent pattern of social exclusion that seems to follow the Black population. Areas with higher proportion of Blacks are also areas with worst performance in a broad range of indicators. In a sprawling (yet predictable) contrast to the light-skin corridor, 26% of the residents in the predominantly Black territory of eastside (*Aguablanca)* have no access to health care, infantile mortality rate is 65% higher in these areas, and most of its inhabitants are 'internally displaced' from the guerrilla–paramilitary war in the Pacific base (Figure 8.7).

Racial segregation deepens socioeconomic disparities and prevents Blacks from accessing the city. In striking difference with the predominantly White/ *Mestizo Comunas* (where the shopping centers, hospitals, cinemas, theaters and universities are located)[10], the east and hill side *Comunas* are poorly equipped with urban infrastructure. The city of Cali has 166 beds for each 100,000 inhabitants, and 40% of them are located in *Comuna* 19, in the north–south axis (Alcaldía, 2010). In *Aguablanca,* the only public hospital is known by local residents as the 'butchery' for the constancy of patients dying from medical errors or while waiting in the emergency room. The city's main highways and its public transportation system also favor the population in the south–north axis. The all-too-common image of Black *Caleños* in overcrowded mini-buses or depending on pirate taxis to get home after a long day of work is just another example of state policies that promote spatial inequalities in the city.

Read together, the maps enable us to identify the intersection of factors that reflect social and spatial inequalities in the city. Such patterns are not unique to Cali – see, for instance, Peter Wade (1993) on Medellín/Colombia, Raquel Rolnick (1989) and Edward Telles (1992) on Brazil and Francisco, Garcia-Serrano (2013) on Ecuador – but Cali's investment in its image as the 'Blackest' Latin American city after Salvador/Bahia makes it particularly relevant to unveil its space-based enduring regime of racial domination. Hidden from public discourses, race is inscribed in space through ordinary and taken-for-granted daily actions, such as going to see a doctor, breathing fresh air, or accessing public transportation. In Cali's geographies of privilege and social suffering, spatial matters are Black matters.
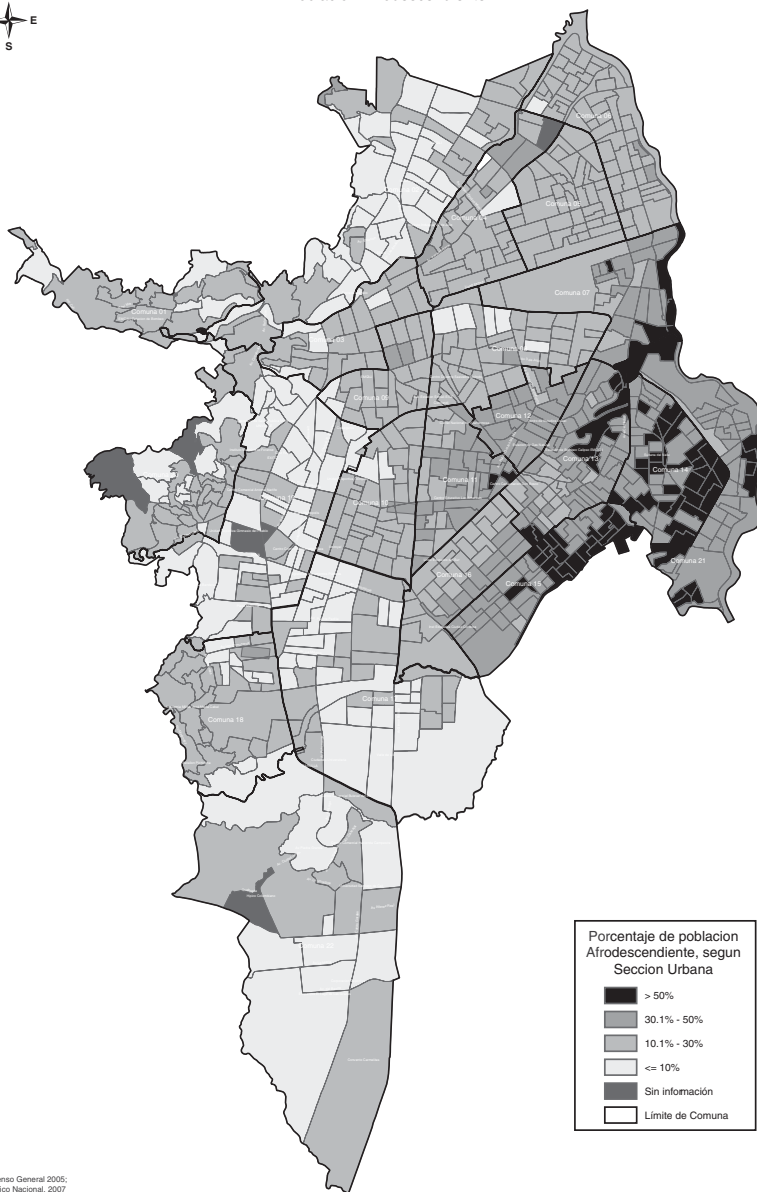
Conclusion

In this chapter, we call for a consideration of the role of racism in the making of Santiago de Cali/Colombia. We argue that although it does not act independently, race plays a central role in defining access to education, health, employment and the right to life itself. While our analysis recognizes a growing literature on race and urban inequalities in Latin America, it also joins some recent calls for further investigation on how 'pigmentocracy' comes into play in societies where racial boundaries seem to be blurred. Racial ambiguities may be indicative of 'Latin American exceptionalism', but the specific places

Porcentaje de poblacion
Afrodescendiente, segun
Seccion Urbana

- > 50%
- 30.1% - 50%
- 10.1% - 30%
- <= 10%
- Sin información
- Límite de Comuna

Fuente: DANE, Censo General 2005;
Marco Geoestadístico Nacional, 2007
Espacializado en: Direccion de Geoestadistica
Fecha: Marzo de 2009

FIGURE 8.7 Afro–descendant population by boroughs.

Source: DANE, Colombian Department of Statistics and Planning, 2005.

Blacks occupy in cities like Santiago de Cali indicate that there is no room for speculating about the power of race in demarking one's position in the city's socio–spatial order. While we acknowledge the scholarship on race and space in Latin America, there is still a need for new research inquiries on how racial chromatic privilege becomes spatialized in supposedly raceless places. Comparative research on Latin American urban designs and the US racial ghetto and/or South African apartheid regime may also shed new light on the burgeoning scholarship on the patterns of residential segregation in the region.

Finally, the article invites more inquiries on the Black urban condition under the multicultural turn in Colombia and beyond. While the Colombian state recognizes autonomy and grants land rights to 'real' Blacks living in traditional territories, it denies access to citizenship rights to Blacks who have 'gone urban'. Can the right to difference, granted under the multicultural premise, include the fast-growing Black urban population in major Colombian cities? What would be necessary for Blacks to be recognized as subjects of rights in Colombia's racially divided cities? Cali's geographical distribution of opportunities and social suffering reveal that Blacks may well be integrated in the city, but their integration is only made possible through a folkloric consumption of Blackness or through a racial logic of disposability. While the city is celebrated in salsa lyrics and, in the annual Petronio Álvarez festival, the near absence of Blacks in spaces of privilege and their overconcentration in neighborhoods plagued by unemployment, illiteracy and premature death indicate that Colombian's multiculturalism continues to be an unfulfilled promise, Cali may continue to be called 'the branch of paradise', but for Blacks, it is yet another hell.

Notes

1 He was born in 1914 in Buenaventura and died in December 1966 in Cali. The first Festival Petronio Álvarez was celebrated in 1997, and it concentrates different rhythms of the Pacific (Chirimía, marimba libre, unreleased song, vocal interpreter, marimba performer, interpreter of clarinet and violins). Retrieved from http://dintev.univalle.edu.co/cvisaacs/index2.php?option=com_content&do_pdf=1&id=353 (last accessed September 7, 2014).

2 Throughout this article, we use the category 'Black', as deployed by the Colombian National Department of Statistics (DANE, 2005). According to DANE, the Colombian population is phenotypically classified as White, Black, *Mestizo* and *Mulatto*. Culturally, the non-White population is classified into ethnic groups as 'Afro', 'Raizal', 'Palanqueros' and 'Indigenous'. In all these categories, 'White' appears as a universal referent from which these racialized/ethnic categories are defined. Although 'Black' and 'Afro' are, respectively, defined in the Colombian Census in terms of race and ethnicity, what makes racial/ethnic discrimination statistically visible in the census is the skin color of those denied access to citizenship rights. Thus, critics of the term 'race' should consider that we deploy 'it' as a phenotypical mark, as society distributes privilege and suffering based on the color of skin rather on the degrees of (African) descent.

3 We are not advocating for an essentialist view of 'Blackness' or 'Whiteness' but rather asking for a contextual reading of White privilege taking into consideration Latin American 'racial ambiguity'.

4   Founded in 1536 by the Spaniard 'Conqueror' Sebastián de Belalcazar, the fertile valley where the city is situated until the European invasion and important Indigenous settlement. Belalcazar's brutal assault massacred the Timbas' population, seized their lands and established Cali as a military and economic center decisive to the Spaniard conqueror of the Colombian Andeans (Gómez 1985). Located in the fertile valley between the Andean Cordilleras and the Pacific Coast, Cali soon became an important producer of sugarcane and the economic and political center of the Pacific basin. Although its economy has been diversified and Cali has become an industrial center, the economy around the sugar plantation is still part of its landscape. From home of ex-slaves to the current runaway Blacks escaping from the guerrilla–paramilitary violence, 'the blackest city in the nation' is a paradigmatic place for understanding Colombia's racial relations if nothing for the celebratory narratives that portrays it as a black–friendly city.

5   Scholar Harvy Vivas Pacheco identified the existence of homogeneous clusters in the neighborhood level and yet a spatial correlation with the global pattern of segregation in Santiago de Cali. Using global indexes of segregation to each *Comuna*, Vivas Pacheco is able to identify a high spatial segmentation in the city, with neighborhood-level clusters confirming/replicating, rather than contradicting the macro–scale segregation. He also contends that 'the differences in quality [of life] and access to opportunities that a city offers vary between different spatial unities, yet, the spatial concentration of ethnic groups, the stigma and discrimination act as explanatory factors in the deepening of spot of poverty and cumulative disadvantages which are inter–generationally transmitted' (Vivas 2006:2018).

6   Economic stratification in Cali is allocated from 1 to 6, being 1 the lowest strata and 6 the highest. According to the administrative bureau of municipal planning, 20, 20% of the population of Cali are in the first strata; 31, 92% in the second; 32, 45% in the third; 6, 72% in the fourth; 7, 61% in the fifth; and 1, 10% in the sixth. See Departamento Administrativo de Planeación Municipal; Alcaldía de Santiago de Cali. 'Distribución de dados de manzana por estrato' www.cali.gov.co/descargar.php?id=33101 (Accessed November 14, 2013).

7   A possible explanation for the inclusion of this *Comuna* among this group is the existence of poverty enclaves within the *Comuna* itself and the inclusion of a poor rural district, surrounding fancy residential blocks of south Cali. As we have discussed in the methodology note, data on dissimilarities within the neighborhood are not available.

8   Indigenous are 4.1%, *Mestizo* 30.7% and White 23.8% (see Alcaldía, 2009).

9   Sociologist Edward Telles has identified a similar finding for Brazilian metropolitan cities where he found a pattern of segregation that followed the 'skin-color continuum' of Brazilian society: high segregation between Blacks and Whites and moderate segregation between Blacks and Browns. The ideology of whitening finds correspondence with the spatial distribution of the population (1992:191–93).

10 Of all 32 universities in the city, 30 are located in the well–off neighborhoods that comprise the 'White corridor' (see Alcaldía 2010, p. 36).

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