

Apresentation

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In Brazil, while prioritizing the idea of integrating minorities as one of the mainstreams of education in a welfare state, the increasingly assertive presence of law, its institutions and procedures in social life becomes evident, especially after the 1988 Brazilian Constitution. In the Brazilian political scenario, the debate about race becomes significant, as it can be seen by the various legal changes since the late 1980s, followed by the growing inclusion of the issue in politics, media and academic debate.

In this sense, the legal measures established by the anti-discrimination provisions in the Federal Constitution of 1988 turned racism into unbailable crime, protected the manifestation of indigenous and African-Brazilian cultures, determined legal protection to documents and sites of former *quilombos*, and guaranteed land rights for *quilombo* remnants. Subsequently, under Law nº 10,558, of November 13, 2002 (*Brasil*, 2002), through the Provisional Bill nº63, the Ministry of Education established the Diversity Program at Universities with the purpose of planning and assessing strategies to promote access to higher education for persons belonging to socially disadvantaged groups, especially African descents and indigenous Brazilians. In the same vein, Law nº 10.639, of January 9, 2003 (*Brasil*, 2003) established mandatory teaching of African-Brazilian and African history and culture at elementary education, followed by the publication of “curriculum national guidelines for the education of ethnic and racial relations and teaching of African-Brazilian and African history and culture”, whose report and resolution were approved by the *Câmara de Educação Superior* (CNE, National Board of Education) in March 2004 and approved by the Ministry of Education in June of the same year. The resolution was the result of report CNE/CP3/2004, whose rapporteur was Petronilla Beatriz Gonçalves e Silva, from the Higher Education Board of CNE (Abreu & Mattos, 2008). Later, Law nº 12,288, of July 20, 2010 (*Brasil*, 2010) created the Statute of Racial Equality.

In democratic regimes, necessarily, equality and freedom are defining principles of society in which the individual is placed as the main reference point. The coexistence of these two ideals, however, when equality is taken to the extreme limiting freedom and vice versa, characterizes most past and contemporary conflicts of democracies. At the same time, to correct certain inequalities (whether social, racial, ethnic, class or gender) the democratic state must intervene in society because, as argued, the foundational anteriority of the concept of equality and a consequent deflation of the concept of freedom help the better understanding of the serious issue of pluralism in democratic societies as well as the role of citizens role in democracies (Rawls, 2000a; 2000b; 2003).

The aim of the articles present in the dossier ‘Racism and School Education’ was to promote reflection - through the results of empirical and theoretical research - on the social phenomenon called racism, investigating whether and how the school is actually achieving, through formal education, non-racist human relations in parallel with actions to resolve the existing racism in society. Thus, if we understand racism as being the

“assumption of qualitative hierarchy among humans, who are classified into different imaginary groups from arbitrarily selected body marks” (Werle *et al.*, 2012, p.261), one will note that socioeconomic and political-cultural circumstances are imposed on people who suffer racism due to this hierarchy. These circumstances create unequal opportunities that are strong enough to place the imagined racial hierarchy in lower positions, which systematically leads to disadvantaged situations in social competition, hinders access to education and vocational training systems and places them, almost always, in the worst job positions and lowest salaries.

Although there are several dimensions in which racism spreads through society -cultural, social, economic, political, ritual, historical dimensions -, the studies presented in this volume examine racism in its cultural dimension, particularly in schools, to show the various fighting efforts in the field of education in Brazil. The school in the western world can be thought from the legitimization and institutionalization of the modern state as the nation-state¹. The school was historically established and coexisted during the development of the state as a public domain (adult world of civil governance) and a private domain (family intimacy). Thus, the educational institution can be considered an intermediate domain between these two; the school is also a public space, whose dynamics involves actions from the state of law, especially when endeavoring to understand the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of the rule of law in constitutional democracies.

As an anti-racist public policy, Law nº 10,639/03 established the mandatory study of African history and African-Brazilian and African cultures in primary and secondary education (Basic Education). In addition to the more general concerns about the conditions for the fulfillment of the rule of law, this a law has raised the analytical development of researchers as to its effectiveness in formal educational contexts.

With respect to the legal-normative issue of affirmative action policies, the Federal Law nº 10.639, of January 9, 2003, Resolution nº 1 of the National Board of Education, Federal Law nº 11,645, of March 10, 2008 and the CNE/CP nº 03/2004 determine that the subject must be discussed in schools. However, by law in the strict sense, the subject is not mandatory in undergraduate courses, which are the locus for teacher training to prepare them to teach the subject in child and primary education. This situation shows the distance between what is stated and what is done to implement the National Plan for the National Curriculum Guidelines for the education of ethnic and racial relations and the teaching of African and Afro-Brazilian history and culture.

The Brazilian Afro-Brazilians have been claiming their rights for a long time, especially as a social compensation for the historical past of their ancestors, who were once enslaved. In a late response, the Brazilian state, through the 1988 Constitution, validated and institutionalized that members of a particular culture may use political rights individualistically to exercise their public autonomy and protect the identity of their cultures. Concomitantly, the overvaluation of culture, whose emphasis focuses on the cultural sphere as the main or exclusive frame for the development of men, has allowed a theoretical trend, which has become increasingly widespread, for social and historical analyses of particular contexts, as opposed to narratives of the past. As a reflection of this immediate cultural and normative particularity, there is a movement for formal education to be different and, paradoxically, to prioritize collective rights.

In this sense, the thematic section “Racism and School Education” of the journal consists of six articles that raise several questions as to how education can approach the racism in society.

In their article, Miriam Soares Leite and Veronica de Souza Silva, from a theoretical and analytical framework, sought to show that the implementation of racial quotas in high schools of the federal education network, in accordance to Law nº 12,711/12, raises new issues for academic research on the subject of affirmative action and the fight against racism in school education. More specifically, taking into account the specificities of basic

¹ Nation-state means a community that lives in a territory with boundaries under a military, political, legal, economic and social structure, in which minorities -elites-determine the parameters for the majority regarding the actions in the sacred, defense and production spheres. Thus, this community lives under state power, based on economic, social, cultural conditions, etc., whose functioning is fully subject to the sine qua non condition of individuals who speak on their behalf.

education, they discuss the impact of the inclusion of racial bias in the system of quotas for high school admission at the *school Colégio Pedro II*, a traditional and valued educational institution in *Rio de Janeiro*.

Gregory Durlo Grise and Celia Elizabeth Caregnato analyzed the representations of teachers concerning the ethnic and racial relations in schools, which were based on the issues raised during a course of continuing education for teachers who work in public schools in *Rio Grande do Sul*.

Santuza Amorim da Silva and Daniela Amaral Silva Freitas focused their research on the production and distribution of children's and teenage literature books - the Afro-Brazilian literature kits - in the city of *Belo Horizonte* (MG) to inquire whether Afro-Brazilian representations disclosed in these materials positively value the image, culture and way of life of the Afro-Brazilian population, and contribute to the strengthening of ethnic and racial identities.

Tatiane Rodrigues Consentino, Fabiana Luci de Oliveira and Fernanda Vieira da Silva Santos asked the following question: 13 years after the approval of Law nº 10.639/03, how has the implementation process of the law been? Therefore, they mapped and problematized facilitating and impeding elements concerning the implementation of the law based on the data from a 180-hour training course during 2014 in twelve municipalities in *São Paulo* with a total of 1,272 participants, including teachers and administrators.

Outside the school environment per se, but relating the quilombolas and the school, Jeanes Martins Larchert investigated the organization of quilombo resistance in the community of *PedrasdeUna*, in *Itacaré* (*Bahia*), particularly concerning the educational processes they experienced, to understand how these educational processes have contributed and contribute to the daily experiences of the fundamental elements of *quilombo* epistemology, their knowledge and expertise.

And from a theoretical perspective, Ana Cristina Juvenal da Cruz refers to the contemporary debates about anti-racial policies and practices, particularly focusing on the analysis of *the* Brazilian context concerning the adoption of specific measures in education to resolve the effects of racism at school.

Everyone is invited to read the articles and reflect upon them since racism is an excrescence that should not be part of our reality. I thank all the authors who submitted their manuscripts as well as the referees and editorial board from the *Revista de Educação* of PUC-Campinas.

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