

BLACK PEOPLE AND HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE BEGINNING OF THE 20TH CENTURY:

considerations on the positioning of the newspaper *Progresso* (1928-1930)

População negra e ensino superior
no início do século XX: considerações sobre o posicionamento do jornal *Progresso* (1928-1930)

Población negra y educación superior a principios del siglo XX:
consideraciones sobre el posicionamiento del periódico *Progresso* (1928-1930)

MARIANA MACHADO ROCHA*, ANA LUIZA JESUS DA COSTA

Universidade de São Paulo, São Paulo, SP, Brasil. *Corresponding author. E-mail: machado.mari.r@gmail.com.

Abstract: This paper intends to analyze how black intellectuals from the beginning of the 20th century positioned themselves regarding higher education, considering not only the formal access of black people to this stage of education and the professions and material and symbolic benefits to which it gives access, but also the informal ways of acquiring and manipulating the 'scholarly culture'. For this purpose, the publications of the newspaper *Progresso* from São Paulo between the years of 1928 and 1930 and available for consultation online in the IEB-USP archive were analyzed.

Keywords: higher education; black press.

Resumo: O presente trabalho pretende analisar como os intelectuais negros do início do século XX se posicionavam a respeito do ensino superior, considerando não apenas o acesso formal dos negros a esta etapa de ensino e às profissões e benefícios materiais e simbólicos aos quais ela dá acesso mas também as maneiras informais de aquisição e manipulação da 'cultura douta'. Para tanto, foram analisadas as publicações do jornal *Progresso* situadas em São Paulo entre os anos de 1928 e 1930 e disponíveis para consulta on-line no arquivo do Instituto de Estudos Brasileiros da Universidade de São Paulo.

Palavras-chave: educação superior; imprensa negra.

Resumen: El presente trabajo pretende analizar cómo los intelectuales negros de principios del siglo XX se posicionaron con respecto a la educación superior, considerando no solo el acceso formal de los negros a esta etapa de la educación y las profesiones y beneficios materiales y simbólicos a los que da acceso, pero también las formas informales de adquirir y manipular la 'cultura académica'. Para ello, se analizaron las publicaciones del diario *Progresso* ubicado en São Paulo entre los años 1928 y 1930 y disponibles para consulta online en el archivo del IEB-USP.

Palabras clave: educación universitária; prensa negra.

INTRODUCTION

The 1990s were a period of intense debate about the access of Black Brazilians to higher education. Encouraged by the Black movement's complaints, the repercussion of this discussion has contributed to the growth of the production of knowledge about access to this level of education in contemporary times. Such studies have enriched the public dialogue on policies of affirmative action for higher education. Despite being very significant in the social sciences, especially in sociology and education, this movement was not immediately reflected in the inclusion of the higher education agenda in the history of education of Black people.

Barros (2016) shows us that in the midst of the particular dynamic of the field of the history of education, the education of the Black population was a minor topic in 1980 and underwent a process of growth that culminated in a significant increase in the number of studies in the first half of the 2000s. Thanks to this development, today we know that the assumption that Black people did not attend school during the period of slavery and the First Republic no longer holds true. Black people attended schools (Barros, 2017; Barros, 2005; Fonseca, 2001; Fonseca, 2005), Black people created schools (Silva, 2012, 2016), Black people wished or tried to attend schools (Cuti, 2007), Black people were teachers (Müller, 2016) and, by different ways, they acquired knowledge of the literate world (Cuti, 2007; Domingues, 2006; Fernandes, 2008; Schueler, 2016; Schueler & Rizzini, 2017; Wissenbach, 2017).

For such research to develop, it was first necessary to break with some generalizations that overshadowed the view of these narratives. Fonseca (2016) shows that there was a time when studies in the field of history of education understood the terms 'black' and 'enslaved people' as equivalent. In this way, the existence of laws that prohibited the access of the enslaved population to education was taken as a prohibition that affected Black people in general without considering the plurality of social statuses existing among them since the colony. For a long time, the presence of regional specificities in the laws of access to formal education was also ignored by the field, that is, the very prohibition of enslaved people to attend schools could be present in one province but not in others (Fonseca, 2001, 2016).

Another change that contributed to the development of studies on the history of the education of Black people was the broadening of the perspective of what is understood as education. When other types of practices and initiatives other than just school-based ones were included, new looks could be cast on the educational experiences of the Black population in history (Fonseca, 2016). The difference between education and schooling is problematized by Fonseca (2017), the author also discusses how the socialization processes in the context of slavery for a Black child born into slavery were parts of their educational path. Thus, knowledge such as how to relate to the masters in order to minimize the risks of captivity, how to perform the

work on the farms, and the understanding of the values and functioning of slave society itself are also understood as part of education.

The work of Wissenbach (2017), in turn, shows the story of Teodora, a Black enslaved woman who could not write, but who dictated letters, which highlighted the possibility of mastery of the functions of writing by enslaved people despite not being able to read or write. Teodora, “[...] although illiterate, participated in the world of writing” (Wissenbach, 2017, p. 67). The author also asserts that in the context of urban slavery, there was some proximity of the enslaved people to writing. Thus, reading or listening, or even seeing the circulation of writing and its uses are understood as ways to experience the presence of writing.

Expanding the understanding of what constitutes education, identifying and reducing generalizations were actions that contributed to the growth and improvement of studies on the history of education of Black people at the most elementary levels of education. A similar movement can help us think about issues concerning the contact of the Black population with higher education and the specific types of knowledge it conveys, an arena in which advances in the history of education have been modest.

In parallel to the idea of 'literate culture' which is not limited to knowing how to read and write, but which encompasses different possibilities of contact with the social uses of this type of knowledge, the present work considers as 'learned culture' knowledge that circulated in the higher education environment but that, nevertheless, could be accessed, valued, recognized, mobilized in ways other than institutional training and the obtaining of diplomas. The exercise of liberal professions such as law, medicine and dentistry, the practice of journalism or literary writing, good oratory, scientific, philosophical and political debates, recognition by peers (or those who formally accessed this culture), influence or placement in political office, and finally, debates about race itself are understood here as constitutive elements of the learned culture. Thus, it is considered that in addition to regular attendance at classes in a higher education institution, there have been varied possibilities of insertion in this culture that provided skills, knowledge, and roles also acquired in the passage through higher education institutions. Such culture goes beyond the boundaries of higher education, but maintains a strong relationship with it. Thus, to understand how Black people came into contact with it and the social status and professions that came with it is also to understand the history of Black people with the higher education.

Sources are another important discussion that accompanies the growth of the field of the history of education of Black people. Some authors point out the challenges present in conducting their own research, as well as the importance of selecting sets of sources that make it possible to access the educational experiences of the Black population in history (Barros, 2005, 2018; Fonseca, 2005, 2016; Peres, 2002). When it

comes to São Paulo in the early twentieth century, the newspapers of the 'Black Press of São Paulo' are among the main sources to verify the relationship of the Black population with education (Araújo, 2013; Barros, 2005; Cuti, 2007; Domingues, 2008; Domingues 2009; Romão, 2005; Souza, 2013). However, among the works that used these sources, there were no initiatives whose objective was to understand the relations established between the Black population and higher education.

Regarding the Black population, it is worth asking: what about higher education? And what about the learned culture? The silence that remains in the history of education regarding the contact of Black people with this type of education and this type of knowledge is possibly the result of generalizations and assumptions similar to those that once hindered the development of research on the history of education of Black people focusing on the elementary levels. Regarding higher education, it is not about the existence of explicit generalizations that deny the existence of interest or even presence of Black people in these institutions. What we see is a deep silence, which is possibly also based on assumptions that have restrained intellectual efforts aimed at understanding this aspect of the history of education of Black people.

Such assumptions may be connected to the prerequisite relationship between the initial levels of education and higher education in a context of very limited access of the general population (including poor White people) to literacy and schooling. For a long period of time, it is possible to identify the presence of a Marxist perspective that prevailed in the field of the history of education and that understood the working classes as a block devoid of particular identities such as racial ones. Thus, we can interpret that the exclusion of the working classes from higher education was indirectly extended to blacks, keeping us from looking specifically at how this group accessed or understood this type of education, their role in society, and their own access or lack of access to it. However, Fonseca (2016) shows us that other theoretical and methodological directions did not mean an immediate inclusion of Black people in the field of history of education. And this is especially true in the case of higher education, in which silence remains to this day despite the various theoretical and methodological currents that exist in the field of the history of education.

It is also possible to think about the existence of assumptions based on a linear and teleological perspective of history. In this case, the absence of Black people, observed in the 1990s, would have been projected into the past, as if the contemporary data accounted for the previous periods. While this information is important, it is wrong to take it as a generalizing answer without further investigation. Thus, the very understanding of the silence about the history of Black people in higher education is a research problem to be faced by the field of history of education.

Lilia Schwarcz (1993) shows that in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the institutions intended for the production of knowledge were the locus of development and propagation of theories of scientific racism and other currents of

thought that postulated the intellectual, moral, cultural, and aesthetic inferiority of Black people and of the so-called mixed-race people. The colleges or professional schools, on their turn, were the formation space of the main Brazilian intellectuals linked to the propagation of scientific racism theories and of the eugenicist, health and hygienist theories that succeeded in founding the racial - and racist - thought present in that period. Among the institutions that played this role, the Medical School in Bahia, the law schools in Recife and São Paulo, the Brazilian Historical and Geographical Institute, the National Museum, and the São Paulo Museum are some of the examples pointed out by the author.

This paper intends to contribute to the field of the history of education of Black people, bringing a perspective based on the way Black intellectuals of the early twentieth century positioned themselves with respect to higher education, considering not only the formal presence of Black people in this stage of education, in the professions and in the material and symbolic benefits to which it gave access, but also the informal ways of acquisition and manipulation of the learned culture and, finally, how the Black community and the institutions of higher education, or the people who circulated in these institutions, dealt with the presence or absence of Black people in these spaces.

The analysis included publications from the newspaper *Progresso* from 1928 to 1930, available for online consultation in the archives of the Institute of Brazilian Studies at the University of São Paulo. The collection comprises 24 published copies, from number 1 to 29. During the period under review, the archives did not contain five copies corresponding to numbers 12, 22, 24, 25 and 28 of the newspaper.

HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE PAGES OF *PROGRESSO*

First published on June 23, 1928, *Progresso* presented itself with the goal of fighting for the moral emancipation of Black men in Brazil (*Progresso*, 1928a). The newspaper included editorials, advertisements, information about associative organizations, social, religious, sports and artistic events (theater, dance, music) and information about some cities in the interior of São Paulo state, where the paper also had correspondents and was distributed. Printed on its own press, the newspaper was published on a monthly basis and was sold singly or by semi-annual or annual subscriptions. It comprised four to eight pages. At the time of the launch, the owner of the paper was Argentino C. Wanderley, and its editor, Lino Guedes¹.

By analyzing this newspaper, it is possible to verify that as early as the 1930s, higher education and all the professional, material, prestige, recognition, social contribution and political possibilities to which it gave access were highly valued and

¹ Learn more about the characteristics of the Newspaper *Progresso* at Guirro (2013).

were being disputed by the black press. The newspaper frequently paid tribute to Black people who held or had held important positions in various fields, such as sciences, law, medicine, and engineering. Important personalities for the movement of black people and/or the development of Brazilian society, for example, the physician Juliano Moreira, the engineer André Rebouças, the self-taught lawyer Luiz Gama and others, had their professional and educational achievements praised and were honored with true tributes to their memory. Regarding living people, contemporary to the newspaper, the attention was directed to travels, lectures and other professional activities undertaken by Black intellectuals. Such tributes communicated to readers not only the existence of these people, but the possibility that other Black people held positions similar to those.

There was a movement to affirm the intellectual capacity of Black people, which added to the argument of appreciation and recognition of the importance of their contribution in the national context. Such a movement was in direct opposition to the racial thinking of the period, based on ideas of intellectual inferiority of Black people. The following are two examples of such celebration situations emphasizing the high level of schooling obtained, either informally/self-taught or by attending regular higher education courses:

Among the scholars of law, there is the admirable example of Antonio Pereira Rebouças, the progenitor of a group of great talents, among whom shines the engineer André Rebouças. He came from a very humble background, extremely poor, and from a very young age had to work in a registry office in his hometown. He spent his leisure hours handling records, studying the laws of the country, or reading law books.

When he was twenty-three years old, he was granted a provision by the Desembargo do Paço court, to advocate in the courts of Bahia. He became, by his unequalled willpower, a notable lawyer, who, in 1847, through a decree of the Legislative Power - a unique case in the History of Brazil - was allowed to lawyer all over the Empire, just like the law school graduates (*Progresso*, 1929a, p. 2).

[...]

Since its foundation [the Civic Center] Palmares followed, step by step, the progress of Brazil. It created libraries. It founded schools. Students from its high school, which had a strong Black faculty, attend colleges in the country (*Progresso*, 1929b, p. 2).

In the above sections, it is possible to perceive the existence of an appreciation of gifted culture and the access to positions and social status it provides. In the case of the reference to the Rebouças family, it is possible to notice an association between obtaining this culture and the professional opportunities it provides and an idea of effort, intelligence, success and overcoming. The comparison with the 'law school graduates' shows the value the newspaper gave to the status that came from the learned culture obtained through the institutional path. In the second case, the reference to the high school offered by the Palmares Civic Center, the celebration of its Black faculty, and the existence of black students in the country's colleges attest to the existence of an appreciation of this level of education and efforts or intentions to promote the presence of Black people in these institutions.

In an article published in connection with the reporting of a situation of racial prejudice in the refusal to admit Black people to the Civil Guard in São Paulo, the newspaper mentions the abolition of slavery by the government and says that after that

[...] nothing else was done in Brazil, in benefit of the Black people. Most of them live completely abandoned, with no government taking care of their intellectual enhancement. So much so, that when we meet a Black man in a college, a Black doctor, a Black lawyer, a Black professor, a talented Black journalist, we are stunned. Why? Because no one ever bothered to reach out to the descendants of those who stretched out their arms to support our greatest. It is such an ingratitude. (Progresso, 1928b, p. 1).

Here we see a perspective that understands that there was a duty on the part of the State to promote the 'intellectual enhancement' of Black people. It was a charging tone and the argumentation followed the line structured from a demand for rights, typical of the newspaper. The intellectual enhancement that would make possible the access of Black people to the highest levels of education and to the learned culture with all its prestige was understood as a responsibility of the Brazilian government towards this people, who had contributed to what was then understood as the progress of the nation. The text mentions the reactions of surprise at the presence of Black people in prestigious positions associated with the learned culture, which shows the existence of the perception of this position as something rarely accessed by such group. However, against the racial ideas of the period, it is understood that what kept Black people away from higher education was not any kind of intellectual inferiority, but the lack of action by the government in this regard. The word 'ingratitude' indicates that the impossibilities for Black people to access higher education were directly linked to the lack of recognition of them as citizens who contributed to the development of the nation.

The context in which the theme appears is a report of prejudice in the hiring for a public position in the Civil Guard in which there was, in addition to the refusal of Black people, the hiring of White foreigners. Thus, the claim about the absence of Black people in higher education appears linked to a set of political demands for the inclusion of the Black population in the city of São Paulo and in Brazil after the abolition.

In the pages of *Progresso*, there were a number of indirect mentions of higher education, indicating the existence of a high degree of valorization of diplomas and of academic and literary culture by the Black literate community, the cradle of the intellectuals responsible for the preparation of the newspaper. A skill linked to a learned culture is that of oratory. By analyzing the newspaper, it is possible to notice that the Black community used to promote events that gathered balls and parties with discourses linked to intellectual and political issues of interest to the Black community. Thus, celebrations of important dates for Black people and for the nation, such as the anniversaries of abolition, of the Proclamation of the Republic, or even celebrations associated with Black organizations in the period, often included a moment when the so-called speakers had the chance to speak. These figures and their oratorical skills were repeatedly praised by the newspaper. In the sections entitled 'Álbum', in which members of the Black community were praised, and 'Sociaes', in announced events such as birthdays, weddings, graduations, or even deaths. It can be seen that high schooling, a diploma, and ability as an orator were part of what was evoked as a way to praise members of the Black community.

The perception of Black press intellectuals about higher education went beyond references made exclusively to Black people. When referring, for example, to the White people who took part in the movement for the independence of Brazil, we can see how access to high levels of education was understood:

What Brazilians were these invincible heroes of our political freedom, the most learned and the most respected by the wise, the good and the righteous ones. Nothing has been able to bend their tenacity or dampen their fire of love for the Homeland: not even their transplantation to other climates [...] nor the absolutist ideas that Coimbra impregnated in their brains [...] (Progresso, 1928c, p. 1).

Here, 'being learned', in the context of the independence movement, indicates a high level of intelligence and political influence, and appears as one of the qualities of men who would be recognized by the wise, the good and the righteous ones. In this sense, being learned was a quality and was close to the value of moral attributes. Next, we see the perspective of the potential political influence exerted by a higher education institution, the University of Coimbra, that would have tried to 'put absolutist ideas' into the heads of these figures, whose love for their homeland would have been strong enough to resist these ideas.

At the end of the 1920s, several Black organizations and newspapers discussed the organization of the First Congress of the Black Youth (Progresso, 1929c, 1929d), among them the newspaper *Clarim da Alvorada* and its main organizer, José Correia Leite. In his autobiography, Leite states that the process of idealization and organization of the congress also involved the mobilization of doctors present in the Black community of the period, as the following depicts:

And we began to preach the idea of the Congress, which was gaining ground among us. But, we soon realized that only with our group we could not make the Congress. There was a need for the participation of other entities that had sociological, scientific, political interest in a project of this magnitude. So, we started to look for support from people with titles, responsibilities (Cuti, 2007, p. 83).

The congress had political purposes understood as connected to a certain type of scientific knowledge, hence the search for Black doctors who embraced the idea. There was an understanding of the political importance of handling certain types of knowledge and, at the same time, an awareness of the important role of Black men who were able to acquire this type of knowledge in the context of Black political struggle.

The ways of acquiring this kind of knowledge, however, were diverse and not restricted to formal access to higher education. A case mentioned in the biography of José Correia Leite strengthens this interpretation. He mentions Vicente Ferreira, a Black intellectual man who could read, but not write, and who nevertheless mastered some of the most elaborate subjects. In addition to the debate on race, where he took a stand contesting theories of racial inferiority and demanding government action on behalf of Black people, he mastered topics related to politics and philosophy, and was a very talented orator who stood out inside and outside the Black community. Leite recounts some episodes in which this is true:

The story of Vicente Ferreira is that of an uncompromising and bitter Black man, a mystic, a genius, a man who had no academic culture, but who was not inferior to anyone. He used to be in the circle of the intellectuals. He lived among the intellectuals, and he made noise, because he was always speaking on behalf of the Black race [...]. A case I can tell you about was when Batista Pereira - a son-in-law of Rui Barbosa - gave a lecture at the Law School to answer the accusations of the Aryanist Gobineau - a French sociologist who in his studies on miscegenation did not believe that a superior Brazilian race would emerge. Vicente Ferreira appeared at this conference, as usual, and at the end, he asked for the word.

It was such a fuss among the students. Some wanted him to speak, some did not. When things have settled down:

- Whether you wish it or not, I speak on behalf of the Black race.

And he gave his speech and received loud applause, both from those who wanted to hear him and those against him.

Just before the 30's Revolution, they founded the Democratic Party here in São Paulo. I remember that in the Patriarca Square, there was a gathering of this party [...] And he made a speech on behalf of the Black race and was applauded on one side, booed on the other. And there was a moment when he talked about philosophy and a brother of Mário de Andrade, named Morais Andrade, made a very mean remark:

- Shut up, you black man! You don't understand philosophy at all.

And he answered:

- Hold on, I'll tell you in a minute. Let me finish my reasoning.

He finished speaking and gave a philosophy lesson. [...] He was fully aware of the positivist philosophy adopted. When he finished speaking, Morais Andrade went to hug him and celebrated with him (Cuti, 2007, p. 67-68).

Vicente Ferreira's mastery of philosophy, his circulation among academics and the recognition he achieved among law students and other intellectuals who, at first sight, doubted his ability, together with the fact that he could not write, show the existence of possibilities of access to the learned culture by means other than a formal attendance at institutions of Higher Education. In this way, access to the academic, scientific, philosophical and political debates held primarily in higher education or research institutions could not and cannot be interpreted as conditioned exclusively to formal education. Especially at a time when universities were still incipient in Brazil.

Correia Leite himself, who narrates the story of Vicente Ferreira, was together with him circulating in these spaces and being part of these debates. Moreover, throughout his biography, we find a map of a whole black intellectual environment highly qualified and in permanent contact with the learned culture. There are those who have gone through college, but there are also cases of people who have been inserted in this culture even without the institutional formality. Thus, the trajectories of Vicente Ferreira and Correia Leite show the circulation of black men in the educated environment. Lawyers, physicians, politicians or journalists such as Juliano Moreira, Vicente de Souza, Arlindo Veiga, Benedito Florêncio, Jayme de Aguiar, Enoch Carteadó, Lino Guedes and Manuel Querino indicate the existence of access to the

learned culture by Black men not only through higher education, but also by other means. The names also indicate that if there were restrictions for black men, for black women they were even greater. It is worth remembering that we are talking about a time when this kind of knowledge, the position and the social status it provided were significantly restricted to men, so that even White women had very few possibilities to access them.

The scene described by Correia Leite when relating the negative reaction of the students when Vicente Ferreira asked to speak corroborates the hypothesis of the existence of a climate of rejection to the presence of Black people in this environment, in positions other than those of objectification and service. The view of Black people as intellectually incapable and not belonging to the places of prestige associated with the learned culture certainly marked the trajectory not only of the Black people who may have formally attended the institutions, but also of those who circulated through these spaces informally or in positions of service.

The work of Virgínia Bicudo also supports the hypothesis of the existence of an atmosphere that constrained Black people and prohibited their presence and voice in these spaces as intellectuals. In the book *"Atitudes Raciais de Preto e Mulatos em São Paulo"* (Racial Attitudes of Black and Mulatto People in São Paulo), we find an account about the author's father, who, while attending the last year of the State High School, intended to continue his studies at the Medical School. At that time, there was no university entrance exam, and it was the approval in the last school stage that would give him the possibility to enter as a medical student. Then a teacher, upon discovering his pretensions, had failed him in the last year, saying that "[...] A Black man could not be a physician" (Maio, 2010, p. 31). In this way, an elementary school teacher, exercising his or her disapproving power, was personally regulating a Black student's entry into higher education despite the absence of formal barriers. One of the people interviewed by Bicudo tells:

When I finished primary school, I went to the neighboring city to take the secondary school exams. A few days later, the newspapers published the results - I was placed third among the competitors. My performance aroused the admiration of everyone in town. Many people even asked me: 'Are you the Black guy who got the third place in the exams?' I thought it was natural and didn't understand the reason for such admiration. Later, when I entered my current profession, I underwent an examination. However, I noticed that I was the only one who was required to have knowledge beyond that stipulated for the others. After proving that I had knowledge beyond what was expected, I was accepted for the job (Bicudo, 2010, p. 76-77, emphasis added by the author).

In this case, both the surprise at the good grades obtained by a Black man and the additional barriers placed in the way of his being able to exercise a profession for which he was officially prepared indicate the existence of a hostile atmosphere toward the presence of Black people in higher levels of schooling and in the exercise of professions associated with their respective educations. The fact that this is the transition from primary to secondary school points to the possibility of additional barriers informally placed throughout the educational trajectory of Black people who managed to attend school, which possibly acted as a way to hinder the access of this population to higher levels of education, especially higher education.

Bicudo (2010) presents the trajectory of a Black man who, after graduating in dentistry, encountered great difficulties in exercising his profession, since the patients doubted his ability and felt insecure to be treated by him. Thus, even after completing his studies, the young man experienced serious financial difficulties and almost gave up the profession of dentistry for which he had graduated with great efforts from a free dental school. Maio (2010) reiterates that access to high levels of education did not free Black people from suffering situations of prejudice in the white social environment, and Hasenbalg is even more specific when he states that “[...] the higher the educational level attained by a person of color, the greater the discrimination experienced by him/her in the labor market” (Hasenbalg, 2005, p. 191). Thus, if on the one hand access to higher education would bring material and symbolic rewards to Black people, on the other hand, it could act as an element that intensified the experiences of color prejudice.

The following situation helps us think about both the manifestation of impediments informally used in opposition to the schooling of Black people and the existence of a hostile atmosphere towards their presence when they managed to reach higher levels of education, especially in the São Paulo context. This is the repercussion of the Enoch Carteado case. ‘The Caravan of Brazilian doctors in Paris and the revolting attitude of their colleagues from S. Paulo’ is the title of the news that denounces with notable indignation the case of color prejudice suffered by the Black doctor from Bahia, Enoch Carteado, during a trip with a group of doctors from all over Brazil to take a course at the Faculty of Medicine of Paris.

According to the newspaper, physicians from São Paulo in the caravan opposed Enoch Carteado's presence in the course because of his color and because he had graduated in Bahia. Carteado reacts to the situation by sending a telegram to Professor Fernando de Magalhães, president of the Brazilian medical union, and to the Exprinter agency, responsible for organizing the trip “[...] by means of the contribution paid annually by all members of the caravan” (*Progresso*, 1928d, p. 1).

According to the transcript of the telegram published in the newspaper, he said:

Paris, 22 - Dr. Magalhães Pro-Matre - Rio de Janeiro. Some colleagues from São Paulo want to force 'Exprinter' to separate me from the medical caravan for the sole reason that I am a Black man that graduated in Bahia, so that the French would ignore that there are Black people in Brazil. I ask for your intervention, because I do not think I dishonor my country. (a) Enoch Carteadado (Progresso, 1928d, p. 1, emphasis added by the author).

Upon receiving the news, the agency responsible for the trip and Professor Magalhães sent telegrams to Paris. The agency addressed the caravan and emphasized that Enoch Carteadado had paid the same amount as the other participants and therefore he had equal rights to attend the course. The professor, in turn, sent two telegrams: the first one was addressed to the Brazilian ambassador in Paris, Souza Dantas, and the other one to the Caravan of Brazilian physicians. The article transcribes these two telegrams:

Dantas: I ask for protection Enoch Carteadado, physician caravan. Regards - (a) Fernando Magalhães.

Misunderstanding here, Carteadado issue. I believe that a peaceful solution is indispensable, because, Carteadado has equal rights - (a) Fernando Magalhães. (Progresso, 1928d, p. 1).

The newspaper points out that the opposition to Carteadado's presence was exclusively from physicians from São Paulo and that physicians from other states repudiated such racial discrimination. Besides the term 'revolting' used in the title of the article, *Progresso* qualifies the posture of the physicians from São Paulo as 'rude and unpatriotic', as can be seen below:

This revolting incident occurred within the Brazilian medical caravan attending courses at the Paris Faculty of Medicine and was caused by the rude and unpatriotic attitude of physicians from São Paulo, who allegedly protested against the presence of Mr. Enoch Carteadado, due to the fact that he is a Black practitioner, calls for some comments in order to better justify the reaction of public opinion. In the first place, it is necessary to establish the consideration that the majority of the physicians in the caravan dislike the lamentable initiative of the São Paulo physicians, as it can be deduced from the above telegrams and that this feeling is shared not only by the society, but also by the whole Brazilian medical area, including dear names that, not for their arrogant contributions, but for their works and researches and discoveries

enrich the world science, such as Juliano Moreira, who is one of our greatest lights and now travels, as a Black man, through the scientific centers of Germany and the East, which applaud and admire him without prejudice, which would be idiotic, therefore intelligence and knowledge impose themselves.

The one thing that should constrain the opinion of all the physicians in the caravan, is not the presence of dr. Enoch Carteado, but that of his colleagues from São Paulo who reject him, and above, the presence of the one who conceived, with such a black soul and such a stupid spirit, that degrading persecution in which he puts his promoters as badly at home as abroad, especially in France, which has as medical practitioner Rezy Roussel, the wise Black specialist of nervous diseases, and who gives, in London, simple medical advice for prices five times higher than those of our best specialists, [...] But it is not worth repeating the subject. What we must do, translating the public sentiment, is to praise the exemplary correction of the Exprinter Agency's attitude, not supporting such low feelings but rather condemning them, and the initiatives of Professor Fernando Magalhães, who, with his telegram to Ambassador Souza Dantas, and with the one he sent in a circular to his country's doctors, gave an admirable testimony, being able to interpret the judgments of the Brazilian opinion, or rather, of the national spirit (*Progresso*, 1928d, p. 1).

The article shows indignation towards the color prejudice manifested by physicians from São Paulo, which is presented as contrary to public opinion, to the other physicians present in the caravan and to the medical field in general. Juliano Moreira, in Brazil, and Rezy Roussel, in France, are presented as examples of successful Black doctors, who are highly recognized for their important contributions to medicine.

During the relevant period (1928-30), no other case had such a great repercussion in *Progresso* as the situation of color prejudice against Enoch Carteado. The case is discussed by the newspaper more than five times and mobilizes a set of articles that make indirect references to the situation, such as the publication of a response to the first article and other texts denouncing situations of color prejudice related to Black liberal professionals. The massive and intense coverage highlights the great importance given to the defense of the right of Black people to access higher education, the status and occupations linked to their diplomas.

São Paulo is markedly recognized for nurturing and propagating its self-image as a people superior to the rest of the nation, a superiority that would be based on racial grounds (Berriel, 2013). According to Hasenbalg (2005), the possibilities of access to positions of greater educational and occupational prestige were different when comparing what is now the South and Southeast with the other regions of the

country. In the first, the massive arrival of European immigrants would have hindered the access of Black people to such positions, while the Northeast, where the majority of the Black population was still found, they would have greater possibilities of social mobility, since it had not received a high contingent of white immigrants².

This regional dynamic helps to understand why it was the physicians from São Paulo who spoke out against the presence of Carteados in the caravan. It is possible to think that the atmosphere of hostility towards the presence of Black people in the environments where the learned culture circulated was more strongly manifested in São Paulo. The mention of the fact that Enoch had graduated in Bahia as part of the arguments of the physicians from São Paulo to reject his presence strengthens this interpretation.

Another element pointed out by Enoch Carteados as motivating the attitude of the physicians from São Paulo was the desire to hide the existence of Black people in Brazil. The quest of the white Brazilian elite to 'hide' the presence of Black people in the country from European nations is recorded by several authors (Alberto, 2011; Cuti, 2007; Dantas, 2009; Gomes & Domingues, 2014). In this case, however, it is not only about 'hiding' a black population in general, but a highly educated and well-positioned Black man. Enoch possessed the learned culture obtained in a formal way and a significant place of material and symbolic power in the Bahian context. Moreover, in effect, the alleged act of 'hiding' him from France means preventing him from enjoying the higher formative knowledge and experiences, and professional connections in pursuit of which the caravan had headed to the European country. The opposition to his presence in that space communicates that the white physicians from São Paulo understood that the knowledge and prestige associated with the experience in a French college could not be attained by a Black Brazilian man.

By repudiating the attitude of the São Paulo physicians, the newspaper also positioned itself against the idea of intellectual inferiority based on race, an action reinforced by mentioning the name of a Brazilian doctor and a French doctor, both Black and highly recognized for their contributions and performance in the field of medicine. Terms such as 'revolting', 'rudeness', 'idiotic prejudice' and 'degrading persecution', used in the characterization of what happened, mark the very high degree of indignation aroused by the act of racism of the São Paulo physicians. The characterization of his attitude as 'unpatriotic' dialogues with the newspaper's position regarding the place occupied by Black people in the history of the nation's

² It is important to emphasize that, despite being greater, the possibilities for social mobility in the northeast of the country occurred in the context in which this region was constituted as the 'underdeveloped' part of the nation, since, while the South was undergoing important processes of industrialization and urbanization, the northeast continued to have agriculture as its central economic base. According to Hasenbalg (2005), the predominant concentration of Black people in this region was part of what collaborated to give them a disadvantage in relation to White people, among whom were the recently arrived immigrants, concentrated in the most industrialized and urbanized regions.

development. In this sense, the position contrary to the presence of Enoch in that space was equivalent to a position contrary to the homeland itself. Given that nationalism was something strongly present in the thinking of the period, its mobilization carried a lot of force and evidenced the understanding that the access of Black people to the positions, occupations, knowledge and social status related to higher education was not only their right, but also an advantage for the nation itself.

Furthermore, by highlighting the attitude of physicians from other states, praising the position of Magalhães and the Exprinter agency, stating that they reflected "medicine", the "Brazilian public opinion" and the "national spirit", and by restricting the attitude of color prejudice only to São Paulo physicians, there is an affirmation of the right, not only from a legal point of view, but also from the point of view of morality and social legitimacy that Black people would have to occupy this type of space. This argument is related to a perspective that in Brazil, there would be no room for manifestations of color prejudice. As mentioned by Alberto (2011), it is possible to understand such positioning as a strategic adherence to the ideology of the myth of racial democracy with the purpose of including the black population to the advantages of the São Paulo society in the process of urban and industrial expansion.

Magellan's and Exprinter's telegrams reveal racial dynamics present in contexts where Black people were attending higher education. Magalhães asks for the protection of Enoch, and that says he considers a peaceful solution to be essential, justified by the fact that Enoch has the same rights as the other physicians in the Caravan, and points out the 'bad impression' caused by the color prejudice of the São Paulo physicians. This attitude towards the racism of the São Paulo physicians shows that the presence of Black people in positions such as Enoch's was something that gave rise to controversial situations, whose confrontation was part of the trajectory of Black men who reached this level of schooling.

The Exprinter agency, on the other hand, brings up the economic argument by saying that Enoch had paid the same amount as the other participants, and this gave him equal rights. In this way, we can think that if on the one hand, the availability of economic resources made access possible for Black people, on the other hand, it was precisely in these access possibilities that they would find explicit racist manifestations contrary to their presence.

In the issue following the news about Enoch Carteadó, the newspaper published an article signed by Medeiros e Albuquerque, a White man who achieved notoriety in the period due to his journalistic, political and literary performance. His text problematizes the events, affirming the inexistence of color prejudice in Brazil and questioning what was the real reason for the São Paulo physicians' act. The author says that in France there is no prejudice, only a few 'jokes' or jests about race. According to him, for the French people, Black people are 'unwashed'. Thus, he presents a

construction that associates skin color with dirt in order to affirm the absence of color prejudice in France. Note that, for him, these 'jokes' did not constitute racism.

The conviction present in the denial of the existence of racism elaborated from situations that today would be easily identified as such shows us that, just as the processes of racialization vary according to the period and the local context, the very understanding of what constitutes racism/color prejudice can change over time. However, despite what was understood as prejudice or not in that period, the set of situations that the text mobilizes to deny the color prejudice is embarrassing for Black people. Moreover, Albuquerque's entire argumentation is focused on raising a suspicion about Enoch Carteado's behavior, that is, for him, the attitude of the physicians from São Paulo was due to some misconduct of the physician from Bahia. Let's take a look at some excerpts from this text:

The newspapers said that the initiators of the persecution of the Black doctor were from São Paulo. S. Paulo once had, it is said, a law professor (his name was Cabral - I believe) who became notorious for persecuting students of color. He stated as his principle: 'Black people can't get a bachelor's degree'- and failed all the Black students who attended his class. But this tradition has been lost. [...] Currently, there is a black member at the French parliament, Mr. Candace. Nobody harasses or boycotts him. Reading the news, the first thing that occurred to me was that the Black doctor had done something unseemly, against which his fellow countrymen would have objected, not because of the color of the person who had acted badly, but because of the unseemliness of the act. And if it would be unbearable to persecute someone just because his skin color, it would, on the other hand, be no less unbearable to tolerate inconveniences from someone just because of his color. It would seem that this is a less absurd hypothesis [...] than seeing physicians from São Paulo suddenly expressing, outside the country, a prejudice that they don't have, when they are in Brazil Physicians - they can't help thinking that one of the leading figures of their profession in Brazil is the admirable man of science, who is called Juliano Moreira. Juliano Moreira is the Miguel Couto of neurology [...] São Paulo people - the doctors who are in Paris cannot forget, among others, the great São Paulo politician, founder of the Republic, who was called Francisco Glycerio. Neither Juliano nor Glycerio ever wanted to pass for white and blond [...] There is certainly something not quite right about this story. (Progresso, 1928e, p. 1-2, emphasis added by the author).

The practice of the law professor who failed Black students while affirming that Black people could not graduate is presented as a narrative that was being spread by word of mouth, but which concerned only the past. It seems to be a collective memory that, regardless of its veracity or exact location in time, indicated the existence of a particular functioning of higher education marked by hostility towards Black people, who were excluded or oppressed when present in these spaces. The other situation in the text is that of a student who was the only black student at the French military school and, despite being very admirable, was harassed by his White classmates. Neither the harassment situation nor the fact that there was only one Black student seems to be interpreted by the author as signs of the existence of prejudice, on the contrary, they are also understood as situations of 'jokes'. There seems to be, then, a certain degree of naturalization of the absence of Black people in these spaces, and their harassment.

The same happens with the caravan of Brazilian doctors going to Paris. The fact that Enoch Carteado is the only Black doctor in the group is not understood as a sign of the existence of prejudice, and the harassment carried out by the São Paulo doctors is justified with the assumption that he must have done something wrong. Only a few texts in *Progresso* are signed. This one, however, in addition to the signature of Medeiros e Albuquerque, contains a dialogue directly established with the article published in the previous issue. Its publication indicates the repercussion and polemic originated by the case of color prejudice against the Black doctor.

The suspicion regarding Enoch's conduct coupled with the repeated affirmation of the non-existence of racism in Brazil indicate that Black people who accessed prestigious educational and occupational positions were under continuous surveillance and that even a situation in which they were victims of color prejudice could be turned against them based on suspicions that they themselves and their conduct were the cause of hostile reactions to their presence. Thus, for Black people who managed to reach higher education, any slip could be read as a legitimate reason for racial harassment. It is possible to think, therefore, that the feeling of having to be perfect, of not being able to make mistakes or create disaffections, was present in the trajectory of Black people who attended higher education in São Paulo in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

FINAL REMARKS

The path taken in the field of the history of education of Black people by expanding the possibilities of looking and interpreting the access of this population to literate culture and formal education opens new interpretative possibilities to understand the relationship between Black people and higher education in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The analysis of the publications of the

newspaper *Progresso* between the years 1928 and 1930 shows that there was, in the black press, an appreciation of higher education, of learned culture, and of the possibilities of contribution that Black men who had reached these levels of education could give to the political struggle of Black people.

A perspective of the newspaper could also be seen in which the low number of Black people accessing this level of education was interpreted as a result of the Brazilian government's negligence in promoting the 'intellectual enhancement' of the Black population. The appreciation shown for the few who managed to occupy these spaces and the praise for their accomplishments demonstrate an attitude of opposition to racial thinking that attested to the intellectual inferiority of Black people. A look at the political role of White men detaining the learned culture, predominantly found in institutions of higher education, in turn, attests to an understanding of the importance of institutions of higher education in terms of shaping the political ideals of the period.

The case of Vicente Ferreira shows that even without complete mastery of writing skills, it was possible to master highly complex topics and even obtain recognition from those who were formally inserted in the erudite culture environment. Circulating in spaces where this type of knowledge was disseminated was an informal way for Black people to have access to these ideas, especially to the racial debate itself.

The cases of teachers or employers failing their Black students or placing additional barriers to the exercise of professions for which Black people were qualified suggests the existence of a set of informal practices for excluding the Black population from the higher levels of education and the professions to which these levels gave access. Thus, when available to a few Black people, the possibilities of formal access to higher education came along with a path through a hostile institution and with a set of new experiences of color prejudice, sometimes more intense or explicit, precisely because of the position of prominence and exception attained by them.

The explicit expression of color prejudice by São Paulo physicians against the Black physician from Bahia Enoch Carteadó, in Paris, suggests the existence of greater hostility against Black people in academic environments located in the São Paulo context. The newspaper's declaration of disapproval, on the other hand, shows that there was a very relevant position on the part of Black intellectuals regarding the rights of Black people to access higher education and the professions resulting from it. The text that replies to the newspaper's repudiation raising the suspicion that the attitude of the São Paulo doctors should be a response to some inappropriate behavior by Enoch, and not an act of color prejudice, points out the existence of a context of high vulnerability of Black people admitted to higher education. Amidst an ideology of denying the existence of racism in Brazil, when they were victims of prejudice, they became suspect of having committed something wrong that would justify such actions.

The questions prepared with the purpose of understanding the relations established between the Black population and higher education, or between the Black population and learned culture, proved to be fruitful, signaling investigating this theme based on other newspapers of the Black press, other periods of publication of *Progresso* itself, or even other types of sources analyzed in light of similar questions, can contribute to the advancement of understanding about the dynamics present in the history of the education of Black people regarding higher education.

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MARIANA MACHADO ROCHA has a degree in pedagogy, a master's degree in education and is currently pursuing her doctorate in education at the University of São Paulo. She is a CNPq scholar, and was also a visiting researcher at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign in a Fulbright sponsored sandwich program.

E-mail: machado.mari.r@gmail.com
<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3498-9403>

ANA LUIZA JESUS DA COSTA has a degree in History from Fluminense Federal University. PhD in Education from the University of São Paulo. Professor of History of Education at the Faculty of Education, University of São Paulo (FEUSP), where she teaches in the Pedagogy and Education programs and in the Postgraduate Program at the Faculty of Education/USP. She is a member of the Interdisciplinary Group for Teaching and Research in the History of Education (NIEPHE/FEUSP).

E-mail: anajcosta@usp.br
<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6917-2917>

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Responsible associate editors:

Adlene Arantes
E-mail: adlene.arantes@gmail.com
<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7007-0237>

José Gonçalves Gondra
E-mail: gondra.uerj@gmail.com
<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0669-1661>

Surya Aaronovich Pombo de Barros
E-mail: surya.pombo@gmail.com
<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7109-0264>

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