

## FÚLVIA ROSEMBERG, IANSÃ, CALIBAN

 Paulo Vinícius Baptista da Silva<sup>1</sup>

TRANSLATED BY  Silvia Iacovacci<sup>II</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Universidade Federal do Paraná (UFPR), Curitiba (PR), Brasil; pauloviniciusufpr@gmail.com

<sup>II</sup> Freelancer, siacovacci@gmail.com

### Abstract

This article discusses the writings of Fúlvia Rosemberg and her contribution to social and educational research. It analyzes in the author's work the concepts of non-synchrony of social hierarchies at the intersection of the hierarchies of race, gender, and age in educational policies and of whiteness, understood as the norm of humanity, which reveals the naturalized social norm at the center of the black-white hierarchy and the need to criticize it. The concepts mobilized and the form of analysis keep vivid the interest of the work and the concepts for the analysis of educational and social inequalities.

**SOCIAL INEQUALITIES • RACE • GENDER RELATIONS • BLACKS**

## FÚLVIA ROSEMBERG, IANSÃ, TODA CALIBÃ

### Resumo

Este artigo discute os escritos de Fúlvia Rosemberg e sua contribuição para a pesquisa social e em educação. Analisa na obra da autora os conceitos de não sincronia das hierarquias sociais nas intersecções das hierarquias de raça, gênero e idade nas políticas educacionais e de branquidade, compreendida como norma de humanidade, que revela a norma social naturalizada situada no centro da hierarquização branco-negro e a necessidade de sua crítica. Os conceitos mobilizados e a forma de análise mantêm vívido o interesse da obra e dos conceitos para a análise das desigualdades educacionais e sociais.

**DESIGUALDADES SOCIAIS • RAÇA • RELAÇÕES DE GÊNERO • NEGROS**

## FÚLVIA ROSEMBERG, IANSÃ, TODA CALIBÃ

### Resumen

Este artículo discute los escritos de Fúlvia Rosemberg y su contribución para la investigación social y en educación. Analiza en el trabajo de la autora los conceptos de no sincronía de las jerarquías sociales en las intersecciones de jerarquías raciales, género y la edad en las políticas educativas y de blancura, entendida como una norma de humanidad, que revela la norma social naturalizada situada en el centro de la jerarquía blanco-negra y la necesidad de su crítica. Los conceptos movilizados y la forma de análisis mantienen vivo el interés del trabajo y los conceptos para el análisis de las desigualdades educativas y sociales.

DESIGUALDADES SOCIALES • RAZA • RELACIONES DE GÉNERO • NEGROS

## FÚLVIA ROSEMBERG, IANSÃ, CALIBAN

### Résumé

Cet article examine les écrits de Fúlvia Rosemberg et leur apport à la recherche en sciences sociales et éducation. Il analyse, dans son œuvre, les concepts de non-synchronie des hiérarchies sociales à l'intersection des hiérarchies de race, de genre et d'âge dans les politiques éducatives ainsi que celui de blancheur, comprise comme norme de l'humanité, révélant la norme sociale naturalisée au sein de la hiérarchie blanc/noir et l'urgence de critiquer cette dernière. Les concepts mobilisés et la forme d'analyse renouvellent l'intérêt pour son œuvre et pour ces concepts permettant d'analyser les inégalités scolaires et sociales.

INÉGALITÉS SOCIALES • RACE • RELATIONS DE GENRE • NOIRS

Received on: DECEMBER 29, 2020 | Approved for publication on: DECEMBER 20, 2021



This is an open access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons license, type BY-NC.

*Iansã, a charmosa, e elegante.  
Iansã de olhar sorrateiro,  
nos vê sem percebermos.  
Iansã, a poderosa que vive no vento.*  
(Silva, 2009, p. 75)<sup>1</sup>

**T**HE CENTRAL ARGUMENT OF THIS ARTICLE IS IN THE FACT THAT, IN MANY aspects, the research and writings of Fúlvia Rosemberg were innovative for social and educational research. The proposal here is to highlight approaches in Rosemberg's production, analyzing the concepts of non-synchrony of social hierarchies and "whiteness as a normal and neutral condition of humanity"<sup>2</sup> (Rosemberg, 1979b, p. 159, own translation).

Fúlvia Rosemberg's work, besides being extensive, reveals a multiplicity of interests; a broad field of objects, which in research on educational policies range from early childhood education to graduate studies; a perspective that considers "the thematic cut more relevant than the disciplinary one",<sup>3</sup> organizing itself, therefore, in an interdisciplinary way. Here we have an important point in the author's research conception and work, whose transit through research in education, psychology, sociology, political science, and in several cases demography was constant. The practice in research was not to consider walls between disciplines – since the objects and their place in politics, their role in the unequal distribution of power, are the definers – and the various academic disciplines make sense in their ways of interpretation and contributions to the understanding of the social phenomena studied, such as the young child or adult black women, to stay in two examples of objects.

To address the multiple legacy and the abundant contributions to Brazilian social research, we begin with the choice of the epigraph for this text. Several times Fúlvia stated that she was said to be a "daughter of Iansã". She was very comfortable with this classification. As Iansã is a warrior orixá who watches over justice, the identification with the mythical character was appreciated. The warrior Fúlvia Rosemberg structured her academic-political trajectory with a deep sense of justice, and this marks her work and her choices. She operated with a concept of social justice in dialogue with feminist reflections, with a perspective of analysis of social tensions and conflicts as contradictory and complex, analyzed, for example, by Joan Scott (2005), understanding contemporary

1 "Iansã, the charming, elegant one. / Iansã with a sneaky look, / sees us without us noticing. / Iansã, the powerful one that lives in the wind" (own translation).

2 In the original: "branquidade como condição normal e neutra de humanidade".

3 Speech given by Fúlvia Rosemberg on several occasions, in her classes at the Graduate Program in Social Psychology at PUC-SP.

society as structured in different axes of intersecting inequality, and the need to establish equity policies to promote groups with less access to material and symbolic power.

The sense of justice has guided the extremely fruitful production and choices of the researcher. In her memoir for the competition for associate professor at the Faculdade de Psicologia of the Pontifícia Universidade Católica de São Paulo (PUC-SP), Fúlvia Rosemberg (1993) discusses some contingencies that were defining factors in her research trajectory and even in her choice of research objects: the meeting with feminists in France and the International Women's Year (1975); the refusal to participate in a project that made it possible, soon afterwards, to assume the coordination of another on the education of black people; the need for a guardian for her first child and the daily contact with the daycare institution. Such contingencies are operated in a peculiar way by the mother/woman/researcher, by her extremely attentive look at the inequalities, with her search for justice, making the social contradictions and lacks to be engines for research and reflection.

The actions of the researcher, teacher, lecturer, program, and policy manager went through the initial sieve about which fight to fight, which cause to defend, in which the sense of justice imposes itself in a primordial way. To accept or not a lecture was to weigh the possible political dividends of it, not in relation to personal promotion, to greater insertion or recognition, but in what context the lecture would be, which audience, what possible derivations for formulators and executors of educational policies. Could your voice help create spaces for regimes of equality? For early childhood education so many times she was the speaker, available, as a rule, because of her commitment to necessary changes in policies directed to young children in Brazil.

In research, the concern with fighting inequalities was indelibly manifested by the definitions of themes, formulation of problems, and theoretical and methodological options. The first question to be thought about was the field of power distribution, the inequalities and the possibilities of acting politically in favor of equality. What to research? What is the object of the research? What is the problem? For our author, the options included the analysis of to what extent the options and possible results would have the potential to act for more social justice. The analysis of the social context, of the distribution of power, and of the possible forms of equity was the base line of the choices and permeated the whole process. The methodological and procedural choices were also tools that the researcher could have at his/her<sup>4</sup> disposal from the reflection both of their adequacy to the research problem and context, and of their critical possibility.

The concept of critique, Fúlvia taught us, is articulated with an understanding of conflict society, in considering that contemporary Western society is structured on

4 From this moment the text starts to use the generic male as a way of relieving it.

inequality and that the axes of inequality of age, gender, and racial-ethnicity are as relevant as social class and operate with a certain “independence”.

### **The non-synchrony of the axes of social inequality**

According to Maria Malta Campos (2015), the feminist Fúlvia Rosemberg took to Fundação Carlos Chagas (FCC), in the 1970s, the first echoes of the politics of difference. From her thesis defended in 1969, *La famille et les relations familiales dans les livres pour enfants* (Rosemberg, 1969), the author noted in her Curriculum Lattes the keywords: “Stereotyping; Race relations; Childhood; Children’s literature”. Therefore, in her initial intellectual work, the analysis of the articulation of the axes childhood and race relations already appears. These themes were taken up again in the research carried out at FCC, *Analysis of cultural models in Brazilian children’s literature* (Rosemberg, 1979a), in which she coordinated the team that analyzed the literature (published in Brazil between 1955 and 1975) addressed to children. The researchers<sup>5</sup> looked at children’s literature to discuss the discrimination against oppressed groups (Rosemberg, 1985, p. 17), addressing the relations of domination along ethnic-racial, gender, age, and social class lines. The basic discussion was how the cultural products produced by adults aiming at the children’s<sup>6</sup> audience inform cultural models that disclose social hierarchies (age, ethno-racial, gender, social class) to their readers and produce/reproduce social meaning of being a child. In this production, we can identify aspects that continued to mark the author’s work throughout her career: the discourses on childhood studied not as an end in themselves, but as informants of complex power relations that act in the formation of childhoods; a harmony with the updated international literature (Rosemberg, 1985, p. 17, note 2), articulating the phenomena studied in local contexts with the subsidy of researches published in the main international media; and the treatment of the forms of domination of age, ethno-racial and gender with a deepening of the analysis in their specificities at the same time that they are analyzed in the complexity of their interrelations<sup>7</sup> (in this case, the construction of childhood sifted by hierarchical marks of age, ethno-racial, gender and social class).

Before going on with the analysis on the relations between the axes of inequality, a parenthesis is placed here to point out an aspect of the research on cultural models

5 Regina Pahim Pinto, Esmeralda V. Negrão, Solange Assumpção, Ana Maria Caleiro, Sílvia Lustig, Maria Lúcia Pupo and Nidia Vailati.

6 An example of the analysis of power relations in the very mechanisms of production, the focus of the adult-child hierarchies, can be seen in the article “Eu consumo, tu me consumes” (Rosemberg, 1979c).

7 This double entry relates to the trajectory of the researcher, who has become an academic authority in all three research areas, age, gender, and race-ethnic relations.

that has a precursor character in the sociology of Brazilian childhood and that is strongly present in our discourse, researchers on childhood in Brazil. Analyzing the adult-child power relationship and its crystallizing forms mediated by formal and informal education, Fúlvia critiqued the unequal distribution of power in society “thought and built around and for the adult”<sup>8</sup> (Rosemberg, 1985, p. 24, own translation) and concluded that “In the adult-centered society the child is not. She is a becoming. Her individuality ceases to exist. She is potentiality and promise”<sup>9</sup> (p. 25, own translation). One can observe here a critique of adult-centeredness that was a precursor in the academic and educational debate at the time of its publication (Rosemberg, 1979a, 1979b, 1979c, 1985) and that became part of the vocabulary of educational professionals and pro-childhood activists over the decades. Although criticism of adult-centrism has expanded in academia and in social movements, it continues to have diverse manifestations in educational policies, often formatted by the expectation of the adult to be “forged” and losing sight of the respect and dignity that the little ones are supposed to be guaranteed.

Returning to the discussion about the relations between axes of social domination, in her memorial for “Concurso para Professor Associado da Faculdade de Psicologia da Pontifícia Universidade Católica de São Paulo (PUC-SP)” [Competitive Examination for Associate Professor at the Psychology School of the Pontifícia Universidade Católica de São Paulo (PUC-SP)], in 1993, Fúlvia describes the focus of her intellectual production up to that moment:

The pattern I have been building in my professional life... from a perspective of social transformation. To understand the subordinations of gender, race and age in Brazil, in the dynamics of the interactions between subjects and social institutions, with a view to overcoming them, is what has guided the pattern of the pattern I have been sewing.<sup>10</sup> (Rosemberg, 1993, p. 1, own translation).

This is the design I have sought in this period: to bring to the field of education the debate on gender, race and age subordination; to take to the field the importance of the debate on gender, race and age of debate on education.<sup>11</sup> (Rosemberg, 1993, p. 8, own translation).

8 In the original: “pensada e construída em torno do, e para o adulto”.

9 In the original: “Na sociedade centrada no adulto a criança não é. Ela é um vir a ser. Sua individualidade deixa de existir. Ela é potencialidade e promessa”.

10 In the original: “A trama que venho tecendo em minha vida profissional... numa perspectiva de transformação social. Compreender as subordinações de gênero, raça e idade no Brasil, na dinâmica das interações entre sujeitos e instituições sociais, visando sua superação, é o que tem orientado o padrão da estamparia que tenho costurado”.

11 In the original: “É este o desenho que busquei neste período: trazer para o campo da educação o debate sobre subordinações de gênero, raça e idade; levar para o campo do debate sobre gênero, raça e idade a importância do debate sobre educação”.

In analyzing her own intellectual production, Fúlvia discusses her affiliation to theoretical perspectives that move away from “class reductionism” (Rosemberg, 1993, p. 7), which considered other forms of subordination and the non-reducibility of the dynamics of gender, race, age, and class as relevant as social class. The researcher also states how the search for the understanding of such dynamics is articulated with the search for intervention in the sphere of social policies.

In developing this discussion, Fúlvia Rosemberg (1993) presents data from two of her studies on the subordination of race, gender, and age in Brazilian education, in which she analyzes the expansion of day care in Brazil, articulated with the implementation of a low-cost and low-quality model for poor and black children, such model linked to low working conditions for teachers.<sup>12</sup> Besides the vehement criticism of the harmful impacts derived from the exportation of social policy models to what was called at that historical moment the Third World, her conclusion helps set up a model for understanding the relations between the axes of inequality: “In a way, the social transformation of gender relations can occur to the detriment of children, in a society that is built on and with these multiple subordinations”<sup>13</sup> (Rosemberg, 1993, p. 16, own translation). One observes an example of what Fúlvia came to call non-synchronous (or asynchronous; or heterochrony in Rosemberg, 1993, 1996, 1999, 2001, 2012) relations, a concept she took from feminist Hicks (1981). Also in her memoir, she discusses her work analyzing gender, race, and age relations that she had developed together with Esmeralda Negrão and Edith Piza (then with a doctoral thesis in development), turning to children’s literature as a discursive support that expressed how attempts to break with gender subordinations rested on age and race subordinations: “we are facing active responses to social contradictions, and which evidence, in our perspective, the *non-synchronicity* of both social systems (in relation to the age, gender, and race systems) and individual needs”<sup>14</sup> (Rosemberg, 1993, pp. 20-21, my emphasis, own translation).

According to Hicks’ concept (1981), since societies have not demarcated and recognized rights of the various social segments, or social inequalities affecting them, one cannot assume a synchrony in processes of struggle for equality and in all institutions. The social processes of production of class and gender inequalities are not synchronous.

The analysis of multiple empirical data on the hierarchies observed in school institutions and in educational policies – spaces in which the dynamics of race, gender,

12 The analysis of policies for the expansion of early childhood education followed his production until his last published texts (Rosemberg, 1999, 2013a), including the important study on the care of children in the countryside (Rosemberg & Artes, 2012).

13 In the original: “De certa forma, a transformação social das relações de gênero pode ocorrer em detrimento das crianças, em sociedade que se constrói sobre e com estas múltiplas subordinações”.

14 In the original: “estamos diante de respostas ativas às contradições sociais, e que evidenciam, em nossa perspectiva, a *não sincronia* tanto dos sistemas sociais (no relativo aos sistema de idade, gênero e raça), quanto das necessidades individuais”.



age and class present complexity, contradictions, ambiguities, discontinuities and ruptures that could not be explained by a simple cumulative model – led Rosemberg to propose the use of the concept of non-synchronous movements. The concept makes it possible to better apprehend the conflict games in the various axes of social hierarchy and inter- and intra-institutional tensions. The operation between the various axes of social hierarchy does not always act in a non-linear or cumulative way. “This means that the intersection of these relations may lead to interruptions, discontinuities, alterations, or increases in the original impact of the dynamics of race, class, or gender in a given social or institutional context”<sup>15</sup> (Rosemberg, 1996, p. 59, my emphasis, own translation).

The associative model of social inequalities would therefore be partial and limited to understand the various dynamics of race, gender, age and social class, while the concept of non-synchrony would make it possible to better understand conflicts, tensions and contradictions. Furthermore, “the *intersection* of these relations can lead to ruptures, discontinuities, alterations”<sup>16</sup> (Rosemberg, 1999, p. 10, my emphasis, own translation) and neither individuals nor social movements develop “in perfect synchrony awareness of class, gender, and race”. For example, “the quest to overcome class subordination may ignore or even rely on gender and race subordination. Egalitarian interventions can have diverse impacts on different social segments”<sup>17</sup> (1999, p. 11, own translation). In the 1990s, several of the author’s analyses observed these ruptures and discontinuities between the axes of social inequality and, in this specific article, she analyzed how the policies of expansion of Brazilian early childhood education in that decade were based on the argument of equality for children of lower income classes, but, concretely and contradictorily, led to new processes of exclusion of poor and black children, in addition to, anchored in the ideology of natural female aptitudes, entailing the discrimination of women from lower income classes (Rosemberg, 1999).<sup>18</sup>

Rosemberg (2012, p. 21) therefore added the hypothesis that at the level of life history, social inequalities affect people with different intensities and impacts. Let us observe in the author’s words her considerations about the concept of non-synchronicity (the long quotation is for bringing her conception from her own words):

15 In the original: “Isto significa que a *intersecção* dessas relações pode levar a interrupções, descontinuidades, alterações ou incremento do impacto original das dinâmicas de raça, classe ou gênero em dado contexto social ou institucional”.

16 In the original: “a *intersecção* dessas relações pode levar a rupturas, descontinuidades, alterações”.

17 In the original: “a busca de superar subordinações de classe pode ignorar ou mesmo apoiar-se em subordinações de gênero e raça. Intervenções igualitárias podem ter impactos diversos nos diferentes segmentos sociais”.

18 Related to gender differences, the work of Fúlvia Rosemberg at FCC was also pioneering and was reference projects and publications throughout the decades from 1970 to 2010-2014. It is worth mentioning, also for its pioneering, the analysis on performance differences of girls and boys (Rosemberg, 2001).



In Brazil, the search for a simultaneous understanding of the hierarchies of gender, race and class has often been based on a cumulative model, expecting a linear association between the axes of inequality. This associative model, however, does not account for the complexity and contradictions observed in educational institutions where the dynamics of gender, race, and class are not reducible to each other, often evidencing a non-synchronous movement.

The concept of non-synchronicity enables us to better understand the inter- and intra-institutional interplay of conflicts, tensions, and contradictions: “individuals (or groups) in their relations with political and economic systems do not share the same consciousness or the same needs at the same moment” (Hicks, 1981, p. 221). This means that the *intersection* of these relationships can lead to interruptions, discontinuities, alterations, or augmentation of the original impact of race, class, or gender dynamics in a given social or institutional context. Neither individuals nor social movements develop class, gender, and race consciousness in perfect synchrony. For example, the quest to overcome gender inequalities may ignore, or even rely on, race inequalities. Furthermore, I have been raising as a working hypothesis that in the trajectory of life, a person does not face the different impacts of inequalities at the same time (Rosemberg, 2002). Thus, although the child is born in a society strongly marked by bipolar gender identity, it is not possible to affirm that in western societies gender inequalities occur at the material level from early childhood, unlike what would occur for class and race inequalities.<sup>19</sup> (Rosemberg, 2002, p. 4, own translation).

In social research, the concept is applied to explain various splits and counterpoints that are more complex than, as the quote makes explicit, the cumulative model. In specific social contexts, interests of minority groups – for example, daycare workers – may

19 In the original: “No Brasil, a busca de compreensão simultânea das hierarquias de gênero, raça e classe tem se baseado, muitas vezes, em modelo cumulativo, esperando-se uma associação linear entre os eixos de desigualdade. Tal modelo associativo não dá conta, porém, da complexidade e das contradições observadas nas instituições educacionais onde as dinâmicas de gênero, raça e classe não são redutíveis umas às outras, evidenciando, muitas vezes, um movimento não sincrônico.

O conceito de não-sincronia possibilita apreender melhor o jogo de conflitos, tensões e contradições inter e intra-institucionais: “indivíduos (ou grupos) em suas relações com os sistemas político e econômico não compartilham da mesma consciência ou das mesmas necessidades no mesmo momento” (Hicks, 1981, p. 221). Isto significa que a intersecção destas relações pode levar a interrupções, descontinuidades, alterações ou incremento do impacto original das dinâmicas de raça, classe ou gênero em dado contexto social ou institucional. Nem as pessoas individualmente, nem os movimentos sociais desenvolvem em perfeita sincronia consciência de classe, gênero e raça. Por exemplo, a busca de superação de desigualdades de gênero pode ignorar, ou mesmo apoiar-se, em desigualdades de raça. Além disso, venho levantando como hipótese de trabalho que na trajetória de vida, a pessoa não enfrenta ao mesmo tempo os diferentes impactos das desigualdades (Rosemberg, 2002). Assim, apesar de a criança já nascer em sociedade fortemente marcada por identidade de gênero bipolar, não é possível afirmar que nas sociedades ocidentais ocorram desigualdades de gênero no plano material desde a pequena infância, diferentemente do que ocorreria para desigualdades de classe e de raça”.

override the interests of infants. The cumulative idea that a poor black girl would have a sum of inequality vanishes when the context is school education, since girls get better results in schools at all stages and, therefore, in this context being a girl is an advantage.

In a doctoral work oriented<sup>20</sup> by Fúlvia Rosemberg and produced by Edith Piza (1995), the approach was based on the thesis of the non-synchronicity between the axes of inequality, and the selected object was the construction of black characters by white writers of children's literature, that is, it operated in the confluence of the subordination of gender, race and age. The results showed that white women writers of children's literature have in their trajectories and narratives aimed at the children's audience characteristics that break with gender subordinations, while at the same time leaning on race subordinations.

Rosemberg used the concept to discuss, especially, the role of social movements, pointing out that both women's and black movements often act socially in an adult-centric way. Her critiques were directed in particular at women's movements and the ways in which policies for young children were often downplayed by such movements (Rosemberg, 2012, pp. 20-22). In other words, her critiques were often the self-critique of an engaged feminist.

Linked to these manifestations of non-synchronicity, Fúlvia critically discusses the role of social movements. The perspectives and proposals of social movements are relevant and should be brought into the analysis, but taken in a critical way she said, not in an idyllic perspective about their propositions as truths or dogmas. On the one hand, social movements represent those who act socially to fight inequalities and their point of view should be relevant to the research, to the power relations established, to the recognition of the tensions and criticisms they formulate for inequalities and policies. On the other hand, one should consider the power relations within movements and between movements. Asynchronous possibilities can make specific movements lean towards advocacy that can be on one emancipatory axis but on another conservative; the analyses/interpretations of intellectuals linked to social movements can be partial, detached or even contradictory with research data.

Fúlvia recognizes the role of knowledge accumulated by social actors in relation to the practices of subordination to which they have been subjected and the forms of intervention they propose in their political activism. For example, in the early 1990s,

20 It is worth mentioning here the orientation form adopted by Fúlvia in most of the orientations, with very active participation in the literature review, in the choice of objects and organization of integrated projects, in the definition of problems, in the methodological definitions, in the analysis of results when, as a rule, she kept an immersion period in the thesis or dissertation and worked with primary data. In my opinion, studying the dissertations and theses she supervised brings important data about Fúlvia's concerns and research questions throughout her career as a researcher, such as her involvement with the mentoring activity.

the study group developed at the Núcleo de Estudos de Gênero, Raça e Idade [Center for Gender, Race, and Age Studies] (Negri – PUC-SP) had the proposition of research training for black militancy cadres. Fúlvia describes that the discussions and the active participation of black women influenced her understanding of race relations in intersection with gender.

Otherwise, her criticism was directed at the feminist and black movements when they acted (or omitted themselves) in relation to inequalities on other axes. Several times such criticism turned to the adult-centricity of women's movements or black movements (Rosemberg, 2012), especially for acting, even in agendas related to educational policies, disregarding early childhood education.

Fúlvia Rosemberg (2002, 2015), when presenting the concept of non-synchrony, informs about its source in Hicks (1981) and states that the concept has been used in her approach to the interactions between gender, race and age relations. Reviewing the articles in the SciELO<sup>21</sup> database, only one study was found that uses the concept of non-synchronicity, this one authored by Fúlvia Rosemberg and Leandro Andrade (2008), which deals with the tension between race/ethnicity and gender in affirmative action. Using the keywords "race" and "gender", 257 references were located. Examining this production, it can be seen that most of the articles do little to articulate the subordination of race and gender beyond the simple idea of summation; the analyses rarely go beyond the cumulative model; they are mainly descriptive analyses of inequalities in different axes, with limited establishment of relationships. This review of the bibliography available in the most prestigious scientific journals in Brazil provides subsidies to affirm that the analysis proposed by Rosemberg (1996, 2002, 2015) understanding subordination as non-synchronous allows for the apprehension of social contradictions. At the same time, it is observed that the analysis performed by the author is significant, especially considering the set of Brazilian publications. Still, checking this literature it is noticeable that age relations are treated in a minority way in relation to gender and race, which would be a new manifestation of adult-centrism in the academic field.

### **Criticism of white as the norm of humanity**

Another contribution of the researcher Fúlvia Rosemberg selected for discussion is the concept of "white normativity". Once again the use of a concept with innovative character and relevant to social research in Brazil was found.

21 Review done up to the 2015 period.

Again in the research “cultural models in Brazilian children’s and youth literature”<sup>22</sup> (Rosemberg, 1979a, 1979b, 1985, own translation), when summarizing the results concerning Indians and Blacks, the author stated

Among the latent forms of discrimination against non-whites, perhaps the denial of their right to human existence – to be – is the most constant. Because of his condition, his attributes are taken as universal. Whiteness is the normal, neutral condition of humanity: non-whites are the exception... The neutrality of white also appears in the illustration, when segments of a body part are used as a symbol of humanity (the index finger pointing the direction, the hand representing a person, etc.): in these cases, the color is always the same, the white always present. It is important to note that this paradigmatic whiteness is not restricted to the fictional universe present in the text, as it is extended to humanity outside the narrative: for example, in the lines issued by the narrator and intended for the child reader, the child model, when explicitly stated, is white.<sup>23</sup> (Rosemberg, 1985, pp. 81-83, own translation).

In a period when studies on whiteness<sup>24</sup> were little developed in the international literature and, in Brazil, little entered social research,<sup>25</sup> Fúlvia placed the concept at the center of her analysis of racial hierarchies in the country.

Similarly to Brazil, the international literature of the period dealt little with whites composing a “race”, but the criticism of whites as a model of humanity had already

22 In the original: “modelos culturais na literatura infanto-juvenil brasileira”.

23 In the original: “Dentre as formas latentes de discriminação contra o não-branco, talvez seja a negação de seu direito à existência humana – ao ser – a mais constante: é o branco o representante da espécie. Por esta sua condição, seus atributos são tidos como universais. A branquidade é a condição normal e neutra da humanidade: os não-brancos constituem exceção... A neutralidade do branco também aparece na ilustração, quando segmentos de uma parte do corpo são usados como símbolo de humanidade (o dedo indicador que aponta a direção, a mão representando pessoa, etc.): nestes casos a cor é sempre a mesma, o branco sempre presente. É importante que se note que esta branquidade paradigmática não se restringe ao universo ficcional presente no texto, pois ela é estendida à humanidade exterior à narrativa: por exemplo, nas falas emitidas pelo narrador e destinadas ao leitor infantil, o modelo de criança, quando explicitado, é branco”.

24 In the 1990s the translation of articles by some authors called “resistance theorists” – Michael Apple, Henry Giroux and Peter McLaren – predominantly used the term branquidade [whiteness]. The concept of whiteness was translated as “branquidade” or “branquitude” in Brazilian publications. For example, in Valter Silvério’s article (2002, p. 240), a definition preceded by “branquitude” [whiteness] is presented. Published soon after, the collection of articles organized by Vron Ware (2004) was translated as “branquidade”. In 2002 the article “Branqueamento e branquitude no Brasil” [Whitening e whiteness in Brazil] by Maria Aparecida da Silva Bento was published in a collection she organized, heavily grounded in the North American social psychology (for example in the works of Janet Helms), using the concept of “branquitude” to analyze the racial identity of white Brazilians. We situate the high impact of these articles by Silvério (2002) and Bento (2002) as a landmark that expands the use of “branquitude”, with the relative diminution of “branquidade”. It should be noted that the initial debate and dissemination of the concept in Brazilian social research was marked by publications of two former students of Fúlvia Rosemberg: Maria Aparecida Silva Bento (1992) and Edith Piza (1995).

25 We can cite as an example of a manifestation in Brazilian sociology a specific work by Alberto Guerreiro Ramos (1957), in which the place of the “white” in Brazilian society is analyzed.

been made by Du Bois (1999) and was incorporated into some studies. In the ERIC<sup>26</sup> database 471 publications on whiteness were found, with the two oldest available – Citron (1969) and Steelman and Murphy (1972) – performing the critique of white normativity. The hypothesis here is that Rosemberg (1985), when discussing gender and race subordination in her studies, uses the insights of the American and French research of the 1970s that make analysis on normativity. The theme of white normativity in the international literature (from consultations carried out in ERIC, Sociological Abstracts and Periódicos Capes) seems to have fallen into oblivion in the 1980s, returning with force in the 1990s and expanding the publications especially after 2000.

Here we point out the novelty of the concept, which possibly gave little room for interlocution with other Brazilian researchers besides the staff of Fundação Carlos Chagas. In the FCC studies, the concept continued to be operative both in the researches focused on “black education” (Rosemberg, 1985, 2004), and in those related to women’s education, in which it is stated “the difficulty in actually breaking (beyond words and intention) with this model that presupposes that the masculine trajectory is neutral and universal”<sup>27</sup> (Rosemberg et al., 1981, p. 141, own translation).

In Brazil, observing the available literature, the discussion on white normativity also appears in sparse publications in the 1990s and gains strength and amplitude in the 2000s. In a widely cited study on whiteness, Henry Giroux (1999) analyzes the “politics of whiteness” taking as his object the public debate on affirmative policies for blacks in the United States and, with a cultural studies impulse, two film productions.<sup>28</sup> Some observations that Rosemberg had warned about in the discourses she analyzed in her studies (1979a, 1979b, 1985) come very close to Giroux’s claims that “whiteness emerges as a normative basis of success, responsibility, and legitimate authority”<sup>29</sup> (1999, p. 119, own translation) and “is codified as a norm of authority, order, rationality, and control”<sup>30</sup> (p. 117). The operation that the author develops is very similar to the one that Rosemberg had already performed in the passage quoted above, affirming whiteness as a naturalized social norm that sits at the center of the white-black hierarchization. That is, the dissemination of the critical analysis of white normativity carried out by the “resistance theorists” helps to resume criticisms formulated by Rosemberg (1979a).

26 Survey done in 2015.

27 In the original: “a dificuldade em se romper de fato (além da palavra e da intenção) com esse modelo que pressupõe ser a trajetória masculina neutra e universal”.

28 The movies *Dangerous Minds* (from 1995) and *Suture* (from 1993) analyzed by Giroux (1999, pp. 115 ff.).

29 In the original: “a branquidade emerge como base normativa de sucesso, responsabilidade e autoridade legítima”.

30 In the original: “é codificada como uma norma de autoridade, ordem, racionalidade e controle”.

It is in the 2000s that the criticism of “white normativity” has new impact in the international bibliography and begins to be integrated in some studies in Brazil, in which they are used for the analysis of media discourses (Silva & Rosemberg, 2008; Santos, 2011), advertising (Silva et al., 2012), textbooks (Rosemberg et al. 2003; Silva, 2006; Nascimento, 2010; Silva et al., 2012) and children’s literature (Araujo, 2012; Silva, 2014). Such studies and the adoption of the critique of white normativity were episodic in the 1990s, became more frequent in the 2000s, and have multiplied, somewhat fostered by the greater entry of black men and women into graduate school and social research who, bearing the marks of their life formation and the weight of racism in their trajectories, elected research problems that focus on white normativity as a way to establish racial hierarchy.

It is worth noting that affirmative policies in graduate studies were an area of activism of Fúlvia Rosemberg, who coordinated the Programa Internacional de Bolsas de Pós-Graduação [International Graduate Fellowship Program] (FCC and Ford Foundation; 2001-2013) and the Programa Equidade na Pós-Graduação [Graduate Equity Program] (FCC and Ford Foundation, 2010-2014). In other words, the formation of a black intellectuality that enabled the expansion of research on the theme, the incorporation, use, tensions and criticism of concepts that Fúlvia Rosemberg was a precursor in spreading in Brazil had its energy also in the opening of opportunities for the formation of activist intellectuals of racial-ethnic minorities, gender and sexual diversity, regional.

The concept that was announced in the research “Modelos culturais na literatura infanto-juvenil brasileira” [“Cultural models in Brazilian children’s literature”] (Rosemberg, 1979a, 1979b, 1985) was incorporated to the debate between 20 and 30 years after its first publication, becoming more expressive in Brazilian social research and has borne good fruits, that is, it has its analytical potential affirmed and takes an important place in the analysis of normativities and in the academic debate.

## Final words

As a synthesis of the analysis proposed on some dimensions of Fúlvia Rosemberg’s work, some general notes can be emphasized: her work, including several articles from the 1970s and 1980s, is of conceptual and methodological interest, many times for its innovative character, many times for the analytical potential of the concepts with which it operates. By bringing to analysis the concepts of “non-synchrony” of social subordinations, “normative whiteness” and “adult-centric society”, the aim is to point out the actuality and potential that the Rosembergian approach offers us.



The study of her work reveals that the author was a precursor, in Brazilian social research, in the critical analysis of white, male, and adult normativities, as well as in the discussion about the intersections of the social hierarchies of race, gender, and age in educational policies and practices, and about the complexity, ambiguities, and contradictions among the different systems of social hierarchy. The concepts she mobilizes and the form of analysis that crosses data from different sources keep vivid the interest of her work for the analysis of age, race, gender, and social class inequalities in Brazilian education.

Her work in the International Graduate Fellowship Program and in the Graduate Equity Program was marked by dialogue and joint struggle for racial, gender and LGBT equality, with constant interaction with activists/fellows, bringing more sharply to the political struggle the demands for participation in academia and the valorization of knowledge production by activists, black women, indigenous and quilombolas (see Rosemberg, 2013b; Silvério et al., 2011; Anjos et al., 2011).

To conclude this article, we point out the importance of critique and conflict, so dear to the researcher. The concepts she mobilized to combat social inequalities were related to the understanding of how research is inserted in the formulation of policy agendas, as well as in their execution. In her trajectory research was used as an instrument in the struggle for equality, and some expressions of this can be indicated: her insistence that our methodological descriptions be very detailed, aiming at the possibility of replication of the studies by social minorities; her daily struggle for the execution of affirmative policies in graduate studies, incorporating ethno-racial minorities, black women, LGBT activists in the processes of knowledge production; her criticism of the management of the multilaterals that became essentially directed by economists; and the use of quantitative research as a way of countering the hierarchical relations established by such agencies. Many times Rosemberg warned us: these people understand only this language and only with competent handling of these data will we have arguments to counter them. We conclude by demarcating this point. The metaphor Caliban never fit so well! Shakespeare's character is the one who, in front of the colonizer, learns his language, but explicitly warns him: "I learn his language to wound him". This metaphor, used by some literary scholars to point out resistance through conflict, transpires in the trajectory of our warrior.

Iansã mobilizes various weapons against injustice. Our Iansã Fúlvia Rosemberg mobilized research as a weapon against social injustices. Let us do justice to her legacy!

## References

Anjos, R. S. A., Rosemberg, F., & Souza, L. A. F. (Orgs.). (2011). *Terra, território e sustentabilidade*. Contexto. [https://www.fcc.org.br/livros/terra\\_sustentabilidade.pdf](https://www.fcc.org.br/livros/terra_sustentabilidade.pdf)



- Araujo, D. C. (2012). Ideologia e racismo: Análise de discurso sobre a recepção de leituras de obras infanto-juvenis. *Revista da ABPN*, 3(7), 85-100. <http://abpnrevista.org.br/revista/index.php/revistaabpn1/article/view/365/337>
- Bento, M. A. S. (1992). *Resgatando a minha bisavó: Discriminação racial no trabalho e resistência na voz dos trabalhadores negros* [Dissertação de mestrado em Psicologia Social]. Pontifícia Universidade Católica de São Paulo.
- Bento, M. A. S. (2002). Branqueamento e branquitude no Brasil. In M. A. S. Bento, & I. Carone (Orgs.), *Psicologia social do racismo*. Vozes.
- Campos, M. M. M. (2015). Andarilha que era. In A. Artes, & S. Unbehaum. (Orgs.), *Escritos de Fúlvia Rosemberg* (pp. 153-157). Cortez Editora.
- Citron, A. F. (1969). *The rightness of whiteness: The world of the white child in a segregated society*. Michigan-Ohio Regional Educational Laboratory.
- Du Bois, W. E. B. (1999). *As almas da gente negra* (Heloísa T. Gomes, Trad.). Lacerosa.
- Giroux, H. (1999). Por uma pedagogia e política da branquitude. *Cadernos de Pesquisa*, (107), 97-132. <http://www.scielo.br/pdf/cp/n107/n107a04.pdf>
- Hicks, E. (1981). Cultural marxism: Nonsynchrony and feminist practice. In L. Sargent (Org.), *Women and revolution* (pp. 219-237). Southend Press.  
[https://books.google.com.br/books?id=IAyxuTMT-tkC&printsec=frontcover&hl=pt-BR&source=gbs\\_ge\\_summary\\_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false](https://books.google.com.br/books?id=IAyxuTMT-tkC&printsec=frontcover&hl=pt-BR&source=gbs_ge_summary_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false)
- Nascimento, S. L. (2010). Ilustração de personagens negros e brancos em livros didáticos de ensino religioso do ensino fundamental. *Revista Pistis Praxis*, (2), 417-433.  
[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/321281104\\_Ilustracao\\_de\\_personagens\\_negros\\_e\\_brancos\\_em\\_livros\\_didaticos\\_de\\_Ensino\\_Religioso\\_do\\_ensino\\_fundamental](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/321281104_Ilustracao_de_personagens_negros_e_brancos_em_livros_didaticos_de_Ensino_Religioso_do_ensino_fundamental)
- Piza, E. (1995). *O caminho das águas: Estereótipos de personagens femininas negras em obras para jovens de escritoras brancas* [Tese de doutorado]. Pontifícia Universidade Católica de São Paulo.
- Ramos, A. G. (1957). *Introdução crítica à sociologia brasileira*. Editorial Andes.
- Rosemberg, F. (1969). *La famille dans les livres pour enfants* [Tese de doutorado em Psicobiologia Infantil]. Université de Paris.
- Rosemberg, F. (1979a). *Análise dos modelos culturais na literatura infanto-juvenil brasileira*. Fundação Carlos Chagas.  
[http://acervo.fcc.org.br:9090/ABCD\\_DOCS/PROJETO/integra/PR16385.pdf](http://acervo.fcc.org.br:9090/ABCD_DOCS/PROJETO/integra/PR16385.pdf)
- Rosemberg, F. (1979b). Discriminações étnico-raciais na literatura infanto-juvenil brasileira. *Revista Brasileira de Biblioteconomia e Documentação*, 12(3/4), 155-166. <http://cedoc.crpssp.org.br/handle/1/2812;jsessionid=2D03E97F2B9E39B9399335A1FA5B16AC>
- Rosemberg, F. (1979c). Eu consumo, tu me consomes. *Cadernos de Pesquisa*, (31), 41-48.  
<http://publicacoes.fcc.org.br/ojs/index.php/cp/article/view/1663/1650>
- Rosemberg, F. (1985). *Literatura infantil e ideologia*. Global.

- Rosemberg, F. (1993). *Memorial para concurso de Professora Titular na Pontifícia Universidade Católica de São Paulo*. Pontifícia Universidade Católica de São Paulo.
- Rosemberg, F. (1996). Educação infantil, classe, raça e gênero. *Cadernos de Pesquisa*, (96), 58-65. <http://publicacoes.fcc.org.br/ojs/index.php/cp/article/view/814/824>
- Rosemberg, F. (1999). Expansão da educação infantil e processo de exclusão. *Cadernos de Pesquisa*, (107), 7-40. <https://www.scielo.br/pdf/cp/n107/n107a01.pdf>
- Rosemberg, F. (2001). Educação formal, mulher e gênero no Brasil contemporâneo. *Revista Estudos Feministas*, 9(2), 515-540. <https://www.scielo.br/j/ref/a/PRcJxQzSFvnScngFpmcgKGR/?format=pdf&lang=pt>
- Rosemberg, F. (2002). *Desigualdades de gênero e raças no sistema educacional brasileiro*. Texto preparado para a Conference on Ethnicity Race, Gender and Education, Lima, Peru, October. Mimeo. (56 p.)
- Rosemberg, F. (2004). Desigualdades de raza y género en el sistema educacional brasileño. In D. Wincler, & S. Cueto, *Etnicidad, raza, género y educación en América Latina* (pp. 239-282). PREAL. [http://americalatinagenera.org/newsite/images/cdr-documents/publicaciones/educacion\\_etnicidad\\_raza\\_y\\_genero.pdf](http://americalatinagenera.org/newsite/images/cdr-documents/publicaciones/educacion_etnicidad_raza_y_genero.pdf)
- Rosemberg, F. (2012). A criança pequena e o direito a creche no contexto dos debates sobre infância e relações raciais. In M. A. S. Bento (Org.), *Educação infantil, igualdade e diversidade: Aspectos políticos, jurídicos, conceituais* (pp. 11-46). Centro de Estudos de Relações de Trabalho e Desigualdade. [http://portal.mec.gov.br/index.php?option=com\\_docman&view=download&alias=11283-educa-infantis-conceituais&category\\_slug=agosto-2012-pdf&Itemid=30192](http://portal.mec.gov.br/index.php?option=com_docman&view=download&alias=11283-educa-infantis-conceituais&category_slug=agosto-2012-pdf&Itemid=30192)
- Rosemberg, F. (2013a). Políticas de educação infantil e avaliação. *Cadernos de Pesquisa*, 43(148), 44-75. <https://www.scielo.br/j/cp/a/rCQYvKxLbt68jLbyvmy3bwh/?format=pdf&lang=pt>
- Rosemberg, F. (2013b). *Ação afirmativa na pós-graduação: O Programa Internacional de Bolsas da Fundação Ford na Fundação Carlos Chagas* (Textos FCC, 36). Fundação Carlos Chagas. <http://publicacoes.fcc.org.br/index.php/textosfcc/article/view/2454>
- Rosemberg, F. (2015). Ação afirmativa no ensino superior brasileiro: Tensão entre raça/etnia e gênero. In A. Artes, & S. Unbehaum (Orgs.), *Escritos de Fúlvia Rosemberg* (pp. 107-123). Cortez.
- Rosemberg, F., & Andrade, L. F. (2008). Ação afirmativa no ensino superior brasileiro: A tensão entre raça/etnia e gênero. *Cadernos Pagu*, (31), 419-438. <https://www.scielo.br/j/cpa/a/WQLcSk8YrQTJL3cgdtbvnwG/abstract/?lang=pt>
- Rosemberg, F., & Artes, A. (2012). O rural e o urbano na oferta de educação para crianças de até 6 anos. In M. C. Barbosa, J. Pasuch, F. L. A. Leal, I. O. Silva, M. N. M. Freitas, & S. S. Albuquerque (Coords.), *Oferta e demanda de educação infantil no campo* (pp. 13-69). Evangraf.

- Rosemberg, F., Bazilli, C., & Silva, P. V. B. (2003). Racismo em livros didáticos brasileiros e seu combate. *Educação e Pesquisa*, 29(1), 125-146. <http://www.scielo.br/pdf/ep/v29n1/a10v29n1.pdf>
- Rosemberg, F., Pinto, R., & Negrão, E. (1981). *A educação da mulher no Brasil*. Fundação Carlos Chagas.
- Santos, W. O. (2011). Racismo discursivo na mídia: Análise a partir dos personagens presentes nos cadernos dominicais de jornais impressos. *Revista da ABPN*, 2(4), 103-124. <http://abpnrevista.org.br/revista/index.php/revistaabpn1/article/view/323/297>
- Scott, J. W. (2005). O enigma da igualdade. *Revista Estudos Feministas*, 13(1), 11-30. <https://doi.org/10.1590/S0104-026X2005000100002>
- Silva, P. V. B. (2006). Racismo discursivo e avaliações do Programa Nacional do Livro Didático. *Intermeio*, 12(24), 6-29. <https://periodicos.ufms.br/index.php/intm/article/view/2553/1790>
- Silva, P. V. B. (2014). One more story: Racial relations and stereotypes in Brazilian literature. *Diogenes*, 59(3-4), 168-180. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0392192114538926>
- Silva, P. V. B., & Rosemberg, F. (2008). Brasil: Lugares de negros e brancos na mídia. In T. Dijk (Org.), *Racismo e discurso na América Latina* (pp. 73-118). Contexto.
- Silva, P. V. B., Santos, W. O., & Rocha, N. G. (2012). Negras(os) e brancas(os) em publicidades de jornais paranaenses. *Intercom – RBCC*, 35(2), 149-168. <http://www.scielo.br/pdf/interc/v35n2/08.pdf>
- Silva, S. J. (2009). *O canto de Oyá no Candomblé Keto: Um estudo dos aspectos culturais e etnomusicológicos* [Dissertação de mestrado]. Universidade Federal da Bahia. [https://repositorio.ufba.br/ri/bitstream/ri/10834/1/dissert\\_Sara%20da%20Silva.pdf](https://repositorio.ufba.br/ri/bitstream/ri/10834/1/dissert_Sara%20da%20Silva.pdf)
- Silvério, V. R. (2002). Ação afirmativa e o combate ao racismo institucional no Brasil. *Cadernos de Pesquisa*, (117), 219-246. <http://www.scielo.br/pdf/cp/n117/15560.pdf>
- Silvério, V. R., Pinto, R. P., & Rosemberg, F. (Orgs.). (2011). *Relações raciais no Brasil: Pesquisas contemporâneas*. Contexto. <https://www.fcc.org.br/fcc/fcc-publicacoes/relacoes-raciais-no-brasil-pesquisas-contemporaneas>
- Steelman, C. A., & Murphy, M. J. (1972). *Increasing compatibility in desagregated schools between elementary educational practices, the curriculum, and the concept of whiteness*. San Francisco School District, CA.
- Ware, V. (Org.). (2004). *Branquidade: Identidade branca e multiculturalismo*. Garamond.

## Data availability statement

The data underlying the research text are reported in the article.

## How to cite this article

Silva, P. V. B. (2022). Fúlvia Rosemberg, Iansã, Caliban. *Cadernos de Pesquisa*, 52, Article e08072. <https://doi.org/10.1590/198053148072>