Reflection Article/Essay

Whiteness and the dimensions of the unsaid in/of occupational therapy

A branquitude e as dimensões do não-dito na/da terapia ocupacional

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Abstract

The reflections presented in this essay are part of the investigation path of the research 'Racism, Whiteness and the production of knowledge of/in Occupational Therapy', a composition of different fluxes, experiences, constructions and encounters, mobilized by the technical, ethical, aesthetic and political contribution to the debate on Racism, putting into analysis the Whiteness of/in Occupational Therapy. Under the clues of the cartographic intervention research, this work had as main material, analyzes that emerged from the BranquiTOde study group, organized to discuss the proposed theme. Inspired by the "Critical Studies of Whiteness" we challenge ourselves to look at our own whiteness and our own racism as white women, researchers, and occupational therapists, and from this inflection several debates were made about racism and whiteness that engender the relations of/in the field. By deepening the understanding processes on how hegemonic systems produce and reproduce racist colonial logics, based on the idea of racial supremacy of white people, we propose some reflections on the ways in which exclusions and inequalities directly interfere in the human activities of people and collectives of subjects. that we have the privilege of accompanying in the most different fields, practices with Occupational Therapy. Furthermore, we understand that producing questions about racial inequalities in the University/Occupational Therapy, means questioning the epistemologies of the fields of knowledge and opening cracks to other cosmovisions, other perspectives of the world, of life, of the university, is a bet on the invention of others. ways of producing practices, knowledge, and possible worlds.

Keywords: Occupational Therapy, Race, Racism, Epistemology.

Resumo

As reflexões apresentadas neste ensaio trazem um recorte do percurso de investigação da pesquisa "Racismo, branquitude e a produção de conhecimento

da/na terapia ocupacional", uma composição de diferentes fluxos, experiências, construções e encontros, mobilizadas pelo compromisso técnico, ético, estético e político de contribuir com o debate sobre o racismo, colocando em análise a branquitude da/na terapia ocupacional. Sob as pistas da pesquisa intervenção cartográfica, este trabalho teve como principal material as análises que emergiram do grupo de estudos BranquiTOde, organizado para debater sobre a temática proposta. Suleadas pelos "Estudos Críticos da Branquitude", desafiamo-nos a olhar para nossa própria branquitude e nosso próprio racismo enquanto mulheres brancas, pesquisadoras e terapeutas ocupacionais, e, com base nessa inflexão, foram feitos diversos debates sobre o racismo e a branquitude que engendram as relações do/no campo. Ao aprofundar os processos de compreensão sobre como os sistemas hegemônicos produzem e reproduzem lógicas coloniais racistas, baseadas na ideia de supremacia racial das pessoas brancas, propomos algumas reflexões sobre de que maneiras as exclusões e desigualdades interferem diretamente nas atividades humanas das pessoas e coletivos dos sujeitos que temos o privilégio de acompanhar nos mais diferentes campos, práticas com a terapia ocupacional. Ademais, compreendemos que produzir questionamentos sobre as desigualdades raciais na universidade/terapia ocupacional significa questionar as epistemologias dos campos de conhecimento e abrir frestas para outras cosmovisões, outras perspectivas de mundo, de vida, de universidade, sendo uma aposta na invenção de outros modos de produzir ciência e epistemologias.

Palavras-chave: Terapia Ocupacional, Raça, Racismo, Epistemologia.

Worse than a voice that is silent/Is a silence that speaks

Martha Medeiros

The Silence and the Echo

Martha Medeiros teases. We echo this provocation to the entire academic field and, in this essay, especially, we call on occupational therapy to reflect on its know-how-feelings, by bringing to an audible frequency the silences and silencing that also make up our history. In this movement, we put in the amplifiers some historical markers of the profession, its process of constitution and expansion, from the vibrations emitted by the critical studies of whiteness.

Some acoustics and their vibrations were captured in the course of investigation of the research "Racism, whiteness and the production of knowledge of/in occupational therapy"[1], a composition of different fluxes, experiences, constructions and encounters, mobilized by the technical, ethical, aesthetic and political commitment to contribute to the debate on Racism, analyzing the whiteness of/in occupational therapy. In the ongoing trajectory, it is challenged to look at the structural racism that sustains all of society, including the University and the fields

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[1] The research "Racism, whiteness and the production of knowledge of/in occupational therapy" is part of a postdoctoral internship at the Department of Occupational Therapy and at the Postgraduate Program in Occupational Therapy at the Federal University of São Carlos – PPGTO/UFSCar held between March 2021 and March 2022.

of knowledge in different areas, as well as the Brazilian scientific production, which rose and remains sustained by colonialism and by whiteness. Based on this, "ourselves" are placed at the center of the analyses, cis, white women, the majority in occupational therapy, who engender the relations of/in the field. Producing based on a critical perspective means raising awareness through self-criticism.

To do so, we followed the tracks of the silences, of the unsaid in/of occupational therapy, "It is the silence that speaks", which echoed and pointed out some paths to follow with the reflections and analyses. The silences and silencings appeared in many ways, as we will present throughout this essay, and, in this sense, we agree that it is necessary to talk about. Break the silence. Point out the silences. Saying the historically unspoken about/in occupational therapy.

Production of Sound Waves

This essay derives from reverberations in the production of the research "Racism, whiteness and the production of knowledge of/in Occupational Therapy", which aimed to bring together critical studies of whiteness and occupational therapy. However, there is a "primary" objective for this research – its first flux –, which mobilizes the researchers' arrival in this field of debate, and involves the desire/objective/need to look at their own whiteness, bring it to light. the center of the analysis and studying racism from within themselves. We find ourselves in this plot, as white women, with professional and academic trajectories of progressive and critical positions in relation to social injustices and living conditions. A course of action in public services engaged in the implementation and effectiveness of public policies, guided by the discourses of struggle for the reduction of inequalities and social exclusion. For a long time, the analyzes focused on class conditions and the reduction of the subjects' social vulnerabilities, with some data related to gender, and very little, or almost nothing, in these analyzes considered issues and ethnic-racial relations.

Not looking at and not facing the issue, bringing to the debate the problems arising from racial inequalities in our analyses, research and practices accompanied the trajectory of silence and silencing of the profession itself, which has been confronted by the voices, especially of black students, who arrive to the university and occupational therapy courses, especially through Law n. 12,711 of August 2012, the Quota Law (Brasil, 2012). This law established a period of up to the year 2016 for public universities to allocate half of their vacancies, in the selection processes, to students who graduated from public schools, in addition to considering ethnic-racial issues and the social class. It is important to emphasize that this law is the result of the historical struggle of social movements, black movements, black feminists, voices that have been displacing the University and bringing with them other epistemologies, other cosmovisions, and that provoked/provoke in us, as researchers, a dive into the studies on race and racism, structural racism, intersectionality, colonialism and whiteness.

In addition, black and black occupational therapists themselves, their studies, practices and research focused on race relations have produced about and with the black population - these people and their collectives have been protagonists in this

movement to break the silence in around the racism of/in Occupational Therapy. Therefore, many of our concerns to reflect on whiteness in the countryside arise based on the knowledge produced and the tensions provoked by these experiences on the topic of racism (Melo & Cruz, 2022; Pereira, 2022; Ambrosio & Silva, 2022; Ambrosio, 2020; Costa et al., 2020; Farias et al., 2018, 2020; Sousa, 2021).

Displaced by such questions, this research was composed of different lines and forces, which under the tracks of cartographic intervention research assumes that every research is a political act (Rocha & Aguiar, 2003). In this essay, we present an excerpt with some reflections produced based on this cartography, which emerged from the study group BranquiTOde, a group organized with the objective of reflecting and debating the theme of whiteness and occupational therapy. The meetings took place remotely, synchronously, fortnightly, lasting two hours, from April to September 2021, totaling 11 meetings. The group was composed of seven people, four occupational therapists, two occupational therapy students and an artist involved in research groups and projects with occupational therapy.

The reflections were raised based on the reading of Brazilian authors who debate the issue of whiteness in Brazil, such as Maria Aparecida da Silva Bento, Lia Vainer Shucman and Lourenço Cardoso. Under these lenses, we sought to analyze the engenderings of whiteness that reverberate in the construction of practices and knowledge of occupational therapy, and, from this, we produced some reflections, presented in this work, on the epistemological constitution of the field in Brazil.

We are interested in raising a debate about the effects of this relationship on the practices and productions of field researchers, turning to a tacitly recognized production as a way of thinking and doing occupational therapy, critically positioned in the struggle to reduce social injustices in Brazil, which organized a whole theoretical and practical contribution around social criticism and in defense of democratic ideals. Faced with this, we seek to produce some reflections on how this field has faced problems related to ethnic-racial issues and racism.

Amplifying Box: Critical Studies of Whiteness

Colonialism and colonialities introduced, in colonized countries, the idea of race associated with a valuation, which places subjects as superior or inferior, according to the race to which each person belongs. In these processes of racialization, white subjects, under the discourses of colonialism, imposed themselves as the race belonging to the top of the pyramid, in order to impose racial supremacy and, with that, produced a series of violences of different orders, in order to maintain the most privileged places in society (Quijano, 2005).

In the circuit of violence, discourses and practices of inferiority were produced for those who do not share the same origin, skin color, phenotype, habits, cultures and, in all difference, those who imposed themselves as the universal standard, the white subjects. In Brazil, specifically, colonial violence turned against indigenous peoples, through a genocide of original peoples, and later, against blacks, kidnapped from African countries and enslaved for more than two hundred years in this country (Nascimento, 2016). This colonization process contributed to the naturalization of the idea of white racial identity as the universal model of humanity, as the standard, at the same time that racial

identities, which do not share the same characteristics as white subjects, are recognized as "others" (Bento 2020; Piza 2020).

Colonialisms and colonialities, bases for the construction and support of whiteness, forged the "Master Narrative of Whiteness", through a set of practices and discourses, produced during the European colonial expansion/invasion, which violently imposed the position of white superiority in different dimensions (Laborne, 2017, p. 92). The effects of this are subjectivities produced from the idea of race and the hierarchization between them, which legitimizes racism and engenders racial and social relations, especially in the Brazilian territory.

We refer to whiteness as "a mode of social behavior, based on a structured situation of power, based on raciality, considered neutral, not named, but sustained by continuously experienced social privileges" (Laborne, 2017, p. 92). It can be understood as the position of systematically privileged groups with regard to material and symbolic resources, initially generated by colonialism and imperialism that remain preserved in contemporary times (Schucman, 2020b). The social position given to subjects with phenotypic traits of European ancestry placed them in a position of advantage, historically constructed, by a narrative that dominated the possible explanations about the differences between Europeans and "the others". A constructed and naturalized narrative that takes white identity as a norm and standard and serves as a "measure and model" for other peoples (Laborne, 2017; Steyn, 2004). Furthermore, it is necessary to be aware of the fact that "the idea of the barbarian black is a European invention" (Césaire, 2020, p. 39).

It is important to recognize the racial identity of white subjects and the set of privileges involved in this social construction, in order to denaturalize the idea of a universal standard and, consequently, its domination over other racial groups (Laborne, 2017). Whiteness is a position of privilege, which places white subjects in a position of advantage and better conditions of access to material and symbolic resources, initiated by colonialism, and preserved over time. For Schucman (2020b), it is important to understand how concrete power structures are built, in which racial inequalities are anchored. In this sense, it is necessary to understand the power relations of whiteness, locating the points and relationships in which it produces effects and materialities in everyday life, that is, thinking about the power of whiteness, linked to a network in which white subjects are exercising, everyday, consciously or unconsciously, small techniques, procedures, mechanisms that constitute localized effects on racial inequalities (Schucman, 2020b).

The author also highlights some characteristics of this position of power that sustains whiteness and, in the form of a question, she presents "invisibility or fantasy of invisibility?" (Schucman, 2020b, p. 62). Shucman shows that, on the one hand, there is a characteristic invisibility of white racial identity, which translates into the lack of perception of the white individual as a racialized being, leading them to collectively share the perception that being a white subject is something "natural and normal", and, consequently, those who have their color highlighted being those who have the visibility of race. On the other hand, Frankenberg (2004) argues that it is not a question of the invisibility of white racial identity, but that it is only seen by some, and not by others; depending on the interests, it is announced or made invisible.

Moreover, invisibility is only possible when a society reaches a high level of white racial supremacy, in which black and indigenous populations are silenced and are not

allowed or empowered to point to white racial identity, in addition to whites not recognizing themselves as subjects. Racialized people, on the contrary, identify themselves as "normal" and the "others" are the ones who need to reach them at an intellectual, moral, aesthetic, economic level, among others (Frankenberg, 2004; Schucman, 2020b). Still on invisibility, there are authors (Cardoso, 2008; Wray, 2004) who point to the tensions of this thought, which can be used as a way of privileging whiteness even more, a way of justifying that the lack of perception of whites, as racialized subjects, it would not allow them to question their privileges. These authors recognize that whiteness is indeed perceptible to whites, and that they can use their privileges precisely because they are aware of them.

Such privileges give white subjects a series of advantageous situations in relation to blacks and indigenous people, and this is not only, as some sociological discourses justify, due to the class conditions that blacks were inserted after the period of enslavement, but, by the fact that whites have social advantages, both with racial oppression and racism, as it is through these mechanisms that the white population has advantages in accessing the most socially desired positions. At this point, it is worth exemplifying the advantages of access to university and graduate school, for example. In addition to a series of material privileges, whiteness has an advantage at a symbolic level, with attributes such as intelligence, beauty, culture, among others, falling on white racial identity, giving these subjects a mode of subjectivation that leads them to have a perception of superiority in relation to blacks and indigenous people (Schucman, 2020b).

Based on this, we understand that colonization and racism have effects on the modes of subjectivation of subjects, black and white, and, therefore, it is a trap to restrict research in the field of racial relations to the black population, because, as Bento points out (Bento, 2020 p. 27), "to avoid focusing on whites is to avoid discussing the different dimensions of privilege", material and symbolic of whiteness. In this sense, whiteness is understood as a position occupied by white subjects, a place that gives them privileged access to resources, material and symbolic, as well as power in relationships, exercised through small techniques, procedures, phenomena, and mechanisms, engendered by social inequalities (Schucman, 2020b).

The privileges of white people, in relation to black people, place them, on a daily basis, in situations of advantage and access. Whiteness was historically supported, and remains socially, on the idea of superiority, regardless of whether these people recognize themselves or manifest themselves consciously or not, all are subjectively produced by these forces, which gives whiteness a place of superiority in society. As a result, white subjects obtain privileges in relationships due to this belonging (Bento, 2020; Schucman, 2020b).

Based on this understanding, critical studies of whiteness began to identify the need to analyze white racial identity as an active element in social relations, marked by European colonialism. Different intellectuals, in different historical and social contexts, pointed to the effects of colonization and racism on the subjectivity of black people and white people (Silva, 2017). These analyzes produced, above all, after the 1990s, in the United States, a shift in studies on race, at a time when the focus of racialized "others" shifted, and they began to focus on the center of what sustains racist relations, including the white subjects, and to analyze this subjectivity based on the notion of race.

This meant displacing white from the idea of the universal, from the standard, and giving it a racialized place, from a constructed subjectivity linked to superiority and presenting the possibility of awareness over the facts.

These studies expanded in different fields of knowledge and in different regions of the world, where whiteness is thought of in a localized way, according to the context in which it is produced. In Brazil, these studies came into play, with greater visibility, from the year 2000 onwards (Cardoso, 2008), but we cannot fail to mention important researchers who, since the mid-1990s, articulated in their analyzes the idea of whitening/whiteness, such as Iray Cardoso, Maria Aparecida Silva Bento, Edith Piza, Liv Sovik. Before that, in 1950, Guerreiro Ramos highlighted in his analyzes the need to debate white racial identity. These first intellectuals and works provided the basis for thinking about the concept of whiteness in Brazilian society, and provoked important conceptual shifts by problematizing social research that was hegemonically conceived based on Eurocentric references, which privileged white racial identity.

It is important to point out, in the field of studies of ethnic-racial relations, that this analytical shift, provoked by critical studies of whiteness, does not minimize the need and importance of research on black people and the subjectivities produced in contexts of racial inequalities and racism, much less conceal the disadvantages imposed on black people in social relations. On the contrary, research on whiteness seeks to denaturalize the idea that only black people are racialized and, with that, enter into white raciality, in order to bring to the analysis the modes of functioning of subjects and relationships in a racialized society, in which supremacy is white (Bento, 2002).

Current research on whiteness presents a greater density of the concept and articulates the construction of a theory (Silva, 2017), based on inflections located in different fields of knowledge. Following in this direction, this essay approaches critical studies of whiteness and occupational therapy, in order to think about the construction of this field of practices and knowledge. With this, it produces some tensions about how whiteness was present in the construction of epistemological knowledge of occupational therapy in Brazil and analyzes the effects of this relationship on the practices and productions of researchers in the field.

Resonance Box: Whiteness and the Production of Knowledge

Institutions are configured as important spaces for sustaining racism and privileges. In this sense, we understand the university as a device that preserves power relations and perpetuates racial inequalities. Such power relations in the academic field, under the lens of critical studies of whiteness, are based on the idea of race – one of the structuring pillars of the University – and are understood as effects of whiteness, intrinsically linked to the history of colonial domination and the construction of Eurocentric perspective of the world. In this context, the Brazilian intelligentsia was produced, based on colonial, Eurocentric knowledge, as a space of white supremacy, which has been perpetuating the privileges of whiteness. In this sense, it is also important to emphasize US imperialism, as well as its doctrines on how to exercise certain ways of life.

Therefore, it is not possible to think about the production ow knowledge of a certain field of knowledge, disentangling the modes of subjectivation of the subjects that produce this knowledge. Studies on whiteness help us think about this subjective production – its pacts – and how they are involved in a structuring and structuring plot, in which thy reproduce, consciously or unconsciously[2], racial inequalities.

In this direction, Bento (2002, p. 55-56) points out how, historically, the white Brazilian elite created strategies to erase the history of blacks from the nation's official historicity, with the aim of maintaining its racial supremacy. Cida Bento says: "silence cannot erase the past". By examining this story, the author develops, based on Freud's psychoanalysis, the idea that there is a set of contents, pacts, contracts and alliances arising from the psychic unconscious, "by means of which subjects connect to each other and to the group set, for overdetermined motives and interests". From this unconscious agreement, the subjects act to maintain the interests of their own group; this she calls "narcissistic pacts".

The university, the intellectual circles as spaces for the reproduction of pacts for the maintenance of material and symbolic privileges of white supremacy, operate through the silence that masks racial inequalities in the social order. University neutrality discourses insist on not recognizing whiteness, masking the pacts and racism that sustain these spaces (Laborne, 2017).

It is important to highlight the chasms where knowledge is produced, by whom it is produced, with what resources, that is, what material and symbolic resources exist to legitimize the knowledge produced. Grosfoguel (2016) states that "epistemic racism/sexism is one of the most important problems in the contemporary world", since it determines the truths, propagates the monopoly of knowledge in the concentration of men from certain countries and regions, in addition to sustaining the forms of maintenance of hegemonic powers.

> The epistemic privilege of Western men over the knowledge produced by other political and geopolitical bodies of knowledge has not only generated cognitive injustice, but has also been one of the mechanisms used to privilege imperial/colonial/patriarchal projects in the world (Grosfoguel, 2016, p. 25).

For Grosfoguel (2016), at least three movements are necessary for us to decolonize the knowledge structures of Western universities. The first would be the recognition of epistemic racism/sexism that constitute the fundamental structure of a genocide/epistemicide implemented by the colonial and patriarchal project, initiated in the 16th century. The second concerns the need to break with the idea of universalism, in which certain hegemonic epistemologies decide and define for everyone. And the third movement is directed towards pluralism, pluri-diverse, expanding the meaning and conceptual possibilities.

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[2] On this topic, Cardoso (2010) developed the concept of critical and uncritical whiteness. The author refers to critical whiteness aimed at white individuals or groups who publicly disapprove of racism, while uncritical whiteness is related to individual or collective whiteness that sustains the argument for white racial superiority.

Occupational Therapy and the Effects of Whiteness: the Law of Silence

In the course of the analyzes of BranquiTOde, when we entered the production in the epistemological production of occupational therapy, under the lens of critical studies of whiteness, we also identified the silence of occupational therapy studies with regard to analyzes focused on racial inequalities. Social inequalities are present and are constantly used to contextualize conditions and ways of life, however, justifications for inequalities and exclusions based on socioeconomic conditions and/or social class often become the only explanation.

Although race and poverty are synonymous in Brazil, this association only reaffirms the unavoidable commitment to the political, economic, and cultural dimensions of the struggle against racial discrimination and racism, associated with the creation of strategies that effectively change the living conditions of Afro-Brazilian and indigenous populations (Carneiro, 2011).

About this, in the light of Bento (2002), we point out this silence, omission and, sometimes, denial as the fundamental trait of whiteness and its narcissistic pacts sustained by occupational therapy.

Recognizing whiteness as a privileged position of power and access to material and symbolic resources of society, which consequently engender social inequalities, points to the importance of recognizing inequalities, arising specifically from racial discrimination, so that it is possible to recognize the place of white subjects, linked to racial discrimination in/in relationships. On the contrary, when inequalities are attributed only to a class problem, without considering the raciality of the context and the privileges involved in engendering relationships, the place of the white subject disappears (Bento, 2002).

We have productions, groups, authors who present theoretical and practical constructions of and in occupational therapy with the debate on the social issue, social inequality, social vulnerability, social transformation, among other dimensions for decades (Barros et al., 2002; Cavalcante et al., 2008; Carleto et al., 2010; Munguba et al., 2018; Duarte, 2016; Bianchi, 2016; Silva, 2019). As pointed out by Barros et al. (2002),

> the social issue has become an intrinsic part of a certain occupational therapy in Brazil based on the criticism elaborated by some occupational therapists in relation to the bases, the fundamentals of their professional action. This occurs as part of a reflection process that focuses on professional performance in total institutions (Barros et al., 2002, p. 96).

In a search for theses and dissertations that have the terms "occupational therapy and whiteness" in their titles, in the Capes Theses and Dissertations catalog, and in the Brazilian Digital Library of Theses and Dissertations, of the Brazilian Institute of Information in Science and Technology, there was no record until the date of completion of this work. It is evident, in the course of the analyzes carried out in the material produced by occupational therapy, such as articles, theses and dissertations, that the criticisms of occupational therapy around social inequalities are already consolidated in the field debate. However, with regard to the analysis of inequalities, focusing on racial inequalities, there is a gap in Brazilian productions.

Relationships between social inequalities associated with racial inequalities are extremely rare. This issue has been present since the beginning of studies on racial inequalities in the 1970s in Brazil. Hasenbalg (1979), on the one hand, already demonstrated how racism maintains the structures of racial inequalities and, on the other hand, how the historical construction elaborated in relation to the phenotypic factor regulates positions in class structures and in the system of social stratification.

> racism is more than an epiphenomenal reflection of the economic structure or a conspiratorial instrument used by the ruling classes to divide workers. Its historical persistence should not be explained as a mere legacy of the past, but as serving the complex and diverse interests of racially superordinate groups in the present (Hasenbalg, 1979, p. 118).

The author already pointed out flaws in Marxist theories, as they were unable to explain racism among lower classes and outside class structures, and in colonial theories, which did not address the relationships between class structure and domination, oppression and racial stratifications (Hasenbalg, 1979).

Provoked by Bento (2002), we consider that the historical erasure in the analyzes, focused on racial inequalities, when inequalities are problematized, attributing them and restricting them to material conditions, camouflages discrimination directly linked to racial inequality. We refer to this as the silence of/in occupational therapy, a condition of the whiteness that sustains the field, which is not seen in the condition that engenders racism and discrimination in everyday life.

The silence around intersectional analyzes based on racial conditions, aimed at black subjects in relation to inequalities in access to material and symbolic privileges, and focused on white subjects, recognizing their legacy in enslavement and without considering the conditions that keep them in a privileged position in different social spaces, has the effect of building a field of practices and knowledge intertwined in the maintenance of privileges, by not even recognizing them.

This very lack of recognition is fed back by the privileges one has as a result of skin color. However, such discourse cannot be used as a justification for conformism and the lack of confrontation with racism, especially when we are talking about the impact of racism on the daily lives of subjects, in a professional context responsible for the production of care, as well as the production of knowledge about people's lives, activities, occupations and their daily lives. Not recognizing privileges is at the center of the debate on racism and whiteness and urgently needs to be recognized, faced, faced and debated – across the board – in all fields of occupational therapy, reiterating its commitment to reducing inequalities in all its facets, beyond the social.

Bento (2002) presents in his studies on whiteness and power in business and government organizations a repetition and persistence of these data, and points out how much professionals, even those responsible for implementing programs to promote equality and fight discrimination, are not recognized as an inseparable part of the scenario of racial discrimination and its mode of operation. About this, we corroborate Bento's analyzes to think about occupational therapy, that this lack of recognition is one of the first symptoms of whiteness in/of the field.

As occupational therapy advanced in its analyzes of inequalities, without bringing the relevance of intersections, especially the racial ones that were silenced, we identified a gap around the different dimensions of white subjects' privileges. Critical studies of whiteness help us to understand that white subjects have the symbolic privilege of whiteness, and this individual is given the right of movement and access that is often denied to black individuals because of their color.

Therefore, we attribute this attempt by occupational therapy to dilute the debate on race, restricting itself to analyzing social class, as a condition that camouflages the roots of inequalities and perpetuates racist systematics. We recognize the large population contingent of white subjects who live in poverty and misery; however, these subjects are not denied symbolic benefits, positive references about themselves, with this, they are able to maintain their self-esteem and self-concept (Bento, 2002).

Moreover, in the field of expectations and projections for the future, the references of success for white subjects are in the media, in aesthetics, in legal and justice processes, in morals, in high positions in companies, in universities, in public power, it is their white peers who occupy these spaces, while, for black subjects, their reference peers, those in conditions of "ascension through work" occupy, in general, the place of servant and subalternity, even though we can recognize numerous advances and ruptures with these established standards. Studies on the situation of poor whites in the United States point out how this subject is considered "less white" because he is in a less financially privileged position, however, he is not classified as black (Wray, 2004).

In this direction, Schucman (2020b, p. 157) presents the appropriations of meanings that society shares about "racial superiority and purity". The author observes how much society has developed a system of hierarchies – silent and camouflaged – that assign a scale of hierarchies, with regard to social status, based on an ideal model of whiteness represented by the subjects she interviewed, such as: tom with very fair skin, straight blond hair, fine features, light eyes and northern European ancestry. The idealization of this whiteness, which operates as a mode of subjectivation, means in the fabric of social relations that, the whiter phenotypically, the greater the advantages of these subjects in social and institutional relations. On the contrary, the closer a person is to black or indigenous stereotypes, the more this body differs from the status attributes defined as "beautiful, desirable and admirable".

Still, about the silences, in the analyzes of occupational therapy in relation to racial inequalities, in dialogue with Bento (2002) it seems that the epistemological production of the field in Brazil developed in solidarity with the conditions of poverty and social injustice, but, as that silences the racial disadvantages caused by racism and, at the same time, produces social inequalities, occupational therapy has remained silent in the face of the logic that engenders the different hierarchical positions of subjects in the social fabric. Thus, as Cardoso (2010) tells us, looking at the multiple aspects of whiteness brings us the dimension of the complexity with which the different forms of privileges obtained by whites in racist practices, sometimes subtle, are established.

One of the relevance of facing this debate to think about the epistemological production of occupational therapy in Brazil is linked to bringing to the scene the diverse racial privileges of researchers in the field, mostly white women. These are criticisms that do not erase the importance of these women for the development of an engaged, critical and socially positioned occupational therapy in favor of those who

suffer social injustices, however, it is urgent to recognize under what logic these analyzes operate - racist - so that the Occupational therapy assumes, in its practices, the discourse that is so often repeated in the field, as a profession of struggle for the rights of those subjects who are marginalized by the system, also together with and from these people and communities.

Cardoso (2010, p. 614) sheds light on how much "middle and upper class white subjects seek to denounce the injustices committed against poor white people". He refers to this as "the union and solidarity of whiteness, which aims to maintain the status quo", that is, the maintenance of the racial privileges of this group even in conditions of poverty, which he defines as a position that is the result of structural racism. As part of this movement, several projects and programs for teaching, research and extension of occupational therapy, in different university institutions, have incorporated the social debate in their production of knowledge, practical and theoretical, consolidating the social field as one of their areas of activity. The expansion of this debate caused important shifts in the philosophical, epistemological, and practical foundations of Brazilian and Latin American occupational therapy (Galheigo, 2014; Ramírez Pulgar & Schliebener Tobar, 2014; Guajardo & Galheigo, 2015; Zango Martín, 2015; Pino & Ulloa, 2016; Guajardo, 2016; Silva et al., 2019).

However, there is much to do, to reflect on. It is necessary to touch the wounds and deepen the processes of understanding about how hegemonic systems produce and reproduce colonial, heterocispatriarchal, capacitist, imperialist, neoliberal capitalist logics and produce exclusions and inequalities that directly interfere in the occupations and human activities of the people and collectives with which we have the privilege of accompanying in the most different fields, practices, and courses of life. They are logics impregnated in ways of life and daily routines that interfere and often define life trajectories, illness processes, experiences and subjectivities that involve all dimensions of life. These processes are often presented for and in occupational therapeutic practices, such as complaints, diagnoses, demands, life stories, whose responses cannot deny, silence, omit, ignore, reproduce, or even support racism, including symbolic and epistemic ones.

Voices to Echo: Final Considerations

Following Ware's (2004) propositions, we understand whiteness as an interconnected global system, but which presents itself with different inflections and implications, depending on the context in which it is produced. In this way, the universalizing analyzes of the experience of whiteness from the metropolitan centers must be questioned (Steyn, 2004), as well as the hegemonic universalist analyzes of knowledge that can lead us into traps.

It should be noted that whiteness is positioned in different, complex, and nuanced ways, with characteristics specific to each context in which it develops. To this end, discussions on occupational therapy and critical studies of whiteness were intertwined as a thematic composition, which is understood as urgent to be transversalized in all practices, institutions, fields, areas of activity and services and not restricted to just certain contexts focused on social debate.

Several studies (Batista et al., 2012; Williams & Priest, 2015; Faustino, 2017; Passos, 2018) show us that, in addition to the social aggravations arising from racial inequalities, the effects of whiteness and racism are factors of physical illness and psychic that need to be thought about, considered and faced in the practices of professionals in different areas, such as collective health, physical, professional and psychosocial rehabilitation, for example.

In this direction, the provocations contained in the trajectory of the research sought to shed light on the power game of racism, present in Brazilian occupational therapy, and to analyze in a localized way the effects of whiteness and its contours in professional daily life. Such an approximation meant looking at our privileges as white researchers, as well as the material and symbolic privileges of a field of knowledge, hegemonically erected by whiteness, and from this recognition open new perspectives for occupational therapy professionals/researchers to assume, in fact, their ethical-political commitment to social justice.

The Critical Studies of Whiteness provided lenses for us to question the epistemological bases of occupational therapy, in particular to a production that is critically engaged and socially positioned in the fight for the reduction of social injustices in Brazil, focusing on the elements of whiteness that cross these practices and discourses in everyday life of/of occupational therapists today.

In addition, the reflections produced during the meetings of whiteness led us to a flux of looking at our whiteness and in several debates we identified situations and ways in which we agree and support racism in everyday life. In this movement, we agreed that at each meeting it was necessary to talk about our own racism, identify situations at work, in studies and in personal life, which whiteness puts us in situations of privilege and, many times, in spaces where people black people cannot even access it due to the barriers and pacts sustained by ourselves.

This recognition, which is by no means easy, has contributed to opening up the many layers of racism that constitute us and, when we face and assume our racism and our privileged places, we identify, in a practical way, which spaces we are inserted, how to be aware to promote changes possible, urgent and necessary, which go through the individual and collective dimension in everyday relationships. As Schucman (2020a, p. 48) tells us, "in order for an anti-racist white movement to exist, it is necessary to consider that whites are racist and that they are in a place of privilege to move against".

Based on this, we raise some questions, which we do not necessarily intend to answer in this essay, but they are provocations that incite a critical reflection and bring clues to new research: what were the theories and racial discourses incorporated in the composition of occupational therapy knowledge? How do the racist theories elaborated by late 19th century medicine[3] reverberated in the constitution of occupational therapy in Brazil? What are the consequences of occupational therapeutic practices, mostly carried out by white women, within a reality in which a large portion of the subjects assisted in public services, the main field of professional activity, are black men and women?

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[3] Like the theories contained in the work of Maranhão physician Nina Rodrigues (1862-1906).

In this tangle of questions, it was intended to draw attention to the regimes of truth historically constructed in Brazil, about racial identity, and how this reverberated in the composition of knowledge and practices of occupational therapy. To this end, we emphasize the importance of field productions, which support socially engaged discourses, but which are silent in the face of racial inequalities, as they do not recognize the specificities of the oppressions suffered by the subjects due to the color of their skin. These are analyzes that help to think about, in what way, the epistemological construction of Brazilian occupational therapy is crossed by the material and symbolic privileges of whiteness, as well as how this is linked to the knowledge and practices of the profession in the present day and in the academic formation itself.

We hope that these provocations are capable of mobilizing the field to think about ethnic-racial relations as an analytical concern transversalized in all fields of occupational therapy, recognizing, in light of the reflections presented, the impact of racism on people's human activities and collective values of the subjects monitored in the different fields and practices of occupational therapy. Thus, we provoked the field and the nuclei to think, for example, about: how to conceive a practice within hospital contexts without considering the color of those who arrive daily at these units, victims of stray bullets and all the violence that plagues black people? Or, how to keep silent in the field of workers' health, for the dismantling of labor rights laws, which affect a huge contingent of black people who suffer most from job insecurity?

Faced with these provocations, we call on all occupational therapists and researchers to be aware of the specificities that affect black subjects, and need to be transversal to practices in different areas of intervention, regardless of theoretical perspectives, taking into account throughout the construction of the therapeutic intervention, racism as a structure of social relations, which permeates existence.

Furthermore, it is understood that assuming occupational therapy as a critically engaged and socially positioned field in the struggle to reduce social injustices in Brazil, but remaining analytically silent about racial inequalities, is a symptom of whiteness that, through its narcissistic pacts, insist on camouflage. Moreover, avoiding focusing on this whiteness operates as a pillar that, within the epistemological production of occupational therapy, perpetuates racial inequalities.

Finally, in the tracks of Pino & Ulloa (2016, p. 425), the entire occupational therapy community is called upon to exercise "epistemic disobedience in contemporary occupational therapy", which means assuming a radical ethical-political-cultural position, in the sense of departing from an understanding that the fundamentals of occupational therapy can be hegemonic and compatible with any reality and context. Based on this, moving towards a pluriversal construction, which means revealing the processes of exclusion, oppression and vulnerability in line with the reality in which it develops, which, in Brazil, is intrinsically connected to ethnic-racial and racist relations inaugurated by European colonialism.

This technical, ethical, aesthetic and political position, on the one hand, runs counter to the hegemonic historical reality of Brazilian occupational therapy, made up of white people, responsible for its epistemological production, based on knowledge imported from the United States and Europe. On the other hand, it continues in constant and persistent flow alongside all those who have tried so hard to break with hegemonic patterns, seeking coherence in the processes of making-think-feeling occupational therapies based on resistance, struggles, meanings and the much-needed transformations. Therefore, producing questions about racial inequalities at the University means questioning the epistemologies of

the fields of knowledge and opening gaps for other cosmovisions, other perspectives of the world, of life, being a bet on the invention of other ways of producing know-how, sciences, and epistemologies.

Acknowledgements

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