

# **The Chronology of The Black Movement in São Paulo, Brazil and Communication Concepts**

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Hi, I'm Rosangela Malachias, PhD in Communication, by ECA-USP Communication and Arts College in the University of São Paulo. I'm also an academic consultant in the Brazil – USA program, Race, Development and Social Segregation. Our class will discuss history chronology of Negro movements in São Paulo, Brazil and we also discuss some of the concepts involved in this chronology in the communication area.

We've considered trans-culture a historical phenomenon that took place in the Americas and in the Caribbean which has been studied by Cuban ethnologist Fernando Ortiz. It defines the cultural shock among Europeans, native people and Africans and it demonstrates adaptation, resistance and simultaneous re-elaboration existing among these movements that occurred along History. We're going to talk about communication and education two interconnected fields that are subject to crises internal crises due to constant need of new procedures and reading of new paradigms.

Moreover when we study Negro movements in Brazil. We'll talking about the communication concept, a methodology concerned with reading and reviewing mediatory messages, by means of mediations. In order to better understand racial relationships in Brazil other utilized concepts are education's four pillars. To learn how to learn. To know the history of the Negro movements. To learn how to do. To learn how to live together. To learn how to be as methodologies for teachers in classrooms.

Interdisciplinary approach is the via used to study racial relationships considered as a common generator theme and other disciplines involving this knowledge. International activism will come about in our chronology through the following concepts redress, or reparations affirmative action, advocacy, empowerment. Redress as compensating policies implemented to correct historical injustices lived by Negro people in the world. The African continent has been expropriated for centuries and this concept will reach Negro militancy in the '80s. Affirmative action that has permeated media lately mainly by the end of the '90s and beginning of 2000 acknowledging that those historically discriminated women, Negroes, native would be entitled to compensating policies.

Empowerment, as a new concept used by the Negro movement militancy as a means to help both feminist movement women in general and Negro population to gain power. And this power would come from knowledge used in their citizenship practice. Advocacy is another concept used by feminist and Negro movements militancy. And it refers to the ability and provision of means to people with political power with media power so that they can constitute lobbies and present claims.

We'll talk about the Negro movement chronology emphasizing the communication issue. Negro resistance has always taken place through "quilombos," "candomblés," but in fact Negro movements in Brazil gained political structure after abolition. We thus have that as a beginning and this communication issue is evident in the Negro press in the city of São Paulo. The Negro press started around 1910, 1915 up to the '50s and the most important men were Correia Leite, Vicente Ferreira. Africa was shown by this Negro press as motherland. There was an ideal reading of what Africa would be. Basically, however, Negro press constituted political activity of mostly Negro autodidactic individuals organized with the support of Negro women who worked as cooks and servants and who had an income and could afford both technically and financially this Negro press.

Education and basic reading and writing appreciation were the main issues for this press constituted in the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century in the city of São Paulo. Also then, many members of the Negro press played a role in the Brazilian Negro Front politically constituted in the '30s. Negro press would show the routine of Negro people in town and the Negro Front would exist in the space where this people were claiming for integration into Brazilian society. Education appreciation and well as the need to teach read and writing to Negroes were the main demands of the Brazilian Negro Front. As to the influence of international movements we have to consider both Negro movement in France in the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> and the pan African movement of Marcus Garvey, in the USA and this movement's strength in England that had influence on Negroes here in Brazil, in the '30s who gathered themselves to politically demand access of the Negro population to politics, education, culture.

In the '30s, basically, 1937 Getúlio Vargas shuts down the Brazilian Negro Front. In the '40s, another space, cultural as well as political will be constituted. It's the Negro Experimental Theater coordinated by Abdias do Nascimento, still alive Senator for Rio

de Janeiro and by the poet Solano Trindade. They founded, in 1944 this theater, with a new reading of the history of Brazil researching Negro presence and with plays that reached the urban outskirts in a new language showing Negroes as leading players of our History. Important artists like Ruth de Souza and Grande Otelo played in the Negro Experimental Theater.

In the '60s we'll have a Negro movement influenced by foreign ones like Cuban Revolution, here in Latin America and the Vietnam war, in the USA. But basically the North-American Negro struggle for civil rights. Martin Luther King's pacifist speech and the speech for a more resistant society by **Malcolm X who created the Black Panthers** are going to influence young Negro militancy in Brazil. **[Please note that Malcolm X did not create the Black Panthers, but was a part of the Muslim organization, The Nation of Islam. Both groups, The Nation of Islam and the Black Panthers took a more militant approach to the struggle for Civil Rights in the United States.]**

In the '70s, we'll have a politically structured Unified Negro Movement that gains the media for the first time right in the period of military dictatorship after a young Negro's murder, Robson da Luz. Negro youngsters took to the streets to protest in front of Teatro Municipal, in São Paulo against Robson's death, literally murdered by police. From then on, the Negro Unified Movement comes about with two main demands: reading and writing teaching, access to education, and jobs. The Unified Negro Movement had a socialist attitude and has always stood for it. Its members would fight for African independency. Many Brazilians went to Angola. And the contact with African militancy will lead this cultural ideology of Africa appreciation to permeate Negro movements discourses in the end of the '70s, beginning of the '80s, in Brazil.

May 13 becomes a political banner and it will transform education and communication means. It's no longer just the date of slavery abolition in Brazil it becomes the date for denounce against racism. Education assimilates the date, after many political demands as a day for thinking over. November 20<sup>th</sup> will be set as Negro Awareness Day. And media will then refer to this date as an important moment in Negro fights in Brazil. Theoretically considering we'll have a parallel chronology in the university.

Racist theories of the 19<sup>th</sup> century will have influence also on studies in Brazil. Nina Rodrigues, Oliveira Vianna and Euclides da Cunha will be read under new light in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century due to what was being done in Europe with racism theory. But in the '30s and '40s there's Gilberto Freire's work a work that is simultaneously founder

of the racial democracy myth contemporary to Fernando Ortiz's mentioned trans-culture concept.

Different from Fernando Ortiz, Gilberto Freire regards this relationship as pleasant. While Cuban Ortiz says that natives, Europeans, Negroes will experience cultural shocks, with resistance, struggle, suffering and pain, till the day when the Americas and Caribbean are pluri-racial nations which they are as we know.

In the '40s, post-war period Unesco sponsored an ample research on racism in the world. This research in Brazil was coordinated by Roger Bastide and Florestan Fernandes. In the '60s and '70s, a Paulista school comes to life to study racism in Brazil and racial relationships in the slavery issue.

But in this period, the '70s, we also see as I have mentioned, the Negro Unified Movement that considers these authors Otávio Iani, Florestan Fernandes and questions them leading to trans-culture results. Affirmative actions beginning to be implemented in the '70s in the USA, arrive in Brazil just as a theory, as a discourse. However, Negro movements mobilization will cause the university to go after new texts new researches and indicators and from then on Negro movement militants entering university manage to promote researches demonstrating race and economic disparities existing in the country.

Africa is again subject of study as a space requiring reparation. The end of apartheid in the '90s will also influence Negro movements militancy and communication means in Brazil. A new concept will rise, advocacy also mentioned here in the beginning. Negro movement, mainly Negro women movement and feminist movement will take hold of this theory in order to better constitute its doctrine to teach how to perform in regional, national and international conferences and to promote demands that will give structure to local policies.

In 1995 Brazil will celebrate 300 years of Zumbi dos Palmares immortality. And Fernando Henrique Cardoso, the President then signs out the Human Rights National Program. Racial issue once again reaches national media and the Program constitutes a government policy since Brazilian federal government for the first time, politically and internationally recognizes the existence of racism in the country. From then on, there's commitment to implement affirmative action.

As we also have mentioned. These are compensation and reparation policies regarding population historically excluded and this commitment basically means the inclusion of Negroes women and other minorities in short, medium, and long term policies. In 2001, the Conference Against Racism takes place and international conference, in Durban, South Africa and Brazil is present with its largest delegation in history.

It's important to recall that we are now close to election year, in this chronology, 2001 and we'll see Luís Inácio Lula da Silva elected. He'll sign right away one of his government's first act the Law 10,639 which determines as mandatory to teach Africa history and Afro-Brazilian culture in elementary and medium schools. President Lula's action is presently well under way and it demonstrates that our quick chronology had an advantageous result education and communication considered as political spaces.

Today, schools, universities are forming and discussing racial issue in Brazil as a consequence of this historical militancy poorly studied in university. In our class you'll have chance to access the bibliography I have quickly mentioned as well as activities that we'll elaborate together. You'll have texts to read and better understand concepts to know a little of the history of Negro movements in Brazil and the role of communication in these movements.