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Caxuxa comics and their messages to children: considerations about the child's body in Cirandinha magazine (1950s)[1]

Os quadrinhos de Caxuxa e suas mensagens às crianças: considerações a respeito do corpo infantil na revista "Cirandinha" (anos de 1950)

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ABSTRACT

Cirandinha magazine circulated in Brazil in the 1950s and aimed to educate and entertain girls. For about a decade, this publication conveyed specific ways of being, feeling, and behaving to readers, taking part in childhood education. This article discusses one of the comics published by illustrator Giselda Melo, presenting Caxuxa, a black girl. The objectives are to identify and analyze the historical and pedagogical processes of children's body education using childhood representations in the magazine's texts and images. The adventures of Caxuxa, manifested in her gestures, speeches, and behaviors, allow a discussion, in the context of cultural history, of her ambiguities, ruptures, and contradictions when compared to the values and moralizing lessons disseminated in other sections of the magazine. As a result, we conclude that Caxuxa is an expressive character for understanding the broader educational processes inscribed underbodies in childhood.

Keywords: Body Education. Childhood. Children's Magazines.

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RESUMO

A revista "*Cirandinha*" circulou no Brasil nos anos de 1950 e tinha como objetivo a instrução e a diversão de meninas. Durante cerca de uma década, essa publicação veiculou maneiras específicas de ser, de sentir e de se comportar às leitoras, participando da educação da infância. Este artigo discute uma das histórias em quadrinhos publicadas pela ilustradora Giselda Melo, da personagem Caxuxa, uma menina negra. Os objetivos são identificar e analisar os processos históricos-pedagógicos de educação do corpo infantil, tendo como perspectiva as representações da infância nos textos e nas imagens da revista. As peripécias da personagem Caxuxa, manifestadas em seus gestos, falas e comportamentos, permitem uma discussão, no âmbito da história cultural, de suas ambiguidades, rupturas e contradições em relação aos valores e às lições moralizantes difundidos em outras seções da revista. Como resultado, conclui-se que Caxuxa é uma personagem expressiva para a compreensão dos processos educativos mais amplos que se inscrevem sob os corpos na infância.

Palavras-chave: Educação do corpo. Infância. Revistas infantis.

The magazine *Cirandinha* circulated in Brazil in the 1950s and aimed to both educate and entertain little girls. For roughly a decade, this publication disseminated to its readers specific ways to exist, feel, and behave, and in this way, taught girls to fulfill their expected role in society. Considering that this magazine contributed to the childhood education of that time, we will present the story of the little black girl Caxuxa, one of the many comics published by illustrator Giselda Melo. Our goals are to identify and analyze the historical and pedagogical processes for the education of children having as perspective the representations of childhood in the texts and illustrations in the magazine. For this purpose, the document corpus of this article is composed of 16 issues of *Cirandinha*, present in the Edgard Leuenroth Archives in the Institute of Philosophy and Human Sciences (IFCH - Unicamp) and personal archives. The bibliography uses the 1950s, the decade the magazine was published, and in total, we found 14 stories about Caxuxa.

Having these comics as a reference, we will analyze corporal practices and the forms of representation of childhood, manifested in gestures, speech, clothes, behavior, and the proposed ways of socialization. Seen beyond its physiological conditions, the body is marked by several teachings since childhood, and it carries the imprints of all lived cultural processes. As Carmen Soares (2003, p. 15) highlights, "in its visibility, the body allows, allegorically, to be interpreted and read like a text written by the society it belongs to."

In this way, we can speak of a process of education that brands the child's body through codes, practices, techniques, discourses, politics, pedagogies, and much broader cultural methods that encircle the individuals and that are not always easily noticed (SOARES, 1998, 2003, 2014; MORENO; SEGANTINI, 2008; ROCHA, 2009; SANT'ANNA, 2007; VAZ, 2003). As Carmen Soares defines (2014, p. 219),

> Comprehended as a notion, the body education refers us to the necessity to specify the connections between education and the body beyond the school, and it involves following traits, capturing traces, drawing not always clear, not always visible outlines, some even understood as educational. It is, therefore, the need to decodify our corporal singularity and analyze how it has been charged by the marks of our culture since childhood and throughout our lives [...].

In the education process that happens beyond the school, we can consider children's magazines as places to prescribe and disseminate ways of speaking, walking, eating, dressing, and grooming, creating appearances, practices, and behaviors that are socially accepted in the private and public spheres of life, based on the ideological markers and existent ideas of the time. Thus, its pages allow comprehension of how different societies, and cultures build representations, imagery, and meaning to the world, manifested in words, objects, images, practices, and speech (PESAVENTO, 2005).

As part of material culture, magazines are a significant source for research because they allow access to multiple social life aspects (LUCA, 2005). When choosing the magazine as a source for the analysis of practices, behaviors, and ideas, we assume every publication is the result of various motivations. The rapid urbanization that happened between the end of the XIX century and the beginning of the XX century resulted in the birth of different types of printed material for different audiences – women's magazines, novels, school books, children's books, weekly papers, etc. –, characterizing the physical spaces and sociability of different spheres like streets, houses, transportation, schools, the public squares, among others. The distribution of the printed press was not only focused on adult readers. The children were also a part of the themes of several publications, being seen in advertisements, photos, stories, medical prescriptions, and recreational pages.

Having the works of Roger Chartier (1991, 2002) for context, we can think of representation as a theoretical-methodological instrument for understanding

the classifications and exemptions that constitute the social settings of a particular time or place. According to the author, these representations are determined by the interests of the groups that shape them and are always placed in a realm of competition. In this issue, we can consider the analysis of the processes through which the magazine, as a symbolic commodity, builds meanings for childhood, applying discursive practices that produce order, affirmations, distance, and divisions (CHARTIER, 2002).

We highlight that while analyzing the representation process, we take into account that the readers assign different meanings to the texts they read since reading is not a passive activity but "a practice full of gestures, spaces, and habits (CHARTIER, 1991, p. 178). However, in this article, we will not examine the meanings the readers assigned to these magazines, as it would involve a study of the sensibilities and interpretation processes attached to their uses and significances, which could be multiple and mobile.

When analyzing the literary discourses of *Cirandinha*, we consider they were organized and produced by adults, who build a narrative related to childhood and to what they picture as appropriate for children. In this way, it's important to highlight that, in looking at these publications, we encounter affirmations and gaps that trail childhood history. We must consider that children are erased from the social memory, along with their historical experiences and the productions dedicated to them (LE GOFF, 1992). This invisibility can also be noticed concerning the female gender when dealing with women in historiographic productions, according to Silvana Goellner (2007). The author emphasizes the importance of history's dialogue with other fields, like literature and gender and feminist studies, to bring different approaches capable of providing visibility to the languages and life experiences of women. The invisibility of black children is even bigger. Their images, in the field of publicity or others, have been either absent or represented in stereotyped ways, or leaning on a "discourse towards neutrality, in which the black individual's differences make no difference" (ABRAMOWICZ; JOVINO; CAVALLEIRO, 2018, p. 273).

Looking at the problematic matter brought here, we can pose some questions like what marks of education of the body can be learned in the dialogues, the expressions, in the looks, and the scenery that are drawn in Caxuxa's comics? How did these comics intertwine with other discourses of *Cirandinha*? Moreover, what is the ideology of childhood the magazine creates? In light of this, we will present the children's publications of O Malho publishing house, addressing the literary perspectives structured in its pages. Following, we will discuss some of Caxuxa's comics, analyzing the ways of being a child expressed by the main character and by the other girls pictured in the magazine. From a discussion about the representation of black children, we will present

some aspects of Caxuxa's place in the magazine. Finally, returning to the educational purpose of *Cirandinha*, we will present a few considerations about the education of the body and femininity in childhood, as well as expectations on the representation of the ideal child in this magazine.

A read just for girls: the literary discourses of *Cirandinha* magazine

The magazine *Cirandinha* is part of the carioca publishing company O Malho, which published what is considered to be the first periodical with comic strips oriented to Brazilian kids, the magazine *O Tico-Tico*, since the beginning of the twentieth century. Almost fifty years after the publication of *O Tico-Tico*, the same publishing company released *Cirandinha*, announced in April of 1951 as the first monthly magazine of the country dedicated to girls. The editorial of the first issue mentions the new magazine represented a bold gesture of its producers, highlighting that "the girls of our country did not have an exclusive magazine that belonged to them, made for them and the way they wanted. Until now." (CIRANDINHA, 1951). The publication had a total of 59 issues, and just like *O Tico-Tico*, it was distributed until 1958 (ROSA, 2002; ROVERI, 2014; VERGUEIRO; SANTOS, 2008).

The covers of *Cirandinha* showed illustrations of girls in all different spheres of the home: caring for plants and animals, playing house and with dolls, sewing and others. The contents, distributed in approximately thirty pages in color, reinforced the desirable behavior from girls and the quality and importance of obedience, diligence, and labor. The sections of the magazine brought stories, poetry, cooking, jokes, comics, advice on chores, homemade crafts, sewing and embroidery, inspirational phrases, and thoughts.

It was part of O Malho publishing house's intentions to keep the dialogue and proximity to the schools, bringing general and scientific knowledge, behavior lessons, poetry, general knowledge contests, and other materials that could be used by school teachers. At the same time that it proposed to help in schooling girls, the editors also defended healthy recreation, using several characters, comic strips, activity pages, and awards. This way, we can say that when educationally providing recreation, the contents of the magazine were tied to the moralization of behaviors, entertainment, and also to marketing.

We notice in *Cirandinha* the presence of what Becchi (1998) calls "advice literature," a discursive practice widely distributed to middle-class families, starting in the 1920s. This type of literature could be found in several mass

media type – books, newspapers, women's magazines, radio, advertisements, and others – that created and reproduced the ideal childhood and disseminated the resources for its education. They also contributed to the idealization of the civilized childhood, righteous and educated in the family (SOARES; ROVERI, 2013). In additions, in a period of urbanization and of the desire for progress and modernity, the press took on the mission of propagating the dominant discourses about health, childcare, eating habits, and life at home, regulating and normalizing the bodies and the behaviors of women and children (VILHENA; FERREIRA, 2014).

In the section of *Cirandinha* called "Mistakes that can be corrected or avoided," signed by professor Leonor Posada, the advice literature prescribes to readers education concentrating on good behavior and small gestures. One of the stories discuss the bad manners of girls on the street, condemning the readers that run, laugh loudly, and scream:

> When going to school, or on the way back, the girl must walk naturally, talking to her friends, never running as a rude boy... In how much risk is a girl in, running through the streets astray, laughing without any reason? And what bad impression does she leave in the soul of those watching her? (CIRANDINHA, 1955c).

This kind of discourse, very common in the magazine's stories, images, and poetry, reveals literature written from theadult author's point of view, who manifests authority and reprimands behaviors considered inadequate. According to Ewers (1998), this literature shapes itself as authoritarian since the adults take the position of the only ones capable of comprehending the children's problems, resting on them the task of promoting judgment and propagating immutable principles. Many times, the writers and illustrators use children's stories and poetry to reinforce adult values and standards. In the 1950s, the written language designated for kids and based on their point of view started to appear with more frequency. Ewers (1998) calls this literature "anti-authoritarian," where the childhood experiences appear independently of the adult values and sometimes in conflict with them. In this perspective, the adult lends his voice and his art so that the child's perception, perspective, and experiences can be expressed. The childhood audience does not get a limited set of instructions indicating how they have to act or adapt to the world.

In *Cirandinha*, authoritarian literature is predominant. Although, in the magazine, there is not only teaching but also recreation, the moralization of

behavior takes the most space in almost all stories. The texts that have the intention of entertaining use the events of daily life or witty language featuring extravagant and picturesque characters whose reactions are unpredictable. The adults – teachers, writers, poets, and illustrators – assume the role of companions, advisors, and amusement for girls. The editorial text has a tone of secrecy, appeasing the daily problems of children and preparing them for the hardships of life and for the social roles that are assigned to them.

FIGURE 1 – GOOD EXAMPLE

SOURCE: Cirandinha (1955b, p. 14-15).

Note: Lucinda's mommy – a very sick lady – lives always very unhappy. It is not only her illness that makes her that way. It is also because Lucinda does not obey her. She is a big girl, and all she does is play! I am not a big girl yet, but I like to work. I know how to sweep the house, how to make flowers, and how to embroider. In school, everyone loves me because I pay attention to everything. I solve all my math problems, and my answers are always correct. I was also lazy one day (my mommy can say), but since I noticed how hard the ants work, and they are even smaller than I am, I got embarrassed and changed my ways. And, just like the little ant, today I'm a hard worker.

When representing childhood in the comics and other stories, the girls being black, white, studious, disobedient, helpful, disciplined, or playful, the magazine imprints specific ways to be, feel and express oneself. At times the

girls in *Cirandinha* are well behaved, quiet, speak with a low voice, help with household chores and respect their elders. At other times they're disobedient, don't act correctly in public, manifest selfishness, gluttony, impatience, and envy, being corrected and criticized by adults as examples of undesirable behavior. Very few of them are represented from an anti-authoritative perspective and without moral judgments. Looking at these aspects we can say that, in her daydreaming, laughs, and contradictions, Caxuxa subverts the docile image of the readers *Cirandinha* aspired to have.

Representations of childhood in Caxuxa's stories

Giselda Melo was one of the few women who illustrated stories for the children's magazines at O Malho publishing house. Her first works were published in "*O Tico-Tico*" in 1946, and from then on, she started producing the "Pechincha Cat" comics. Later on, with the release of *Cirandinha*, Giselda started to produce Caxuxa and Coquinhos comics.

The word *Caxuxa* has roots in the candomblé and is a word with African origin that is meant to be an affectionate way to call a young lady (SANTOS, 2016). It is also classified as a musical rhythm, in the concept of a musical rhythm, there are several quotes that mention "caxuxa" or "cachucha"[2]. In literature for example, we have the excerpt from José de Alencar's (1901, p. 8) "[...] to dance cachucha, what would I give to you?". According to the description of Silva (2011, p. 222): "the caxuxa or cachucha was a popular loose partner Spanish dance, accompanied by tap dancing and castanets." In all cases, being from candomblé, music, or dance, the word *caxuxa* was always linked to social interactions and the collective.

The black characters were a minority in the magazine and were not present in poetry, tales, magazine covers, and other discussions geared towards scientific knowledge or good behavior examples. In the comics, two of them appear more frequently: Maria Fumaça e Caxuxa. The former, drawn by Luiz Sá, is a maid depicted in a foolish and stereotyped way that often gets into trouble for not understanding the language or her white boss orders, propagating the existing social distaste towards black people. Caxuxa, on the other hand, is a child living in the country with Aunt Rosa and her cousin Coquinho and is depicted

2 Frequently, in the written form the word *caxuxa* can also be written as *cachucha*.

in common day-to-day situations, including playing, studying, house chores, and many other happenings occurring in her environment. Her representation also involves a black body and is granted special traits and social prejudices.

In Caxuxa's stories, there is always the intention of humor achieved by both an emphasis on the experiences of a child and by the drawing of a character different from others in *Cirandinha* magazine in several aspects like language, ethnicity, racial group, behavior, place of living and family relationships. It's possible to state Caxuxa is a representation full of ambiguities and contradictions. Initially seen in opposition to the image of the ideal little girls that appear in the magazine, Caxuxa is revealed as a stereotype of the black child, poor and subservient. On the other hand, if we consider the perspective of the stories in the context of the authoritarian and moralizing narratives of Cirandinha, we unveil a girl that challenges the rigidity of the adults and their norms and values, asserting her way of being, thinking, and expressing herself.

Some evidence of this challenge to the rigidity of adults appears in different stories. In one of them, Caxuxa and her cousin are hidden, spying on Aunt Rosa[3] making a cake for Three Kings' Day. As she is adding baking powder to the batter, the character says that its purpose is to make the cake rise. Right after, she exits the kitchen leaving everything on the table. Caxuxa and Coquinho get more baking powder and pour it on the bowl with the batter, saying happily: "if the baking powder makes it bigger... More baking powder is the way to go! It has to be an enormous cake so I can eat a lot!" A half an hour later, the cake explodes in the oven, and Aunt Rosa starts running screaming: "Help! There's a ghost...inside my oven!" (CIRANDINHA, 1954a, p. 18-19). The two kids appear acting as if they don't understand what is happening. In the story, Caxuxa and her cousin express the desire to taste a big delicious cake, making mischief to achieve their goal. That desire, very common amongst children and expressed with resourcefulness by Caxuxa and Coquinho, is part of a range of behaviors criticized and classified as bad to the readers of the magazine, as mentioned in an editorial of another issue:

> Not only for being the ugliest of sins should gluttony be avoided. That alone would be a good reason, but it so happens that gluttony is not only damaging to the soul it is also harmful to the body. That means it is dangerous in double measure [...] The excess of fat caused by the excess

3 Tia Rosa (Aunt Rosa) is the character who takes care of Caxuxa. She is also black, a hard worker, connected to the household sphere, very similar to Tia Nastácia (Aunt Nastácia), a character created by Monteiro Lobato.

> of unrestrained eating, and eating at odd times, make girls ugly, fat, heavy, pathetic and unable to practice healthy sports that, in harmony with the effects of studying, achieve the ideal of "healthy body in a healthy mind" we all should cultivate (CIRANDINHA, 1953a, p. 3).

In another story, Aunt Rosa asks Caxuxa and Coquinho to use bread as bait and go fishing in the river to guarantee a good Sunday dinner. The two kids leave excited and succeed in catching several fish, imagining they will have an abundant dinner. However, a guard appears in the distance and sends them away, saying they can't fish there. Caxuxa tells her cousin to hide the fish while she talks to the guard. When the guard approaches, the girl asks what the problem was[4] because she and her cousin were just quiet at the edge of the river "soaking the bread." The guard is suspicious and tells her she has a lot of guts to say she wasn't fishing: "hey, I have eyes!" (CIRANDINHA, 1953b, p. 28-29).

The boldness of Caxuxa in challenging the superiority of the guard is one of the behaviors disapproved in several other *Cirandinha* texts like prescribed in one of the editorials. In it, the authors call for the girls' attention to contain their bad impulses and to cultivate kindness in their soul:

> Meditate, ponder, think well when met with bad impulses, with vengeance, with cold selfishness, with inference for others' pain [...]. God is always grateful when one of his creatures lets manifest the good and beautiful, the altruistic and generous parts of the personality He granted us when He breathed the breath of life (CIRANDINHA, 1956, p. 3).

In another situation, Caxuxa and her cousin are talking outside about a visitor who just arrived, Chatty Chica. The two kids show displeasure and pity for Aunt Rosa because the woman is terrible, "she talks… and talks...day and night!" (CIRANDINHA, 1954b, p. 28). Caxuxa remembers hearing a neighbor saying Chatty Chica was only scared of two things: pigs and the Devil. So, she has the idea of going to the pigsty with her cousin to release the pigs inside

4 Tia Rosa (Aunt Rosa) is the character who takes care of Caxuxa. She is also black, a hard worker, connected to the household sphere, very similar to Tia Nastácia (Aunt Nastácia), a character created by Monteiro Lobato.

the house, scaring the visitor sitting in the living room and sending her away. The mischiefs of Caxuxa and Coquinho differ from other pages in *Cirandinha* magazine, as the test "Can you control yourself?" from another issue points out:

> In many instances, you have heard a talk about control. Do you know what that is? It is the capacity people have to master themselves, curbing the impulses that come in the face of certain facts or situations. Let's take, as an example, you. How do you act in a determined situation or circumstance? What course do you take considering one fact or another? [...] A friend of your mommy visits your house, and her unexpected arrival will disturb your plans. Do you offer her a warm welcome? (CIRANDINHA, 1954c, p. 8).

The unexpected visit of Chatty Chica caused rejection by the kids that, in contrast to Aunt Rosa, didn't commit to offering a "warm welcome." In complete opposition to what the test was teaching, Caxuxa and Coquinho don't exercise control of their impulses but the visitor. She, being an unpleasant person, is the one who needs to be disciplined.

In the comic strip in figure 2, Caxuxa performs a simple and naive action that is capable of undermining the power and social status of the adult. In this story, another visitor, Miss Beleléu, arrives wearing a brand new and elegant hat, contrasting the simplicity of the girl and her aunt. Entrusted to the care of Caxuxa, the hat ends up in tatters causing despair in Miss Beleléu and Aunt Rosa. The behavior of the girl towards the visitors shows some of the annoyances of the children in the face of the adult world, in which the opinion of others and the organization of the house, good manners, and appearances has a special place in the routine and sociability of many families.

FIGURE 2 – MISS BELELÉU'S HAT

SOURCE: Cirandinha (1955a, p. 16-17).

Note: Aunt Rosa: Sit down, Miss Beleléu. Don't you want to take your hat off? Miss Beleléu: I accept your offer. But be really careful! This hat is brand new! Aunt Rosa: Take it and put it away carefully! Caxuxa: Wow! What a fancy "thingy"! Miss Beleléu: Well, I"m on my way... enough talking for today. My hat Miss Roda, yes? Aunt Rosa: Of course, my lady. Caxuxa! Caxuxa: Is that it was so hot that I gave the flower some water! Aunt Rosa: Are you crazy, negrinha (little black girl)! Miss Beleléu: Gosh! I'm going to pass out, Rosinha!

The illustrator intends to build humor through the colloquial language of the characters and the dialogue with rhymes, observe in the following Portuguese words: *Beleléu/chapéu*, *cuidadinho/novinho*, *calô/flô*[5], among others, that give fluidity and skill to the text. At that time, the use of rhymes in children's magazines was very common, especially when the intention was to communicate moralizing content, appearing in the form of verse and poetry, considered easy to memorize. In the history of Brazilian children's literature, as Lajolo e Zilberman (1985) discussed, until the 1960s there was a belief in the communicative and persuasive power of the rhyme, as they carried emerging ideological values. Different from other poetries signed by Bastos Tigre, Olavo Bilac, Galvão de Queiroz, amongst others, who published their works in *Cirandinha*, we can see

5 Beleléu: ladie's name; Chapéu: hat; cuidadinho: care (diminutive form); novinho: brand new; calô (colloquial form of 'calor'): heat; flô (colloquial form of 'flor'): flower TN.

in Giselda Melo's writing style – in *Caxuxa* and other comics – the use of rhymes in informal dialogues, attached to entertainment and a looser language, different from Galvão de Queiroz, for example, in his rhymes about the girl Raquelzinha:

> Instead of playing outside,
> of ring o'roses or hopscotch,
> What Raquel loves the most
> is to help her mommy.
> She is a perfect helper
> with chores in the kitchen.
> She accepts any chore
> to help her mommy.
> While she works, she sings...
> And, thanks to Little Raquel,
> there's not so much weight
> on her mommy's shoulders (CIRANDINHA, 1954b, p. 7, our translation).

Girls that are "pleasant adults," like Raquelzinha, are abundant inside *Cirandinha* magazine, as we can see in another issue that has, cover the image of a girl picking apples. The editorial reinforces that the readers should cultivate the seed of goodness in their heart "because, in a miracle that will please God, from seed it will soon transform into a generous tree, and its fruits can be picked" (CIRANDINHA, 1956, p. 3). On page 11, the magazine proposes that the readers engage in a "do it yourself" activity, making a lampshade and, in that way, "staying quiet for a few hours just the way like mommy likes." While the obedient reader of *Cirandinha* crafts her lampshade, concentrating in assembling, cutting, and sewing, filling her time with useful activity, further ahead on page 16, Caxuxa takes her clothes off and goes swimming in the river with her cousin Coquinho, exclaiming happily: "I'm gonna take a nice bath!"

"Are you crazy, little black girl": notes on Caxuxa's body

The adventures of Caxuxa bring elements for reflection that dialogue with the freedom and the transgression of current conventions in a discourse that places her, at the same time, on the edge of social exclusion. We will highlight three elements: behavior, speech, and the culture of our black protagonist.

In literature, we have several examples of how this relationship can be built based on the precepts of the adult world imposed on children, in the attempt to convey and preserve the ideas and values in effect. As a representation of a black character, Caxuxa is not an adult, but a child that gets the spotlight, a name, and a voice in the stories of *Cirandinha*. However, in some instances, the character is still called *Negrinha* (Little black girl), as we can see in Figure 2. If we compare with the production of Monteiro Lobato, a black girl that did not even have a name, also responded to *Negrinha*. Her saga is told in the book with the same name (LOBATO, 1956).

Regarding the behavior, Caxuxa doesn't stay home quietly, embroidering "as mommy likes," she goes out with her cousin Coquinho, a boy. She takes her clothes off and takes a nice bath in the river, allowing her body movement and freedom on a hot day, going against the social rules, and rebelling against the good manners taught to the white girls like Raquelzinha. She is also presented as "clumsy" and even as a character who carries traits of ignorance of social and cultural practices considered simple and of common knowledge – for example, when she wets the flower on Miss Beleléu's hat, suggesting she doesn't recognize it is not a real plant. In this specific case, there is also the economic component: in the illustration, Miss Beleléu visibly belongs to a higher economic class than Caxuxa or Aunt Rosa. Miss Beléleu is "sá dona" (which can be translated as a lady), white, and probably rich. When reprimanded Caxuxa is reminded of her status as a black girl with the phrase "Are you crazy, little black girl." In other words, the feat is so outrageous that it can only be an act of a crazy person – or a little black girl (negrinha). This discourse expresses stereotypes built and spread by the comics regarding the place and ignorance of the black girl or woman. We understand stereotypes as Janaína Damasceno (2001, p. 3; highlights of the author) notes, with "the purpose of reducing, essentializing, naturalizing, and establishing the differences of the Other".

Concerning the linguistic standards held to be educated or refined[6], Caxuxa is the antithesis of the girl who goes to school, does embroidery, and speaks quietly. She uses colloquial terms like "*troço*" (thing), which her creator makes a point of leaving in quotation marks. Her accent, which can be blamed on lack of education, or from being from the countryside, is also very evident: "*flô*", correct spelling "*flor*", meaning flower, or "*calô*" with the correct spelling "*calor*", meaning heat. Differentiating Caxuxa's language from the other girls

6 On the linguistic prejudices, that carries others (against poverty, people from the Northeast of Brazil, the natives, the immigrants etc.), see Bagno e Rangel (2005), among others.

considered "educated", defines the place where she comes from and therefore should be avoided by the readers, given the moral standards of the magazine.

With the behavior and the way of speaking, there are hints in the content of the comics that put Caxuxa's knowledge into question or even diminish them. In *Cirandinha*, the settings for the lives of the black characters refer to the stories told by old enslaved women and men. While the stories of Caxuxa are attached to the literature considered national folklore, other pages of the magazine highlight characters from European mythology, scientists, and historical figures and heroes.

This way, as Maria Cristina Soares Gouvêa (2005) highlights in her analysis of the images of black people in children's literature, the culture, the religious practices, and the Black traditions are considered inferior cultural events, from a rural space placed on the margins of urban relationships. Embodied in the older, previously enslaved men and women (pretos e pretas velhas), this knowledge was represented as detached from the "society that sought to modernize itself, under the support of a scientific logic that refuses those expressions" (GOUVÊA, 2005, p. 87). Caxuxa represents this Black tradition in Brazil, characterized by the social and economic disparities, by the racial prejudice, and in favor of the "whitening policies," as proposed by Jerry Dávila (2006). When analyzing educational material, Ana Célia Silva (2000) suggests the whitening ideology establishes itself in the internalization of a negative self-image and a positive image of the other, in other words, through the rejection of the self-attached to the search for the standards considered good, and ideal. Gouvêa (2005) comes to the same conclusion at the end of his research on the representation of Black people in literature, pointing out these works were unqualified, in other words, there was a production of an identification of the reader with the white culture and aesthetics, shown as superior in the texts.

The narratives that involve the girl Caxuxa seem to show a common destiny to ladies who laugh loudly are too happy, talk too much (and do not use proper language, considered refined and ideal), and swim with boys: their freedom, audacity, and happiness in childhood will not be rewarded in the adult life, because what is expected in the ideology of that time is for girls to behave as to not open space to "malicious" judgment from those around her, to guarantee a good marriage in the future. Caxuxa represents the reverse side of this speech, and because of that, she is "an example not to follow." On the other hand, she can also represent, symbolically, a rupture to that thinking or rejection to this structure: her mere presence, challenging standards even if restricted to a few pages of the magazine, brings the possibility of resistance, secured in the tiny cracks and in the small gestures the character uses, she tears the authoritarian prescriptions of adults with her small, black, female, child's body.

A few considerations

In this article, when we chose a source for analysis, a publication geared towards girls, we mapped discourses that allowed us to learn about the process of education of children's bodies. This way, we presume the varied corporal practices, facilitated also by the stories of black girl Caxuxa, were articulated into the project of education of the readers of *Cirandinha*. The magazine, an object of the written media and part of material culture, has as its educational purpose to teach and entertain the child, shaping the future woman according to the social and cultural standards aspired at that time, with a modern, urban and refined nation and anchored in the moral and family values. Three main questions supported this article: what marks of education of the body can be learned in Caxuxa's comics? How did these comics intertwine with other discourses of *Cirandinha*? What is the ideology of childhood the magazine creates?

Regarding the processes of education of the body, we have authoritarian literature that prescribes to a girl the proper ways of walking, eating, speaking, smiling, and presenting herself physically in front of others. In this respect, the magazine presents itself as a manners' guidebook and can be categorized as regulatory literature of civility, in other words, it transmits the "codes of conduct considered legitimate, while others were condemned for being inappropriate to social relationships" (SANTANA, 2014, p. 8). Moreover, the purpose of *Cirandinha* is connected to "advice literature," according to Becchi (1998).

A series of educational practices and discourses reaffirm an education for femininity, characterized by the control of the impulses of the girls. The magazine warns about the risks of running through the streets, laughing uncontrollably, and causing a bad impression. It teaches dedication to work and to relieve any tiredness, singing. It prescribes controlling eating habits, practicing sports, and the discipline when studying to have a healthy mind and body. The representation of the ideal child was of white skin, warmhearted, helpful in the home, and generous with family members and other adults. The image of Caxuxa represented the antithesis to these principles.

The whitening of the reader, as well as the expectations for women and the place they should occupy in society, are easily identified in the production of *Cirandinha*. This representation built a distinction between social classes, gender, and race. The white characters of *Cirandinha*, born and raised in a traditional, nuclear, middle class, urban, and educated family, like Raquelzinha, reinforced the stereotypes of "good daughter, good girl" and of future "good wife, good mother". These girls, propagated both in the written texts and the illustrations,

did not disappoint the family or the society. The attitudes of Caxuxa intersect on the opposite side of these traits, represented as a poor Black girl from the countryside. Hence, there is the intention of building the feminine behavior considered correct, and the mocking of Caxuxa's doings is part of the lesson, in a movement that prescribed to girls their ideal behavior and silenced the bodies of both children and the Black population.

Considering the context of ambiguities and contradictions that run through the representation of Caxuxa, it is noticeable that her happiness and her provocative behaviors in the face of the authoritarianism of the adults determine, by contrast, a childhood that resists and questions the way of being a child, a girl and Black in the society she belongs to. This was certainly not the ideal childhood standard created by the magazine and allows us to see it making itself present, which undeniably continues to propel the search for other reflections on the images of the different childhoods in history, literature, and education. Recovering this character is to contribute to the movement for comprehension of the construction of the representations of the body that echo to us up to today in the shape of prejudice, silencing, and invisibility of the woman, the girl, and blackness.

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