

# TUMBALALÁ PEOPLE: HISTORY, TERRITORY, CULTURAL IDENTITIES AND THEIR IMPACTS ON INDIGENOUS SCHOOL EDUCATION

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## Abstract

This paper aims to present a historical data about the Tumbalalá people, starting with the first records of their territorial occupation, as well as their historical roots and identification with their ancestors and the cultural focus of their ethnicity. From this point on, it is introduced a discussion about Indigenous School Education, under the focus of the prevailing Brazilian legislation, pursuing to differentiate Indigenous Education from Indigenous School Education, emphasizing the value that Indigenous knowledge has for School Education in contextualization and interculturality as ways to foster the rescue of Indigenous culture. It is moreover important to highlight the role of the Brazilian legislature, which has sought to guarantee the right of Indigenous people to a differentiated education as a guarantee of respect for their culture and, at the same time, the right to a formal education that allows them to continue to defend their rights and interests. Resulting from the long struggle of the Indigenous peoples to achieve this right to a differentiated education, although it has advanced significantly there is still a lot to be done.

**Keywords:** Culture; Ethnicity, Ancestry, Interculturality, Traditional Knowledge

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## 1. Introduction

The Tumbalalá people are organized in a village in the former mission of Pambu, today part of the municipality of Abaré, in the state of Bahia (AMORIM, 2006). This collective space belonging to a people would be the territory (VIEGAS 2017).

Revisiting the history of the Northeast region, it is observed that, in the seventeenth to nineteenth centuries, the hinterland on the borders of the states of Pernambuco and Bahia marked by the São Francisco River was already the scene of indigenous missions led by religious (ANDRADE, 2004).

Initially, we present the origin of the Tumbalalá people and their cultural expressions. We then start from the definition of culture adopted by Santos (2018), in which are aggregated the ways, the collective and learned ways of being of life, which are passed on by subjects and groups dispersed in community.

Sequentially, we bring for better clarification the legal or political view, of the Supreme Federal Court on terms such as “people”, “country”, “territory”, “homeland” or even “Indigenous nation”, which is of paramount importance for the recognition and delimitation of Indigenous lands.

Souza Filho (2003) points out that the view adopted by the SFC, in establishing differences in those terms, has been adopted as a strategy not to recognize the existence of a people and traditionally used to deny territory.

There are many challenges experienced by the Tumbalalá people, as well as by other Indigenous peoples, especially as to new social groups in the Northeastern part of Brazil involving the rescue and claiming of their cultural heritage, as a form of recognition by state agencies of their ethnicity.

Among these challenges, we have the guarantee of the rights to Indigenous School Education, its principles and educational processes.

The challenges of Brazilian education seek to intensify public policies that aim to guarantee the rights won by Indigenous peoples through the process of struggle. To acquire a better view of the theme addressed in this study, we will adopt the concept of Indigenous School Education proposed by Luciano (2006), focusing on the processes of transmission and production of Non-Indigenous and Indigenous knowledge to the school, which is a space that was and is appropriated by the Indigenous peoples with the purpose of reinforcing their knowledge and practices, besides facilitating the appropriation and apprehension of the necessary knowledge that may contribute to respond to the demands generated from the contact with other indigenous cultures and with the Non-Indigenous society.

We have, therefore, as guiding principles for Indigenous School Education guaranteed by the Federal Constitution of 1988 and regulated by the National Committee for Indigenous School Education, through the document, “Guidelines for the National Policy on Indigenous School Education,” released by the Ministry of Education in 1993, which “establishes as principles of pedagogical work in Indigenous communities, respect for differences, collective production of knowledge, interculturality, use of mother tongues, autonomy” (BONIN, 2012), principles that seek to build and provide instruments for strengthening unique cultures and for the formation of the Brazilian Indigenous citizenship.

Accordingly, the main goal of this paper is to revisit the History of the Tumbalalá people, their origins, their territory, their beliefs, their rituals, their struggle for recognition, their cultural identities, and their right to Indigenous School Education with emphasis on the principles that guide it, based on the reflection of the laws that ensure the right to a differentiated, intercultural, formative Indigenous School Education and build spaces for the empowerment of traditional peoples in the backlands of the state of Bahia.

## 2. The Tumbalalá Culture

Indigenous lands as a legal category distinct from indigenous territories. The constitutional disabuses of the words “people”, “country”, “territory”, “homeland” or “indigenous nation”. Only the “territory” as a juridical-political category is the precise spatial scope of incidence of a given sovereign or autonomous legal order. The noun “lands” is a term that takes on a distinctly socio-cultural, and not political, character. The Constitution was careful not to speak of Indigenous territories, but only of “Indigenous lands”. This means that indigenous “groups”, “organizations”, “populations” or “communities” do not constitute a federated entity. They do not form a

circumscription or spatial instance that has a political dimension. That is why none of the indigenous social organizations or their peculiarly anthropological basis, can be recognized as a transnational entity. Therefore, none of the Brazilian indigenous communities has the normative stature to appear before the International Legal Order as an independent “nation”, “country”, “homeland”, “national territory” or “people”. It is easy to see that every time the 1988 Constitution referred to “nationality” and the other words used (country, homeland, national territory and people) it was to refer to Brazil as a whole. (Translated)<sup>1</sup>

Viegas (2017), following the doctrine of Souza Filho (2003) in his study about territoriality in the Brazilian states, notes that the distinctions established by the Supreme Court, as a matter of acts, reveal that the same ideology used to deny the existence of a people is historically applied to deny the territory. The author also points out that the names given by Brazilian law, over time, to Indigenous territories reveal the content that was attributed to the right granted.

The author continues to point emphasize that, in the Land Law of 1850, Law No. 601, the term “reservation” has been used to denote the concept of reserving territorial space for the peoples found during colonization for distribution, called ordained, to those who had the capital to invest in them. The Indigenous people were to remain on the reserved lands only until they learned a so-called “civilized” job and could be integrated into national life. These rights were provisional and always linked to a reserved territorial space (SOUZA FILHO, 2003).

Another lexical word used in the Land Law of 1850 to designate the territory was “area”, only later to be used the term “Indigenous land” (VIEGAS, 2017). Souza Filho (2003) asserts that the name “territory” was never used, on the contrary, it was intentionally denied. It goes unnoticed, of course, a not-so-subtle difference between “land” and “territory”: “land” is the legal name given to individual property, whether public or private; “territory” is the legal name given to a jurisdictional space. Thus, territory is collective space that belongs to a people (VIEGAS, 2017).

The Tumbalalá ethnogenesis is inserted in the new social groups of the Brazilian northeastern backlands that claim their local Indigenous heritage. And as a social group, the Tumbalalá base this claim on the cultural heritage of the ethnicity once present throughout the region of the mid-Sertão of the São Francisco River, within the extensive Cariri linguistic group (ANDRADE, 2004). Still, according to Andrade (2004), the phenomenon of Tumbalalá cultural reconstruction has its historical specificities in the Tumbalalá memory and in the local history of the Pambu village.

Batista (2004), in his article stemming from the Circumstantiated Report on the Identification and Delimitation of the Truká Indigenous Land, already stated that when conducting research on the history of the Truká, or on the human groups that were linked to the Truká identity, at various times he was confronted with individuals who were present, whether in the memory or in the daily life of the group, and who claimed to be Tumbalalá.

### 3. First Historical Records

Batista (2004), describing the historical process of territorial occupation, explains that,

The colonization of the Sertão took place mainly following the course of the São Francisco River, on whose banks were fertile lands, good for cultivation and animal husbandry, abundant water and minerals, in addition to a Babel of ethnic groups, which were used as labor on the farms or as militias and instruments of defense of the conquered territories; the ethnic groups became in the eyes of the “posseiros”, one of the resources offered by the river. (Translated)<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> “7. AS TERRAS INDÍGENAS COMO CATEGORIA JURÍDICA DISTINTA DE TERRITÓRIOS INDÍGENAS. O DESABONO CONSTITUCIONAL AOS VOCÁBULOS “POVO”, “PAÍS”, “TERRITÓRIO”, “PÁTRIA” OU “NAÇÃO” INDÍGENA. Somente o “território” enquanto categoria jurídico-política é que se põe como o preciso âmbito espacial de incidência de uma dada Ordem Jurídica soberana, ou autônoma. O substantivo “terras” é termo que assume compostura nitidamente sociocultural, e não política. A Constituição teve o cuidado de não falar em territórios indígenas, mas, tão-só, em “terras indígenas”. A traduzir que os “grupos”, “organizações”, “populações” ou “comunidades” indígenas não constituem pessoa federada. Não formam circunscrição ou instância espacial que se orne de dimensão política. Dai não se reconhecer a qualquer das organizações sociais indígenas, ao conjunto delas, ou à sua base peculiarmente antropológica a dimensão de instância transnacional. Pelo que nenhuma das comunidades indígenas brasileiras detém estatura normativa para comparecer perante a Ordem Jurídica Internacional como “Nação”, “País”, “Pátria”, “território nacional” ou “povo” independente. Sendo de fácil percepção que todas as vezes em que a Constituição de 1988 tratou de “nacionalidade” e dos demais vocábulos aspeados (País, Pátria, território nacional e povo) foi para se referir ao Brasil por inteiro.” (original text in Portuguese)

<sup>2</sup> “A colonização do sertão se deu principalmente seguindo o percurso do rio São Francisco, em cujas margens se encontravam terras férteis, boas para

In this sense, Andrade (2004) brings us that the hinterland covered by the borders of the states of Bahia and Pernambuco, which has as its geographical landmark the São Francisco River, during the 17<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup>, and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, had an important concentration of Indigenous missions, which were administered by various religious orders, such as the Capuchins, Franciscans, and Jesuits. It is seen, therefore, that, since the 17<sup>th</sup> century, it was already an intense populating area, receiving many people coming from Portugal and adjacent Islands, not only because of the good land offered, but especially because of the saturation of people on the coast near the city of Bahia and the coastal cities. So sought after by settlers from various nations, the hinterlands in the São Francisco River valley became a strong economic center for the Colony, from where the main cities were supplied with food, saltpeter and other products.

It is in this context that the Indigenous peoples of Brazil move through endless images and concepts, designated as isolated, contacted, and resurgent, a definition that, according to the Indigenous movement, contrasts with the extinct official integrationist categories of “silvicultural, integrated, and acculturated Indians,” thus designating their condition as differentiated peoples (AMORIM, 2003).

It is necessary to reinforce that the distancing of these peoples did not happen voluntarily, or by free choice, but forced by circumstances, distancing them from their ancestry, their ancestral cultural and religious practices, as well as from their descendants, requiring from these peoples a strong effort for the continuity and manifestation of their Indianness, a basic requirement that, in the conception of Cunha (1986), demands from these peoples an “inexorably Indigenous” cultural practice, having as its central base their ancestry.

As a result of a long history of mobilizations, which included the participation of Indigenous groups from the region, support agents, and Indigenous institutions, which sought the recognition of the rights of the “Caboclos” who inhabited the Bahian margin in front of Pambu Island. Until the 18<sup>th</sup> century, it housed one of the largest Indigenous missionary settlements in the middle São Francisco River, FUNAI established a Technical Group in 2004, which conducted the delimitation of the Tumbalalá area in 2004 and 2005 (Indigenous Peoples in Brazil, 2001-2005).

The Tumbalalá area currently covers approximately 50,000 hectares, situated between the municipalities of Abaré and Curaçá, and is the largest continuous Indigenous area ever drawn in the Northeast. However, within its boundaries, on an extension of 10,000/ha, of which almost 3,000/ha are irrigated, there are 19 Agri-villages ages of the Pedra Branca project, a project that was intended to house about 800 families who had their lands submerged by the construction of the Itaparica hydroelectric dam in 1986, and who were resettled by the state-owned São Francisco Electric Company – CHESF (INDIGENOUS PEOPLES IN BRAZIL, 2001-2005).

Also within this delimited area is the village of Pambu, which has received improvements with funds from the municipality of Abaré and the Union, such as sidewalk, six new classrooms, and the reconstruction of houses (POVOS INDÍGENAS NO BRASIL, 2001-2005).

About two hundred families of non-Indigenous people who own land within the delimited area and outside the Pedra Branca Project own plots that together exceed 10,000/ha of the project. Through threats to the Tumbalalá Indigenous people, some of these people, with the support of politicians from Abaré and Curaçá who were opposed to the limits of the Tumbalalá Indigenous Territory, inhibited the identification and delimitation work of the Indigenous area. Moreover, the opposition was also manifested by a group of resettled people in the Pedra Branca Project, a position also shared by CHESF itself that, according to the report of the Work Group (WG), tried to impede the demarcation (POVOS INDÍGENAS NO BRASIL, 2001-2005).

At this very moment, according to information from Funai, the Tumbalalá Indigenous land is delimited and occupies an area of 44,978,000 ha, in the traditionally occupied mode (BRASIL, 2020).

#### **4. Territories of Pambu**

According to Arraes (2018), the empty, unknown, and unpopulated aspect that appears in the images representing the backlands was due to the small number of maps that showed in their representations the diversity or multiplicity

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cultivo e para criação de animais, água em abundância e minerais, além de uma Babel de grupos étnicos, que foram usados como mão de obra nas fazendas ou como milícias e instrumento de defesa dos territórios conquistados; os grupos étnicos se tomaram aos olhos dos posseiros, uns dos recursos oferecidos pelo rio.” (original text in Portuguese)

of the network of settlements in the backlands.

Still according to this author, in 1672, there were already from the mouth of the São Francisco River up to about 120 leagues inland, corrals, chapels and farmhouses.

Even though the backlands had acquired a grandiose portrait of “vast and frightening solitudes”, according to the initial impression of the Capuchin friar Martinho de Nantes, hermitages were still established in the missions of Rodelas, Uracapé and Aramurus, as well as the one in the village of Pambu, which had a chaplain as administrator, who was maintained by the inhabitants of the region (ARRAES, 2018).

According to chieftain Cícero Marinheiro’s report (2010),

Pambú is the first Tumbalalá village where there is a record from the year 1600. In the division of Riacho da Divisa de Abaré and Curaçá, there was a war between Indians and whites, but also between Indians in Missão Velha. A place where priests prayed mass, after these wars this whole region was Pambú. (translated)<sup>1</sup>

It becomes clear that in line to the Tumbalalá people account these people already populated the Region in the XVII century.

Arraes (2013), quoting Capistrano de Abreu, disserting on the two points of departure to the backlands of Bahia and Pernambuco then known as “inner Countryside”, which departed from Salvador, the movement led by the Bahians, comments that,

(...) the sertanistas headed to the hinterlands bordering the main rivers, whose objective would be to find the São Francisco River. Such flows created routes connecting the recôncavo of Bahia to the mid-Sanfranciscan margins, and, after the auriferous discovery, would unite that region to Minas Gerais. The route written by the farmer and partner of the Casa da Torre, Domingos Afonso Mafrense (later nicknamed Sertão) endorses the growth of communication between the São Francisco River with Bahia, Piauí, Maranhão, Pernambuco and Minas Gerais. The river was in fact a conductor axis, a beacon in the attempts to devassar, know, populate and expand the borders of Colonial Brazil. (translated)<sup>2</sup>

In this context, the same author reminds us that those vast areas, even before being devastated by the sertanistas, had already been occupied by several Indigenous tribes, which facilitated the work of the Portuguese, since there were paths and trails made by the natives, to devastate the obscure interior. Thus, the Indigenous people not only collaborated to change the scenario of the backland’s territory, by associating with the settlers, among them the religious missionaries, as well as contributed to the constitution of the network of missionary villages, consisting of clusters of the urban complex founded along the river current of the São Francisco River (ARRAES, 2013).

## 5. Identities: Indigenous Science, Toré and Jurema

Further explaining the meaning of science for the Indigenous, we transcribe *verbatim* the words of the Tumbalalá chieftain Cícero Marinheiro (Indigenous Peoples of the Northeast, 4, 2010):

The name Tumbalalá was discovered in the 1930s through our rituals that in six works of science the name Tumbalalá was confirmed. The name Tumbalalá was given by the Encantados de Luz. We don't tell, it is a secret of our people. Whoever wants to believe should believe. (translated)<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> O Pambu é o primeiro aldeamento dos Tumbalalá onde tem registro do ano de 1.600. Na divisão do Riacho da Divisa de Abaré e Curaçá, teve uma guerra entre índios e brancos, mas, também entre índios na Missão Velha. Um lugar onde padres rezavam missa, depois dessas guerras toda essa região era Pambu. (original text in Portuguese)

<sup>2</sup> “... os sertanistas rumavam aos hinterlands margeando os principais rios, cujo objetivo seria encontrar o rio São Francisco. Tais fluxos criaram rotas conectando o recôncavo da Bahia às margens médias sanfranciscanas, e, após o descoberto aurífero, uniria aquela região às Minas Gerais. O roteiro escrito pelo fazendeiro e sócio da Casa da Torre, Domingos Afonso Mafrense (depois alcunhado de Sertão) endossa o crescimento da comunicação entre o rio São Francisco com a Bahia, Piauí, Maranhão, Pernambuco e Minas Gerais. O rio foi de fato um eixo condutor, baliza nos intentos de devassar, conhecer, povoar e dilatar as fronteiras do Brasil Colônia.” (original text in Portuguese)

<sup>3</sup> O nome Tumbalalá foi descoberto na década de 30 através de nossos rituais que em seis trabalhos da ciência se confirmou o nome Tumbalalá. O nome Tumbalalá foi dado pelos Encantados de Luz. A gente não diz, é segredo do nosso povo. Quem quiser acreditar que acredite. (original text in Portuguese).

Andrade (2002) emphasizes the importance of the ritual field as a space in which interethnic relations of reciprocity are reinforced and animate regional ethnogenesis.

For Grünewald (2008), the Toré and the Jurema are the Indigenous emblems in Northeastern Brazil, being the two main icons of Northeastern Indianness, although they are not exclusive cultural elements of Indigenous societies, they codify the autochthony of Indians in the Northeastern part of Brazil.

Toré is an Indigenous tradition that is difficult to demonstrate substantively because of its semantic variation and diverse forms of practical realizations among Indigenous societies and beyond. In principle, it is a ritual dance that consecrates the ethnic group. There is no way to specify the origin of the term or even the Toré ritual itself, given the absence of colonial narratives that mention its existence. From a social process initiated in the first half of the twentieth century, Toré gains visibility and relevance today, being fully incorporated into the Indigenous movement in the Northeast as a form of political expression (GRÜNEWALD, 2008).

However, its significance is recognized in the rescue and preservation of Indigenous culture, in the words of chieftain Miguel Marculino (POVOS INDÍGENAS DO NORDESTE, 4, 2010).

Then we go to our stronghold, which is the Toré, here is where we search for rituals, it is our culture, it is where we search for strength in nature. We live from our customs, if we didn't have these customs or if one day they end, the Tumbalalá people will no longer exist. There are no people without rituals. We need them to use our clothes, our pujá, our cataiôba, to have their maracas, to dance the Toré. Sometimes people forget, or sometimes don't give importance to what is necessary. We need to be prepared for the moment when there is pressure from non-Indians and squatters, and from the courts against us. (translated)<sup>1</sup>

Regarding Jurema, Grünewald (2008) presents us with three ways in which it is seen: as a plant, as a drink, and as an entity. He also brings us the fact that there are several botanical species referred to as Jurema. "Poir" consists in one of those with the highest concentration of N-N-dimethyltryptamine (DMT), a substance capable of promoting intense alterations in consciousness and perception.

Beverages used in rituals by Indigenous societies in the Northeast Brazil are extracted from the barks of the Jurema roots and some Indigenous groups attribute to the plant magical or cosmic powers, which are revered, or respected, as emissary of interventions from the native forests (GRÜNEWALD, 2008).

In this, Batista (2004) refers to Toré, remembering that when speaking of it, reference is always made to the Particular one, and that because of this it is not considered in isolation. Being that the help of the magical-religious forces would be present in a more evident way in the, which is also known as Auricuri or even Cienciazinha, characterizing in fact, a ritual in which the Jurema drink is used, leading the Indigenous people to a connection with the world of the enchanted ones. The basic difference between the two is that in the Toré, it is not necessary that the charms are present, which does not occur in the Particular one, because it is at this moment, that one can meet again their ancestors or former villagers, the so-called charms.

Andrade (2002) explains that the activating part of the Toré is made up of the enchantments or enchanted ones, which in turn form a grid of entities, particular or regionally divided, that pass between the villages, forming a link of interethnic connections that link the Indigenous ethnic groups of the Northeast.

The Tumbalalá classify these supernatural entities into:

Charms of the "brabio" (or of the earth, or of the caatinga) and of the waters - with apparent attributions of prerogatives appropriate to these two elements - which are distinguished from the spirits of the dead by undergoing a process of enchantment that transforms, in a volitional rather than compulsory manner, a person who has died into

<sup>1</sup> "Então vamos para o nosso forte que é o Toré, aqui está o Toré onde agente busca os rituais, é a nossa cultura, é onde a gente busca força na natureza. Vivemos do nosso costume se não tivesse esses costumes ou se um dia chegar a se acabar, não vai mais existir o povo Tumbalalá. Não existe um povo sem ritual... A gente precisa, que usem as nossas vestes, nossa pujá, a nossa cataiôba, ter seus maracás, dançar o toré. Às vezes as pessoas esquecem, ou às vezes não dão importância para aquilo que é necessário. A gente precisa se prevenir pra o momento de pressão de pessoas não índios e posseiros, como também da justiça contra agente".

a charm, who comes to inhabit not a separate stratum of our empirical world, but specific locations (hills, waterfalls, depressions in the terrain, caves, etc. ) in the geography of the village" (ANDRADE, 2002). (translated)<sup>1</sup>

It calls our attention to the strong presence of popular Catholicism, when elements are used such as the Cross, the invocation of the Saints, Jesus Christ, God, and Our Lady, as well as of Afro-Brazilian cults. In this second aspect, however, there is a certain resistance from the Toré master officiants, who reject any relationship with these cults, for considering that their practices go against Christian ideology, and they are evil-oriented. Furthermore, it emphasizes the extraordinary power that the ritual must “agglutinate unifying symbols that are fundamental for the construction of an exclusive Tumbalalá identity, which, in turn, has been emerging from a broad regional cultural matrix” (ANDRADE, 2002).

Hence, we cannot fail to recognize the importance of Toré and Jurema as means of affirmation and rescue of their origins and culture not only for the Tumbalalá, but for many ethnic groups in the Northeastern Brazil.

## 6. Education, Indigenous Education, and Indigenous School Education

To get more specifically into the discussions about Indigenous School Education, we must get into a brief differentiation between Education, Indigenous Education, and Indigenous School Education. According to Luciano (2006), Education is defined.

(...) as the set of processes involved in the socialization of individuals, corresponding, therefore, to a constitutive part of any cultural system of a people, encompassing mechanisms aimed at its reproduction, perpetuation and/or change. (translated)<sup>2</sup>

Following this line of thought, Werneck (2004) states that in a broad sense, education is admitted “as any process of human development, in the physical or in the psychic aspect, in sensitivity, in rationality or in will, while in the narrow sense, it would be defined as the process of apprehension and hierarchization of values in a proper and adequate way to the realization of man as a person and as a personality.

Indigenous Education is only practiced and experienced by Indians, in their way and place where they live, being a much more comprehensive education than what occurs in the school context. It is composed of non-formal educational processes, arising from historical sociocultural relations, experienced from generation to generation among indigenous groups and individuals (SILVA, 2015). Therefore, “Indigenous education refers to the processes themselves of transmission and production of Indigenous peoples” knowledge.” (LUCIANO, 2006, p. 129).

According to the Opinion 14/99 of the National Education Board,

(...) all indigenous peoples, regardless of the school institution, have mechanisms for the transmission of knowledge and socialization of their members and that the institution of the school is the historical fruit of the contact of these peoples with segments of the national society. Thus, it is necessary to clearly distinguish two terms: indigenous education and Indigenous School Education. (BRASIL, 1999, p. 3). (translated)<sup>3</sup>

It is understood, in this way, that Indigenous School Education, by taking into consideration its characteristic of interculturality, is that in which the transmission and production of Indigenous and non-Indigenous knowledge are made through the school, appropriate to reinforce Indigenous sociocultural projects. It contributes to propitiate the opening of new paths that lead to other universal knowledge, which may contribute to a better qualification to meet the demands generated by contact with the globalization of the society in which it is inserted (LUCIANO,

<sup>1</sup> “Encantos do brabio (ou da terra, ou da caatinga) e das águas – com aparentes atribuições de prerrogativas apropriadas a esses dois elementos -, que se distinguem dos espíritos dos mortos por passarem por um processo de encantamento que transforma, de maneira volitiva, e não compulsória, uma pessoa que morreu em um encanto, que passa a habitar não um estrato separado de nosso mundo empírico, mas locais específicos (morros, cachoeiras, depressões no terreno, grutas etc.) na geografia da aldeia” (ANDRADE, 2002).

<sup>2</sup> “...como o conjunto dos processos envolvidos na socialização dos indivíduos, correspondendo, portanto, a uma parte constitutiva de qualquer sistema cultural de um povo, englobando mecanismos que visam à sua reprodução, perpetuação e/ou mudança.”

<sup>3</sup> (...) todos os povos indígenas, independentemente da instituição escolar, possuem mecanismos de transmissão de conhecimentos e de socialização de seus membros e que a instituição da escola é fruto histórico do contato desses povos com segmentos da sociedade nacional. Assim, é preciso distinguir claramente dois termos: educação indígena e Educação Escolar Indígena.” (BRASIL, 1999, p. 3).

2006, p. 129).

According to Silva (2016), the Indigenous peoples and Quilombolas have used interculturality as a pedagogical tool for use in the educational field, claiming a specific and differentiated education. Its main characteristic is the respect for the integrity of their different identities, beliefs values and traditions, thus resulting in an Intercultural Education, or a Bilingual Education for Indigenous peoples.

Defined by Bergamaschi (2010), this type of education would be a frontier space that establishes a dialogue between the knowledge considered as differentiated traditional and Western knowledge. It enables enable an egalitarian relation between Indigenous peoples and the local society, and why not say globally, since we live in an interconnected world, where knowledge is no longer restricted only to a few local communities.

Cohn and Santana (2016) show us that the struggle of Indigenous peoples for the right to a differentiated school education is old, but the advances achieved are very recent, since it was only after the Federal Constitution of 1988 that guarantees have been instituted.

It has resulted in the edition of laws that opened paths and possibilities for Indigenous people to have a specific, differentiated, contextualized school education, respecting their intercultural and bilingual characteristics, assuring them the right to maintain their ethnic identities, use their native languages and their learning processes.

It must be considered that until some time ago, school education was seen by the Indigenous Peoples in Brazil with distrust and repulsion, considering that it was seen as an exclusive means of acculturation (LUCIANO, 2006).

Admissible fear comes from, among many others, the fact that Brazilian historiography, between the XIX and XXI centuries, produced a discourse about these peoples, perfectly connected with the indigenist policies, especially in the scope of the formation of the National State, whose objective was to erase the diversity that characterizes the various ethnic groups present in the national territory, and affirm a pretended homogeneity (JESUS, 2016), we can see that, the projects for Indigenous Education did not meet its main purpose, the fact is that,

Until the 1970s, we can identify a clear, explicit and pragmatic project that guided Indigenous Education in Brazil: catechesis and socialization for the assimilation of the Indians into Brazilian society, since the indigenist tradition was based on the stimulus of social and economic forms that generated dependence and subordination of the land and indigenous labor to a logic of accumulation. The motto was to integrate, to civilize the Indian, conceived as a social stratum submitted to an inferior ethnic condition, when seen in the molds of Western Christian culture (KAHN; FRANCHETTO, 1994) (translated)<sup>1</sup>

The challenges are many so that the intended Indigenous School Education is seen and effective with all the characteristics mentioned above, when we still have so many criticisms of Indigenous peoples regarding the pedagogical processes adopted by the formal school, those summarized in this way by Luciano (2006: 134/135), as:

- The teaching model of indigenous schools reproduces the school system of the national society.
- Normally, the guidelines, objectives, curricula, and programs are inadequate to the reality of indigenous communities.
- The didactic-pedagogic material used is insufficient and inadequate, jeopardizing the educational actions.
- There is no adequate and effective pedagogical supervision in the schools.
- The educational activities are hindered by the difficulty of settling the teachers in the communities, a fact that is due to the absence of decent housing, transportation and food for them, and the lack of training programs for local indigenous teachers.
- The teaching materials and food received are insufficient and non-convenient, and their supply does not follow a systematic schedule.
- Due to the language barrier, the teachers encounter difficulties in developing their didactic and pedagogical work and, consequently, the literacy process is harmed.

<sup>1</sup> “Até os anos 70, podemos identificar um projeto claro, explícito e pragmático que norteou a Educação Indígena no Brasil: catequese e socialização para a assimilação dos índios na sociedade brasileira, já que a tradição indigenista se pautava no estímulo a formas sociais e econômicas que geravam dependência e subordinação da terra e do trabalho indígena a uma lógica de acumulação. O lema era integrar, civilizar o índio, concebido como um estrato social submetido a uma condição étnica inferior, quando vistos nos moldes da cultura ocidental cristã” (KAHN; FRANCHETTO, 1994).



(translated)<sup>1</sup>

According to data from the National Indian Foundation (FUNAI), based on the preliminary results of the Demographic Census conducted by the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics – IBGE, the up-to-date population in Brazil totals 190,755,799 million people, of which 817,963 are Indigenous, 502,783 living in rural areas and 315,180 inhabit urban areas, representing 305 different ethnic groups and 274 indigenous languages fully registered in the country (IBGE, 2010).

This demographic census also revealed that in all states of the Brazilian Federation, including the Federal District, there are Indigenous populations. Funai also registers sixty-nine references of Indigenous people who have not yet been contacted. Furthermore, there are groups that still requests recognition of their Indigenous conditions with the federal indigenist body (BRASIL, 2010). Figure 1 shows the distribution of the Indigenous population by region in Brazil.

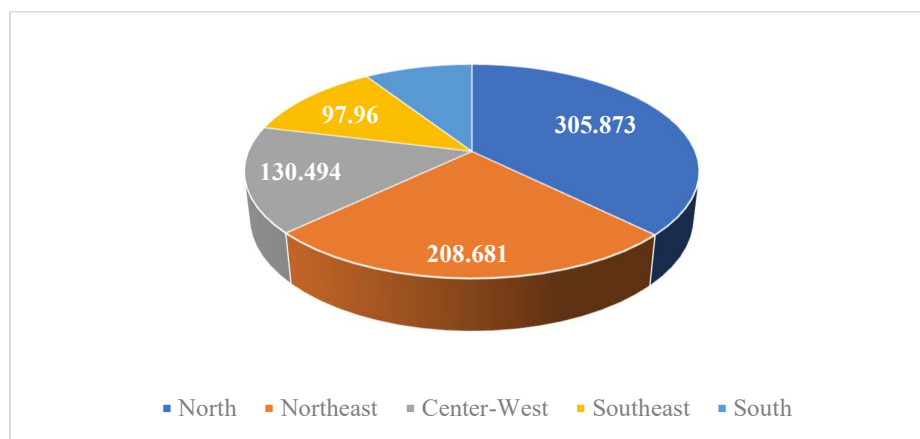


Figure 01: Distribution of the Indigenous Population within the Federal States of Brazil  
 Source: Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE) – Census 2010

Table 01: About 25.5% of the Indigenous population of Brazil is found in the Northeast () and has its second largest concentration in the state of Bahia.

Federative State	Population
Maranhão	38,831
Piauí	2,944
Ceará	20,697
Rio Grande do Norte	2,597
Paraíba	25,043
Pernambuco	60,995
Alagoas	16,291
Sergipe	5,221
Bahia	60,120

Source: Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE) – Census 2010

In this census, the basic educational levels, literacy and illiteracy of the Indigenous population were also evaluated and it was found that the literacy rate of indigenous people aged 15 years or older was shown to be below the

<sup>1</sup> “- O modelo de ensino das escolas indígenas reproduz o sistema escolar da sociedade nacional.  
 - Normalmente, as diretrizes, os objetivos, os currículos e os programas são inadequados à realidade das comunidades indígenas.  
 - O material didático-pedagógico utilizado é insuficiente e inadequado, prejudicando as ações educativas.  
 - Não existe supervisão pedagógica adequada e eficaz nas escolas.  
 - As atividades educacionais são prejudicadas diante da dificuldade de fixar os professores nas comunidades, fato que se deve à ausência de moradias dignas, transporte e alimentação para os mesmos e falta de programas de formação de professores indígenas locais.  
 - O material didático e a alimentação recebidos são insuficientes e não-convenientes, e o seu fornecimento não segue uma programação sistemática.  
 - Devido à barreira linguística, os professores encontram dificuldades no desenvolvimento de seus trabalhos didático-pedagógicos e, conseqüentemente, o processo de alfabetização é prejudicado”. (original text in Portuguese)

national average, situated at 90.4%, and in the Indigenous lands 32.3% are still illiterate, thus demonstrating that the expansion of public policies in the area of indigenous education is a permanent challenge, especially for the population living in Indigenous lands (IBGE, 2010), as we visualize in more detail in Figure 02.

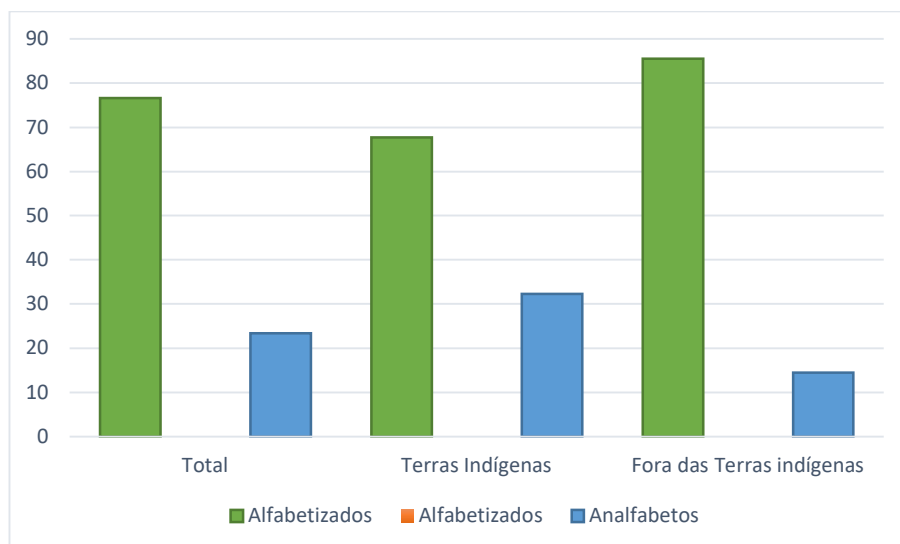


Figure 02: Percentage of Indigenous people 15 y.o. and older, by household and according to literacy status.  
Source: Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE) – Census 2010

Thus, we identify that, on Indigenous lands, according to the 2010 Census, the percentage of literate people aged 15 years or older reaches 67.7%, while outside these lands this percentage rises to 85.5%.

## 7. Legal Supports for Indigenous School Education

Following the promulgation of the Federal Constitution in 1988, a state indigenist policy of integrationist and homogenizing character instituted since the colonial period, was broken. New political and conceptual references are affirmed by the definitions present in its text, which served as a lever in a historical process for the indigenous peoples in Brazil, giving way to a new paradigm, in which these peoples are now considered subjects of law. It has recognized the cultural and linguistic plurality of Brazilian society, a characteristic that until then was considered an obstacle to the formation and development of the nation-state (CADERNO SECAD 3, 2007, p. 16). The Paragraph 2 of Article 210 assures that regular elementary schooling will be given in the Portuguese language, and that Indigenous communities will also be assured the use of their native languages and their own learning processes (BRASIL, 1988).

The Federal Constitution also guarantees, in the first part of Art. 231, that “their social organization, customs, languages, beliefs and traditions are recognized to the Indians (...)” (BRAZIL, 1988).

According to Bonin (2012), the significance of the use of indigenous peoples’ own learning processes when it comes to school education is that the school will have to be recreated in each locality, as it can only consider their own ways of educating if it is incorporated and transformed by Indigenous pedagogies, as there is no single, generic Indigenous Education applicable in any context. The author counsels that schools need to be open to the diverse ways of educating, as well as to the different Indigenous cultures, demanding from the school institution a new attitude towards those differences.

Law No. 9.394, of December 20, 1996, establishes the Directives and Bases of National Education (LDBE) and consequently attributes to the Federal Union the task of organizing Indigenous School Education, as well as the responsibility to ensure protection and respect for cultures and models of Indigenous education. It is noticed that a new position of the legislator, already in Paragraph 4 of Article 26 of said Law, where it is established that the teaching of the History of Brazil will consider the contributions of diverse cultures and ethnicities for the formation of the Brazilian people, especially the comprising Indigenous, African and European matrices (BRASIL, 1996). It recognizes the significance of these cultures and ethnicities, taking to the classroom the true importance of these

peoples in the contexts of the Brazilian historiography.

According to the Paragraph 3 of Article 32 of the LDBE, Indigenous Communities are assured the use of their mother tongues and their own learning processes. It should be noted that there are also two articles in this same law that deal specifically with Indigenous School Education, Articles 78 and 79, which stand out because they bring the objectives for Indigenous School Education and all the means necessary for its fulfillment:

Art. 78. The Union's Education System, with the collaboration of federal agencies for the promotion of culture and assistance to Indians, will develop integrated programs of teaching and research, for offering bilingual and intercultural school education to indigenous peoples, with the following objectives:

I - To provide to the Indians, their communities and peoples, the recovery of their historical memories; the reaffirmation of their ethnic identities; the valorization of their languages and sciences.

II - Guaranteeing to the Indians, their communities and people access to information, technical and scientific knowledge of the national society and other indigenous and non-indigenous societies.

Art. 79 - The Union shall technically and financially support the teaching systems in the provision of intercultural education to indigenous communities, developing integrated programs of teaching and research.

§ 1. The programs will be planned with an audience of the indigenous communities.

§ The programs referred to in this article, included in the National Education Plans, will have the following objectives:

I - Strengthen the socio-cultural practices and the mother tongue of each indigenous community.

II - Maintain training programs for specialized personnel destined for school education in indigenous communities.

III - Develop specific curricula and programs, including the cultural content corresponding to the respective communities.

IV - systematically elaborating and publishing specific and differentiated didactic material.

§ Regarding higher education, without prejudice to other actions, indigenous peoples will be attended to in public and private universities, by means of the offer of teaching and student assistance, as well as by stimulating research and the development of special programs. Included by Law 12,416 of 2011 (BRASIL, 1996). (translated)<sup>1</sup>

In 2011, Law No. 10.172, of January 9, 2001, came into force, approving the National Plan on Education supporting other provisions, fulfilling what is established in Article 214 of the Federal Constitution, having as its objective the articulation of the actions of public power in common goals. It seeks to ensure the development of school education processes at all levels, improving the quality of education and expanding access to citizens (BONIN, 2012).

According to the National Plan on Education established by Law No. 13.005, of June 25, 2014, which is valid for 10 years, to comply with the provisions of Article 214 of the Federal Constitution, among the guidelines established by that Law, is Item X of Paragraph 2, which establishes the “promotion of the principles of respect for human

<sup>1</sup> Art. 78. O Sistema de Ensino da União, com a colaboração das agências federais de fomento à cultura e de assistência aos índios, desenvolverá programas integrados de ensino e pesquisa, para oferta de educação escolar bilingue e intercultural aos povos indígenas, com os seguintes objetivos:

I - Proporcionar aos índios, suas comunidades e povos, a recuperação de suas memórias históricas; a reafirmação de suas identidades étnicas; a valorização de suas línguas e ciências;

II - Garantir aos índios, suas comunidades e povos, o acesso às informações, conhecimentos técnicos e científicos da sociedade nacional e demais sociedades indígenas e não-índias.

Art. 79. A União apoiará técnica e financeiramente os sistemas de ensino no provimento da educação intercultural às comunidades indígenas, desenvolvendo programas integrados de ensino e pesquisa.

§ 1º Os programas serão planejados com audiência das comunidades indígenas.

§ 2º Os programas a que se refere este artigo, incluídos nos Planos Nacionais de Educação, terão os seguintes objetivos:

I - Fortalecer as práticas socioculturais e a língua materna de cada comunidade indígena;

II - Manter programas de formação de pessoal especializado, destinado à educação escolar nas comunidades indígenas;

III - desenvolver currículos e programas específicos, neles incluindo os conteúdos culturais correspondentes às respectivas comunidades;

IV - Elaborar e publicar sistematicamente material didático específico e diferenciado.

§ 3º No que se refere à educação superior, sem prejuízo de outras ações, o atendimento aos povos indígenas efetivar-se-á, nas universidades públicas e privadas, mediante a oferta de ensino e de assistência estudantil, assim como de estímulo à pesquisa e desenvolvimento de programas especiais. Incluído pela Lei nº 12.416, de 2011 (BRASIL, 1996).

rights, diversity and socio-environmental sustainability” (BRASIL, 2014).

In this respect, Luciano (2006) points out:

There is a need to formulate courses and specific projects for indigenous people that value their culture and knowledge, always articulated with non-indigenous scientific knowledge that allows the registration of this knowledge through the production of didactic material. This material is based on the reality of the region and must be linked to projects that can promote the social, cultural, political and economic development of the communities, presenting sustainable alternatives for survival and reinforcing the ethnic and cultural identity of the indigenous peoples. (translated)<sup>1</sup>

Only in this way, we will really be promoting respect for Human Rights, diversity and socio-environmental sustainability. Not only Brazilian legislation has sought to ensure the rights of Indigenous people, but to point that there is also a concern of the international community to guarantee these rights, as demonstrated by the International Labor Organization (ILO) Convention 169 on Indigenous and Tribal Peoples promulgated by Brazil, through Executive Order No. 5051, of April 19, 2004 (BRASIL, 2004).

According to Bonin (2012), the enactment of this Convention became an important stage in guaranteeing the rights of Indigenous peoples, teaming up to establish respect for traditions and cultures, eliminating the integrationist bias and, moreover, pointing to the need to ensure Indigenous participation in the decisions of the Brazilian State concerning to them. The educational rights of Indigenous peoples are dealt with in Articles 26 to 31 of this Convention, ensuring that measures must be taken to guarantee at all levels education to Indigenous peoples, at least on equal terms with the rest of the National community.

Worthy of register there is an entire legislative framework that ensures Indigenous rights to a differentiated, contextualized, intercultural education; however, there is a constant struggle to ensure that these rights are effectively guaranteed and applied to meet the needs and wishes of Indigenous peoples in Brazil.

## 8. Guiding Principles of Indigenous School Education

Considering that the political emphasis given by the Department for Continuing Education, Literacy and Diversity (SECAD) of the Ministry of Education to valuing and maintaining Indigenous social diversity takes as a reference the principles and concepts used in the societal and identity projects autonomously constructed by each indigenous people to guide their destinies and definition of their development model (CADERNO SECAD/MEC, 2007).

Thus, we can state that Indigenous School Education must be a specific type of education, differentiated, bilingual or multilingual, in some cases, as well as intercultural, being understood as such, based on the LDBE and the SECAD, among others, being, therefore, the schooling processes experienced by Indigenous peoples, respecting their cultural spaces and experiences (SILVA, 2015).

We may also state that, based on that valorization, a series of actions were implemented, aiming at expanding the offer of basic education in Indigenous areas, with emphasis on the guidelines of affirmation of ethnic identities, seeking to recover the historical memories, valorization of the languages and knowledge of Indigenous peoples, having been extended not only to intercultural basic education.

For this, it was of vital importance the reflection and actions promoted by innovative experiences promoted by organizations that support Indigenous peoples and the mobilization of teachers and Indigenous leaderships interested in a School Education that might contribute to their autonomy. (NOTEBOOK SECAD/MEC, 2007).

According to Candau (2008), Gomes (2011) and Bergamaschi (2010), “nowadays, thinking about intercultural education is to look beyond the specificities, realizing how important it is for plural societies to know the sociocultural expressions inherent to them and thus be able to respect them” (SILVA; SILVA, 2015).

Therefore, the national legal framework, having as a fundamental and citizenship right, guarantees the indigenous population a specific, differentiated, intercultural and bilingual Indigenous School Education.

<sup>1</sup> Há a necessidade de formulação de cursos e de projetos específicos para indígenas que valorizem a sua cultura e o seu conhecimento, sempre articulados ao conhecimento científico não-indígena que permite o registro desses saberes por meio da produção do material didático. Esse material tem como base a realidade da região e deve estar vinculado a projetos que possam promover o desenvolvimento social, cultural, político e econômico das comunidades, apresentando alternativas sustentáveis de sobrevivência e reforçando a identidade étnica e cultural dos povos indígenas.

## 9. Indigenous School Education in Bahia

According to data provided by the Government of Bahia, sixteen Indigenous groups are recognized in this Federative state, each of them living in accordance with their own cultural traditions, as well as their social, political, and economic organization: Atikum, Kaimbé, Kantaruré, Kariri-Xocó, Kiriri, Payayá, Pankararé, Pankaru, Pataxó Hãhãhãe, Pataxó, Truká, Tumbalalá, Tupinambá, Tuxá, Xacriabá, and Xukuru-Kariri (PIB SOCIOAMBIENTAL, 2019).

As to other Indigenous peoples in Brazil, some of them has dealt with a period of historical, political, and cultural invisibility, strikingly during the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, under the stigma of the denomination of “Caboclos”, that is, a category of “mestizo” assignment, delegitimizing any pretension to claim an ethnic and cultural specificity (ALMEIDA, 2012).

Regarding Indigenous School Education, the state of Bahia supports the conception of education as a process of constitution and strengthening of a specific, intercultural and differentiated education, supported by the Ethnoeducational Territory Yby Yara, a new configuration of the Indigenous educational policy, whose scope is to implement a quality Indigenous School Education meeting the educational needs and the sociocultural specificities of the sixteen Indigenous groups spread in 102 educational spaces (SILVA, 2013).

Grupioni (2006) highlights the specificities of Indigenous teachers’ training should contemplate research models guiding them to understand the knowledge gathered in the school curriculum in the light of their own knowledge, enabling an exchange between knowledges, and thus acquiring a qualification of the Indigenous teachers’ training work, much more valuable and more comprehensive, giving the research an emancipatory condition, overcoming the myth of a scientific neutrality (GUIMARÃES, 2010).

Nevertheless, according to the author, the state of Bahia has adopted a critical perspective in the practice of research in the work of initial and continuing education of Indigenous teachers, considering in its programs the development of research workshops and production of textbooks, which has resulted in the publication of books that are beginning to be adopted in their schools (GUIMARÃES, 2010).

## 10. Final Considerations

The advances brought about by the 1988 Federal Constitution, with respect to the recognition of the rights of Indigenous peoples, represent the redemption of the social debt that Brazil has to those peoples, recognizing them the right to the delimitation and demarcation of their lands, as well as guaranteeing respect for their culture, their uses, their customs, and their traditions, as well as the right to the use of their native languages and the internal processes of learning in regular elementary education taught in the Portuguese language, in accordance with what is expressed in Paragraph 2 of Article 209 of our Magna Carta, which provides them with intercultural education.

Notwithstanding all this, if from a legal perspective the integrationist practice has already been abolished, the confrontation persists, because amid the guarantee and effectiveness of this right there is still a long way to go, given that some derivatives of this right have not yet had a practical effect, which is the reason for constant claims made by entities and ethnic groups in pursuit of the real effectiveness of this right.

As seen, Indigenous School Education has a fundamental role as an instrument of knowledge of this intercultural education, through which Indigenous people increasingly prepare themselves, educate themselves, and appropriate the knowledge of other cultures, of formal knowledge, to hold the indispensable instruments of knowledge and to formally claim their rights.

In this way, Indigenous School Education has faced several phases until the legislation guaranteed intercultural education, in which respect is sought for their customs and beliefs, and, in this, Indigenous education is considered a means of maintaining their values, adding scientific and cultural knowledge outside the village.

In the face of a globalized world, it is imperative that the indigenous people have access to this legislation to guarantee means of fighting and defending their interests and even their existence as a people, moving on to coexistence of mutual cultural respect.

We can, therefore, say that we have advanced in the guarantee of rights when it is verified that the theme of Indigenous School Education goes through a process of affirmation of its values, its experiences, and its knowledge.

We see this work as a prologue to these discussions, and we understand that its continuity is imperative in this sense, being indispensable to give continuity and depth to this theme.

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