

Afro-Brazilian and African History and Culture in K-12 Education in Paraíba state, Brazil

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ABSTRACT – Afro-Brazilian and African History and Culture in K-12 education in Paraíba state, Brazil. In this article, the teaching of Afro-Brazilian and African history and culture in public schools in Paraíba is discussed. The experiences developed by thirty teachers who work in K-12 education and in municipal public schools located in municipalities from the three meso-regions of Paraíba – coastal, *agreste* and *brejo* – are analyzed. For the analysis, projects developed and implemented by the teachers were used, through which the content, methodology, didactic resources and the relations between the implementation of these projects and the development of the education for the ethnic-racial relations were discussed.

Keywords: History. Afro-Brazilian Culture. Curriculum. Ethnic-Racial Education.

RESUMO – História e Cultura Afro-Brasileira e Africana na Educação Básica da Paraíba. Neste artigo discute-se sobre o ensino de história e cultura afro-brasileira e africana em escolas públicas da Paraíba. Nele analisam-se as experiências desenvolvidas por trinta docentes que atuam na educação básica e em escolas públicas municipais localizadas em cidades de três mesorregiões da Paraíba: litoral, *agreste* e *brejo*. Para a realização da análise, recorreu-se aos projetos desenvolvidos e executados pelos docentes, através dos quais foi discutido o conteúdo, a metodologia, os recursos didáticos e a relação entre a execução desses projetos e a efetivação da educação para as relações étnico-raciais.

Palavras-chave: História. Cultura Afro-Brasileira. Currículo. Educação Étnico-Racial.

Introduction

The purpose of this article is to discuss the teaching of Afro-Brazilian and African history and culture in public schools in Paraíba state, Brazil. The research that resulted in this article consisted in the analysis of 30 action projects developed by K-12 education teachers, in municipal schools located in various cities of Paraíba in the coastal region, *agreste*, *brejo* and in the micro-region of Guanabira¹ and its surroundings.

The projects were accessed through schools; therefore, in the Tables I and II these institutions were kept anonymous, having been analyzed the following categories: selected contents, approaches and methodologies, as well as the necessary didactic resources and their compatibility with the education level of the students with whom the teachers deal with in class. In addition to these categories, the relation of the work developed by the teachers with the institutionalization of education for ethnic-racial relations in schools where they operate was analyzed. The “skills, the didactic means and the educational intentions which establish the development of abilities that promote learning in ethnic-racial diversity” were identified (Universidade..., 2014).

The Law 10639/2003 (Brasil, 2003), to the extent that it institutionalized the teaching of Afro-Brazilian and African history and culture in the school curriculum, has been leading to changes in the school curriculum, especially because teachers began to question their practices and to review both the curriculum with which they had been working with until then and, by extension, the teaching materials. The purpose of the changes is to meet the demands posed by this law, which is not always accomplished. Researchers discuss the experiences developed by teachers in the classroom and point out the relations between the implementation of this law and the development of ethnic-racial education as a process in construction, which pervades the teacher’s life story (Gonçalves, 2011), the reorganization of the school from the emancipatory perspective, the reviewing of school culture, the reinvention of the curriculum and of the social relations established between students and teachers (Gomes, 2012), as well as the concrete change in the social reality of the black population (Amâncio, 2008).

Analyzing the projects and their relation with the development of the ethnic-racial education revealed the following issues: the need for the teachers to constantly reflect on their work, to review the curriculum and the teaching material and to have access to the recent historiographical discussion, what will enable using new approaches in the classroom.

Although the elaborated projects denote the presence of Afro-Brazilian and African history and culture contents in the teachers’ work, they are addressed in a sporadic and discontinuous manner.

Another relevant issue is the fact that these contents are addressed through projects elaborated by two or three teachers, mainly in the fields of History, Literature, Religious Education and Portuguese,

what makes them specific rather than a permanent action in school. However, they are important,

[...] considering the curricula as everything that happens in schools, involving the formal educational contents, social relations, cultural manifestations and non-educational knowledge (Oliveira, 2012, p. 3).

It is also pertinent to the projects the lack of contents related to religions of African origin and the limitation of the Afro-Brazilian and African culture to the artistic aspect only.

That which may be seen, but not seized

Despite the legal obligation of K-12 schools to make possible the teaching of Afro-Brazilian and African history and culture, this content is not always present in the daily life of the classroom, staying out of the school curriculum. However, the school should

[...] think teachers and students as authors of the curriculum, permanently built as an intended, emotional, pleasurable 'work of art' with the purpose of returning to the subjects of the school their dignity as creators, as unique, singular active subjects of their *doingknowingenjoying*, although submerged in a social (and cognitive) world that goes beyond them, but which is also made by them (Oliveira, 2012, p. 9-10).

Although the distance between Brazil and Africa is minimal, as metaphorized by composer Déo Nunes², the relation of the school with African continent's history is still of distancing, i.e., still characterized by lack of intimacy, on the part of teachers and students with the African history and culture. In general, both segments have a homogeneous vision of Africa as the land of black people and slaves, where everything is the same and, during a long period, incivility persisted. Otherwise, they retain a fragmented vision of Africa and generalize the entire continent.

In his poetic and musical composition called "Afro-América" (Nunes, 1999), singer and songwriter Déo Nunes reduces the distance between Brazil and Africa, and draws attention to the proximity between these two worlds that overlap. This perspective is evidenced not only in the African civilizing values, revisited and adapted by slaves brought to Brazil in the so-called *africanidades*, but, above all, in the geographical proximity that unites these two continents.

Africa is on the other side of the Atlantic and can be seen "from here". In the mentioned composition, this adverb of place is metaphorized in a reference to Ponta do Seixas, the extreme eastern point of the Americas located in Praia do Seixas, in the city of João Pessoa-PB, from where this composer suggests it is possible to see Africa.

The long relationship between Africa and America resulted in the transposition of values and knowledge to Brazil, values that began to be

part of all sectors of the material and spiritual life of Africans in the new land. For this reason, they had to:

[...] resignify their lives as slaves in Terra de Santa Cruz, adapting their knowledge and culture to the numerous historical environments in this continental country, Brazil. The knowledge and cultural traits were brought inside the heads and souls of men and women, since they were not allowed to bring personal belongings during the long crossing of the Atlantic. The adaptation of the knowledge and cultures to the new reality was critical to their survival and to the opening of negotiation spaces with the masters (Reis, 2008, p. 40).

The African civilizing values are present in everything that Brazilians are and do, in what students and the community are and practice; the school may not always see them. This reality stems from a series of issues, from the distancing of the school from the community where it is located, to the access of teachers to educational materials about Afro-Brazilian and African history and culture, and to the vocational training that they received, especially the initial education, which is still based on Eurocentric values. According to Mattos (2003), the overcoming of the distancing of the school from the contents of Afro-Brazilian and Brazilian history and culture will come with the following measures:

[...] addressing the history of Africa at the same level of depth with which European history and its influences on the American continent are studied; historicizing the process of racialization of black people in the Americas, in their relations with the memory of slavery, and its implications in terms of definition of civil rights in the countries of the continent; incorporating, to the training of teachers, the more recent historiography on the history of slavery in Brazil; and, finally, in a more incisive manner, incorporating to the training of K-12 school teachers the new researches that address, historically, concrete experiences of creation and cultural transformations of identity, in the experience of the African diaspora. (Mattos, 2003, p. 127-136).

In this sense, implementing contents of Afro-Brazilian and African history and culture involves not only the reinvention of K-12 education school curriculum, but also transforming the curricular design of teaching degree programs held by public and private universities across the country, since these institutions are responsible for teacher training but have not always followed the demands of the Brazilian society. Specifically, in the case of History teacher training, it seems contrary to the organized civil society, particularly to the demands posed by black social movements.

Not only undergraduate History programs, but, in general, teaching degree programs, proper spaces of teacher training, remain faithful to the Eurocentric matrix, and its concepts of science, philosophy, arts,

culture, and education are thought from that perspective and are the foundation of the curriculum used in training pedagogues, teachers of Arts, Literature, Geography, History, Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry, Portuguese, and Religious Education.

In a way, curricular proposals already are products from dialogues between the hegemonic thinking, the demands of practices, the concrete political and social conditions of their production. Intensification of pressures from emancipatory practices on them can, in this sense, contribute decisively to the legitimation in texts of practices and approaches today considered marginal, as has already occurred with the incorporation of the compulsoriness of teaching the afro and indigenous contributions to the Brazilian cultural formation. Therefore, this discussion contributes to the repolitization of social life – and that which about we teach and discuss with students in different school situations –, a condition that is necessary for the emancipatory struggles, whose political character is permanently reaffirmed by Boaventura (Oliveira, 2012, p. 14).

Thus, when not totally excluded from the curricular proposal of undergraduate programs, Afro-Brazilian and African history and culture play supporting roles while the European continent is featured as determinant of the other histories and cultures, which makes that all content studied have Europe as foundation. Thus,

[...] topics relating to minority groups, especially blacks, are not included in everyday classes, especially in K-12 education institutions. This situation leads to a problem that is common, and which arose because of poor – if not nonexistent – training of teachers working in this type of education (Ferreira, 2008, p. 226).

Hence, the recurrent approach in K-12 education school curricula is the one according to which, before the European civilization, everything was darkness and incivility; Europeans shouted *fiat lux* and civility and history began. Certainly, at school, the history of Africa is not studied as a constitutive matrix of human history; however, this continent is mentioned when studying the commercial capitalism expansion process or the so-called great Portuguese navigations, which resulted in enslavement of Africans and in their transport to the Americas.

Generally, syllabi related to Africa and to Africans are addressed – in K-12 education schools – as an extension of what had been observed in Europe from the 15th century. Consequently, Africa and Africans prior to contact with Europeans are rarely mentioned.

Afro-Brazilian and African History and Culture: contents and approaches in the classroom

[...] During class I observed how children identified with Bruna, when I was telling the story and showing them illustrations of the book “Bruna

e a Galinha D'Angola." Some said: "she is swarthy." I took the opportunity to address the issue of skin color, saying that Bruna was not swarthy but black, and they started to identify with her, recognize themselves. I showed them other elements of African culture that are present in our daily lives (Kindergarten Teacher II, responsible for designing and running Project 1).

Contents of Afro-Brazilian and African history and culture can be worked in any level of education and using various approaches. Generally, teachers of K-12 school I (initial grades) claim they do not address contents of Afro-Brazilian and African history and culture because their students are too young and naive to understand such contents and are not racist.

Certainly, the teaching of Afro-Brazilian and African history and culture – in K-12 education schools – is not limited to the discussion on racial prejudice. However, even if children have no formed opinion about this phenomenon, they may or may not reproduce stereotypes about Africa, Africans, black people in Brazil and their cultures, as they have access to television and the internet, media where stereotypes are constantly disseminated and reproduced.

Hence, at any education level, it is possible for the teacher, based on a simple resource, such as an image related to the Afro-Brazilian and African history and culture, to address these contents, without necessarily having to wait for the racial prejudice to be expressed in the classroom. It is enough to have training, access to appropriate educational material, and political will to reinvent their practices, as well as the methodology with which they will address such content in the classroom and implement it in the school curriculum.

To this end, it is essential to plan the actions to be developed, so the contents and approaches are compatible with the children's education levels and, thus, provide them with the opportunity to build other references about Africa, the Africans, and the cultures they reinvented in Brazil, as well as the opportunity to comprehend and identify with the Afro-Brazilian cultural expressions, valuing and respecting such expressions as they are also theirs.

Since the institutionalization of Law 10639/2003, teachers are challenged, in everyday classroom practice, to think and teach the history of Africa and of people of African descent from a perspective beyond the Eurocentric comprehension of history that usually characterizes the school curricula and textbooks. That is, all teachers are encouraged:

[...] to confront the Brazilian teaching universe with the challenge of disseminating, for the whole of its population, in a short space of time, a wide range of multidisciplinary knowledge about the African world. Deepen and disseminate knowledge about the peoples, cultures, and civilizations from Africa, before, during, and after the great tragedy of the black slave trafficking of the Sahara, the Red Sea, and the Atlantic (European), and about the

subsequent direct colonization of this continent by the West since the 19th century, are major tasks (Moore, 2010 p. 139).

Implementing Law 10639/2003 requires from teachers in the classroom the posture of a constructor of knowledge and a researcher, to go beyond the restrictions imposed by the Eurocentrism, to build other perspectives for understanding the history of mankind. These actions overcome the European colonialism as the only way to enable the comprehension of history. "What interests us is to expel the colonialists, not necessarily kill them" (Freire, 1985, p. 6).

This perspective of comprehension of history was also discussed by Nascimento. During the formulation of the *quilombismo* movement, this thinker stated:

[...] The history of Africa, of African cultures, civilizations and of African arts will have eminent place in school curricula. Creating an Afro-Brazilian University is a necessity within the *quilombista* movement (Nascimento, 2009, p. 213).

Of the 30 projects examined, 27, that is, 90% of them had been built by teachers who work in K-12 education I (from kindergarten to 5th grade), while 3, that is, 10% of them work in K-12 education II (from 6th to 9th grade). Therefore, introducing to K-12 education I and II classrooms the contents theoretically designed and organized beyond Eurocentrism is a challenge not always achieved. In addition to implementing curricular contents, the conduction of the projects enabled these teachers to reflect on reinventing their practices, to review the teaching materials, as well as the methodologies and approaches with which they had been addressing the old subjects and to think them from the perspective of the ethnic-racial education.

The summary of the projects provided in the following tables indicates that the classroom is active and its objective is to provide the different subjects that are part of the school with elements that are essential for them to build another perception of the self, of the people with whom they coexist in everyday life, and of the spaces they inhabit, realizing in them the diversity of practices and cultures. The projects also point to the possibility of:

Making the relations between teachers and students, among them, and with the other members of the school community the most horizontal possible, seeking to make them understand the importance of this *horizontal policy obligation* for the modes of interaction in classrooms is an important aspect to think the possibilities of proposition and development of curricular proposals in favor of citizenship education in the perspective of horizontal citizenship and social democracy, that is, those practiced daily in all the dimensions of social life (Oliveira, 2012, p. 19).

In general, teachers did not engage in the discussion on Afro-Brazilian and African history and culture only at the time they built and executed the projects. They all had developed some specific action in schools, especially those related to public holidays, for example on May 13 [Slavery Abolition Day] and November 20 [Black Awareness Day]. The development of the projects motivated them to implement, in the school curriculum, the contents featured in Law 10639/2003 in an effective and permanent way. However, this is the greatest challenge for teachers in schools, since it requires participation and involvement of all teachers and managers.

Table I – Afro-Brazilian and African History and Culture in K-12 Education I

Project	Level	General Objective	Approach	Resources	Methodology
1	Kindergarten II	Introducing the African culture and its presence in the lives of Brazilians.	The African Myth of the Creation of the World. The African elements in daily life of Brazilians, based on each one.	Children's literature, "Bruna e a Galinha D'Angola."	Conversation about the story told.
2	2nd grade	Introducing the world of animals based on the African fauna.	The diversity of the African fauna. The different landscapes of Africa. Africa's Cultural diversity. Images of Africa.		Conversation about the content of the video.
3	2nd grade	Knowing and respecting racial differences. Acknowledging the black culture in the constitution of the Brazilian people.	The cuisine. The dance. Physical aspects of the Black Person.	Children's Literature, "O Jongo." Photographs of Black People.	Conversation about the different expressions of Afro-Brazilian culture and the physical differences of Brazilians, based on the self. Photo exhibition with different types of Brazilians and their cultural manifestations.

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4	2nd grade	Introducing the Brazil-Africa relations and the Constitution of the Afro-Brazilian Culture.	The presence of Africans: Dances, Songs, Musical Instruments, and Foods.	Children's Literature	Conversations about the differences between black and white Children presented in children's books. Image exhibition about Expressions of Afro-Brazilian Culture. Listening of Songs related to the Folklore. Exhibition of black characters of Brazilian folklore.
5	2nd grade	Enabling the development of values for co-existence with the ethnic and racial diversity.	Constitution of the Brazilian People. Africa: geographic aspects. Self-awareness. Respect for self and for the other. The Relation with Africa. Dances. Foods. Songs	World Map. Children's Literature, Black Girls. Six Short African Stories. First Story: The Creation of the World. Lila and the Secret of Rain. Music of Jackson do Pandeiro	Conversations about the contents of the books.
6	1st grade	Addressing the diversity of Afro-Brazilian culture through the child's play.	African Heritages in Children's Play. Acknowledging self and the other. Valuing oneself and the other in the differences. Who am I? Construction of Unity in Collectivity	Kids games (Maze and <i>Macala</i>). Children's literature: Canção dos Povos Africanos; Menina Bonita do Laço de Fita; Pretinho, Meu Boneco Querido.	Conversations about the differences between individuals, circle dance nursery rhymes with songs from Pretinho, Meu Boneco Querido.
7	5th grade	Studying, using the movie "Kiriku e a Feiticeira", a little of African history and culture.	Traditional Africa: social organization (family), production, marketing of goods, access to land. African Unity. Roles of women, men, and seniors. African Identity.		Conversation about the content of the video.

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8	1st to 5th grade	Fostering students' respect for racial differences.	What is the color of my skin? Brazil, a country of people with different colors. The colors of Brazil came from Africa.	"What color is my color?"	Conversation about the content of the video. Construction of the self-portrait.
9	Nursery School	Fostering children's respect for the racial differences.	Appreciation of African Culture.	Literature, O Cabelo de Lelê.	Photo exhibition about the diversity of the African people.
10	3rd grade	Revivifying the history of Africa and value, in schools, the Afro-Brazilian culture.	Our vision on Africa. Location of Africa in the World. The Black and the Constitution of Brazilian Culture.	Children's literature; Pretinho, Meu Boneco Querido. Earth Globe and World Map.	Conversation about Africa, the Afro-Brazilian culture, and the presence of African descent in Brazil.
11	4th grade	Studying the history of the black people and their forced immigration to Brazil	Values of the Afro-Brazilian Culture. The Brazilian people constitution process.	African contemporaneity	Conversation about the difference between blacks and whites in Brazil, based on the presentation of images of black children and of white children and perception of one's own body and of the body of the other. Conversation about Africa.
12	Kindergarten II	Examining the children's skin colors so they acknowledge themselves equal in the difference.	Appreciation of different individuals: black, white, and indigenous. Perception of the difference between black and white dolls.	Children's literature: A boneca Preta, Cadê Clarice, O Pé de Igor.	

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13	Nursery School	Acknowledging the differences and similarities of individuals based on their cultural identity.	Cultural identity, similarities and differences between individuals. Equality in difference. Author acknowledgement.	Images of individuals from different cultures: indigenous, black, European, and Asian.	Conversation about the cultural similarities and differences between individuals: African, European, indigenous, and Asian. Questioning children about the difference between them and other individuals, regarding skin color, hair type, eye color, and usual way of dressing.
14	3rd grade	Tackling racial prejudice	The similarities and differences between human beings.		Equal or Different Dynamics. Students observe themselves and one another and point similarities and differences between them and their colleagues.
15	3rd grade	Discussing the discrimination against Africa and Africans	Africa yesterday and today.		Conversation about Africa yesterday and today based on the video.
16	4th grade	Appreciating the Afro-Brazilian and African history and culture.	Educating for the elimination of racism and the appreciation of racial identity. Differences bring closer together, they do not make grow apart.	Song of Grupo Olodum: "Dança aí, nego nagô." Posters with black individuals.	Conversation about the song. Identification of aspects of the Afro-Brazilian and African history and culture in the video, song, and posters.
17	Preschool	Fostering attitudes of respect for diversity among the students.	Equality and difference in Africa and in Brazil.	Children's literature, "Bruna e a Galinha D'Angola."	Conversation
18	1st grade	Fostering the students' interest and acknowledgment in relation to the African culture and observe the biodiversity of this continent.	Nature: animals of the African jungle. Society: Africa's cultural diversity.	World Map. Images of African peoples.	Conversation about the nature and diversity of the African continent. Location of Africa in the World Map.

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19	1st grade	Addressing the children's ethnic and racial identity, promoting their self-esteem, the appreciation of diversity, and the embrace of their color.	Racial identity of each child. The diversity of children and colors in the classroom. Hair types in the classroom.	Children's literature, book, Que Cor é a minha Cor? Os Cabelos de Lelé. Colorful playdough.	Conversation about each one's color. Construction of the self-portrait. Analysis of the other's self-portrait. Modeling of the figures of the mother and the father, and of the own figure.
20	1st grade	Comprehending the culture brought to Brazil by the Africans that was reconstituted here, constituting the Brazilian culture.	Images of Africa. Africa, land of blacks? The diversity of the African people. Children's Identity in the classroom.		Conversation about the civilizing values of the Africans.
21	5th grade	Acknowledging the Brazilian black people's protagonism based on the cultural manifestations	The Brazilians' vocabulary and relation with Africa. The Dances and Struggles of Blacks in Brazil. Afro-Brazilian Cuisine.	Song lyrics. O canto das Três Raças.	Reading of lyrics of the song "Canto das Três Raças." The song was sung and there was a conversation about the lyrics and the relation with the Brazilian people.
22	4th and 5th grade	Exploring the African heritage in Brazil.	Images of Africa. The Africa continent of slaves, of blacks, and of people without culture? Deconstruction of images of Africa. Origin of the Brazilian of African descent. The African heritage in Brazil.	Children's Literature:	Conversation with students, storytelling.
23	Literacy	Reflecting on the Afro-Brazilian and African history and culture.	Black individuals in Africa and in Brazil. The different types of individuals and of hair in Africa and in Brazil.	Children's Literature: the stories of Ifá, o Advinho; A Botija de Ouro e o Presente de Ossanha; and O Cabelo de Lelé. Toys: black dolls and white dolls.	

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24	1st and 2nd grade	Encouraging the children to reflect on the similarities and differences between individuals and realizing that the differences between a child and a colleague make none of them superior or inferior.	The different types of people, different beauties. The racial identities of each student. Various expressions of the Afro-Brazilian culture: foods, dances, religions.	Children's Literature: Bruna e a Galinha D Angola, Betina, O Casamento da Princesa.	Construction and painting of the self-portrait. Preparation of Afro-Brazilian food.
25	5th grade	Enabling the student to understand Africa in its complexity and diversity.	From Negation to Positivation of Africa and Africans. The relation between Brazil and Africa. The Identity of Brazilians: Kings and Queens in Africa, enslaved in Brazil.	Clippings from newspapers and magazines with images of Africa, of Africans, and of blacks in Brazil.	Questioning students about their image of Africa.
26	3rd grade	Addressing the cultural diversities of Brazilians and their particularities. Stimulating respect for cultural differences and for different individuals.	The way five children were treated due to being different. Did the differences make them unequal? Differences bring people closer together, they do not make them grow apart. The diversity of the Brazilian people.	Different dolls.	Puppet theatre
27	3rd and 4th grade	Knowing the Afro-Brazilian and African history and culture based on the story Bruna e a Galinha D'Angola	Creation of the universe in the African culture. Diversity in Africa and the relation with Brazil. African customs reinvented in Brazil.	Children's literature, Bruna e a Galinha D' Angola.	

Source: Projeto de Ação Pedagógica – Paraíba (2014).

Table II – Afro-Brazilian and African History and Culture in K-12 education II

Project	Level	General Objective	Approach	Resources	Methodology
01	9th grade	Deconstructing the Eurocentric and colonizing conception about the African continent.	Africa, space, territory, and societies. Africa prior to the European colonization. The Enslavement of Africans. Living conditions of Africans in Brazil. Formation of the <i>quilombos</i> : a form of resistance. Africans in Brazil's cultural constitution.	Poem "África Mãe," Tim Maia. Excerpt from the movie: Amistad. Video Zumbi dos Palmares, construtores do Brasil.	Session of video/movie. Conversation and debate about Images of Africa.
02	6th to 9th grade	Observing/addressing some aspects of the African culture based on the video "Kiriku e a Feiticeira".	African Habits, Cultures, and Dances.		Kiriku e a Feiticeira and conversation about its content, highlighting aspects of the African culture.
03	6th to 9th grade	Reflecting on the richness of the Afro-Brazilian culture. Building knowledge about the ethnic and racial diversity of Brazil.	Brazil's Cultural diversity. Popular Culture and Ethnicity.	Textbooks and Supplementary Educational Materials. Human Resources	Knowledge building workshops/artifacts related to the Afro-Brazilian history and culture: painting, beads, braids and Afro hair types, <i>capoeira</i> circles.

Source: Projeto de Ação Pedagógica – Paraíba (2014).

According to Table I, the 27 projects contained were built by teachers working in K-12 education I; therefore, they are geared towards children aged 3 to 10 years.

However, these projects addressed contents considered by teachers as complex and difficult to deal with children, especially because such contents are not yet part of the school curriculum. This resulted in the use of didactic material and in the choice of methodology that are suitable for the children's age group. The interrelation that the teachers of these projects made between the didactic materials and the methodologies enabled them to address a broad and diverse content on the Afro-Brazilian and African history and culture.

The methodologies employed were diverse but suitable for the children's school age. Although most projects present several method-

ologies simultaneously, the video session (as a methodology) is present in 13 projects (43.3%) and in association with storytelling. Among the videos presented, the ones specially highlighted were *Kiriku e a Feitiçeira* (10 projects), *A África Tradicional* (1 project), *Que cor é a Minha Cor?* (1), and *Ana e Ana* (1 project). Thus, the story of Kiriku was told and, based on children's literature, other stories were narrated, because storytelling is present in 11 projects (36.7%) and the recurrent works were: *Bruna e a Galinha D'Angola*; *Betina*; *O Casamento da Princesa*; *Os contos de Ifá, o Advinho*; *A Botija de Ouro*; *O Presente de Ossanha e o Cabelo de Lelê*; *Que Cor é a minha Cor?*; *A boneca Preta*; *Cadê Clarice*; *O Pé de Igor*; *Prezinho, Meu Boneco Querido*; *Canção dos Povos Africanos*; *Menina Bonita do Laço de Fita*; *Meninas Negras*; *Seis Pequenos Contos Africanos* (First story: *A Criação do Mundo*); *Lila e o Segredo da Chuva*, and *O Jongo*. The other 6 projects (20.0%) presented other methodologies, such as text reading, music, puppet theatre, and construction of self-portrait.

Regarding the approaches to the contents, of the 27 projects in Table I, 11 of them, that is, 36.7% took Africa as a starting point and addressed the following issues related to the history and culture of this continent:

The African Myth of the Creation of the World. African elements in the everyday life of Brazilians based on each one. Africa, space, territory, and societies. Africa prior to the European colonization. The Enslavement of Africans. Living conditions of Africans in Brazil. Formation of the *quilombos*: a form of resistance. Africans in Brazil's cultural constitution. The diversity of the African fauna. The different landscapes of Africa. Africa's Cultural diversity. Images of Africa. Traditional Africa: social organization (family), production, marketing of goods, access to land, Unity of Africans. Roles of women, men, and seniors. African Identity. Appreciation of African Culture. African Habits, Cultures, and Dances. Our vision on Africa. Location of Africa in the World. The Black and the Constitution of Brazilian Culture. Africa yesterday and today. Nature: animals of the African jungle. Society: Africa's cultural diversity. Africans and the ~~Miscegenation of Brazil~~. Images of Africa. Africa land of blacks? The diversity of the African people. Children's Identity in the classroom. From Negation to Positivation of Africa and Africans. The relation between Brazil and Africa. The Identity of Brazilians: Kings and Queens in Africa, enslaved in Brazil (Projects for Action in Schools prepared by the teachers in 2014).

Even though the starting point was Africa, it is common the association between this continent and Brazil's cultural constitution, especially the construction of Brazilians' ethnic and racial identity. Nevertheless, the cultural aspect is limited to the artistic universe, and there is no reference to technology and science. Thus, when the teachers thought the presence of Africa in Brazil's cultural constitution, they included the following manifestations: music, dance, cuisine, and clothing. Only one project addressed the issue of miscegenation and there was no mention of the Africans' religious aspect.

Of the total projects in Tables I and II, 19 of them, that is, 63.3% took as a starting point the Afro-Brazilian culture and addressed the presence of the African in Brazil, especially in the construction of the nation and of the culture.

Similarly to the 11 projects (36.7%) which defined Africa as a starting point, the 19 projects (63.3%) that elected the Afro-Brazilian history and culture also restricted the comprehension of culture to the artistic expressions of dance, music, and cuisine. In this sense, black individuals in Brazil are conceived by teachers as non-developers of science and technology. Overall, black individuals are not considered as scientists and constructors of knowledge, but as mere reproducers of knowledge. The African legacy in Brazil is limited to artistic construction, especially to body-related expressions, in particular dance, music, rhythms, celebrations, and the cheerful colors with which they dress and paint themselves. These expressions, although cultural, are considered innate, not learned over a lifetime and not transformed. The recurring idea in teaching practice is that black people reproduce, in Brazil, what their ancestors brought from Africa and, naturally, they are born predisposed to dance, sing, play the drums and dress in colorful clothes. As it is commonplace among Brazilians that *all black persons are good at samba*, that is not always true.

Of the total projects in Table I and II, 19 projects (63.3%) elected the Afro-Brazilian culture as a starting point, out of which 7 (23.3%) emphasized the diversity of this culture. However, when considering the total 30 projects, only 1 project (3.3%) of them addressed the religious aspect. This percentage shows that the religions of African matrix are still taboos in the classroom, as demonstrated by the contents selected by teachers.

Another aspect to be considered is the fact that, in the process of elaborating the projects, teachers did not think the school in its entirety, having limited the scope to their classroom and their field of knowledge. There was no involvement of teachers of different areas of knowledge and education levels in the construction and implementation of the proposal; overall, the projects were restricted to each teacher's classroom at the school they worked and to their practice and field of knowledge.

The only exception in this list is Project 3 in Table II, designed by K-12 education II teachers. Unlike the others, this project became a proposal from the school and involved ten teachers of the following fields of knowledge: History, Geography, Portuguese, Arts, Physical Education, Religious Education, and English, in addition to a Pedagogue, each in the respective area of expertise. In the second half of 2014 and first half of 2015, the contents of Afro-Brazilian and African history and culture were worked in an interdisciplinary manner.

This project had no participation of teachers of Mathematics, Physics, Biology, Chemistry, Exact Sciences, and Health Sciences. This reality was observed in all projects and constitutes a challenge in schools, especially because teachers of exact sciences and health sciences – when the subject is Afro-Brazilian and African history and culture – have little dialogue with teachers of the human and social areas, due to lack of knowledge on the subject or no interest in learning how to address these contents in their respective areas.

In general, the projects – even when built collectively – are restricted to the teachers of Humanities and Social Sciences. However, this is a reality that results from the model of training that teachers of exact sciences and health sciences underwent and that tends to isolate these areas of knowledge in relation to humanities and social sciences, as if it were admissible.

Final Remarks

Over a decade after the promulgation of Law 10639/2003, implementation of contents on Afro-Brazilian and African history and culture in the school curriculum is a challenge for many teachers of K-12 education, above all because usually the curricula and textbooks still have a Eurocentric approach, which makes the content established by this law to be discussed in schools only in a few moments, for example on holidays. Thus, currently such contents are not implemented in the school curriculum.

As shown in Tables I and II, the thirty projects analyzed here point some issues and challenges that affect the everyday practice of teachers in the classroom and the type of education provided by the institutions of higher education.

Even though the teaching degree programs provide the future teachers with curriculum components related to Afro-Brazilian and African History and Culture, the curricular design of these programs is still Eurocentric. Therefore, the history of Africa and the Afro-Brazilian culture are not studied in the same proportion compared with the history of Europe. This aspect is reflected in the practice of K-12 education teachers, because, when the subject is Afro-Brazilian and African history and culture, the difficulties are promptly pointed out, and they serve as justification for not addressing such content. Otherwise, when addressed, it is conducted in a discontinuous manner, outside the curriculum and restricted to one teacher or to a group of teachers that identify with the cause of black people. The projects analyzed here point some challenges, such as:

a) the need of continuous teacher training with respect to Afro-Brazilian and African history and culture;

(b) the need of permanent dialogue, in schools, between teachers from all areas of knowledge, so they can, based on their respective areas, engage and address the contents of Afro-Brazilian history and culture in the interdisciplinary perspective;

c) the continuity of the teaching practices related to teaching Afro-Brazilian and African history and culture, because it is a content that pervades all periods of history and areas of knowledge, and should be addressed during the school year, and not only a unit in the bimester; however, this does not imply that the curriculum will replace Eurocentrism by Afrocentrism, but rather dialogue with all cultures that constitute the history of mankind, thus instituting the education for ethnic and racial relations;

d) the permanent access of teachers to recent historiographical works, especially studies that advocate the criticism of Eurocentrism when teaching history and culture;

e) the massification of didactic and para-didactic materials) and other supplementary teaching materials related to Afro-Brazilian and African history and culture in K-12 education schools.

All these issues are essential to the process of implementing the contents of Afro-Brazilian and African history and culture; however, they must be conceived as a public policy, since Law 10639/2003 is part of a larger process called Policies of Affirmative Action for Black Populations. Although the teacher is at the forefront of the educational process, the requirement that this law addresses cannot be the sole responsibility of this subject. It is also the duty of states and municipalities, through the Departments of Education, in addition to universities, ensure the conditions necessary for teachers to carry out their part in this process. These institutions must create the legal conditions, such as the production of teaching materials and textbooks, to provide training and supervise teachers to comply that which is required by the aforementioned law.

The projects analyzed show that something is being carried out in the public schools of the state of Paraíba; however, implementing the contents of Afro-Brazilian and African history and culture in the school curriculum is not the individual task of one or another teacher. This is a broad process and – according to the National Plan for Implementation of the National Curricular Guidelines for the Education of Ethnic-Racial Relations and the Teaching of Afro-Brazilian and African History and Culture – each institution – for example the Ministry of Education, the Education Departments, Universities, the Centers for Afro-Brazilian Studies (NEAB), and schools – have their roles to be performed.

Even if the official documents³ point to the idea of public policy, and that universities are providing training, the projects analyzed and implemented in several schools of Paraíba show that the practices developed are initiatives with no relation or connection with the public policies developed by the municipal Departments of Education. These institutions that manage education have not yet assumed the duty to implement the contents of Afro-Brazilian and African history and culture in the school curriculum as public policy. This reality makes the actions of teachers in schools still isolated, discontinuous, and restricted to an individual teacher or group of teachers in each school.

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Notes

1 Guanabira is one of Paraíba state 23 micro-regions. It is formed by the municipalities of Alagoinha, Araçagi, Belém, Caiçara, Cuitegi, Duas Estradas,

Guarabira, Lagoa de Dentro, Logradouro, Mulungu, Pilõezinho, Pirpirituba, Serra da Raiz and Sertãozinho. It integrates the *Agreste Paraibano* meso-region (História, 2010). The projects were developed in public schools in the cities of Guanabira, and the ones located in its surroundings, such as Rio Tinto, Riachão, Gurinhém, Mulungu, Pirpirituba, Cuitegi, Alagoa Grande, Sapé, Bananeiras, Tacima and Mamanguape.

2 When singing: “Daqui dá pra ver a África, daqui dá pra se soltar”, Nunes (1999) (“from here you can see Africa, from here you can let go”).

3 In the state of Paraíba, resolution n. 198/2010, see Paraíba (2010).

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