

**LAW 10.639/03 AS POLITICAL-PEDAGOGICAL ORIENTATION FOR AN ANTI-RACIST EDUCATION IN SCHOOL: POSSIBILITIES FOR CURRICULUM DECOLONIZATION**

***A LEI 10.639/03 COMO ORIENTAÇÃO POLÍTICO-PEDAGÓGICA PARA UMA EDUCAÇÃO ANTIRRACISTA NA ESCOLA: POSSIBILIDADES PARA DECOLONIZAÇÃO DO CURRÍCULO***

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**ABSTRACT:** This article analyzes the implementation of Law No. 10,639/03 as a political-pedagogical tool for anti-racist education at school, in the context of Brazilian basic education. The methodology was anchored in a bibliographic review and with the documentary analysis of Law No. 10. 639/03. With the contribution of references and the text of this Law, we analyze that from this scenario of racial inequalities and social exclusions is that public policies reparative and affirmative actions are necessary for combating racial prejudice in Brazilian society, given the possibility of resignification and valorization of the black population in cultural aspects, social, scientific, political and others. Thus, it is important to deconstruct stereotyped and prejudiced practices that are still present in school institutions, seeking through an anti-racist education in the sense of recognition about the contribution of the black population.

**KEYWORDS:** Anti-racist education. Curriculum. Decoloniality.

**RESUMO:** Este artigo analisa a implementação da Lei nº 10.639/03 como ferramenta político-pedagógica para uma educação antirracista na escola, no contexto da educação básica brasileira. A metodologia ancorou-se numa revisão bibliográfica e a análise documental da Lei nº 10. 639/03. Com aporte nas referências e no texto da referida Lei, evidencia-se que a partir do cenário de desigualdades raciais e exclusões sociais do povo negro é que as políticas públicas reparadoras e ações afirmativas se fazem necessárias para o combate ao preconceito racial na sociedade brasileira. Nesse sentido, corrobora-se para a resignificação e valorização da população negra nos aspectos culturais, sociais, científicos, políticos entre outros. Assim, torna-se importante a desconstrução de práticas estereotipadas que estão presentes nas instituições escolares, buscando, por meio de uma educação antirracista, reconhecer a contribuição da população negra na construção da sociedade brasileira.

**PALAVRAS-CHAVE:** Educação antirracista. Currículo. Decolonialidade.

**RESUMEN:** Este artículo analiza la implementación de la Ley N.º 10.639/03 como herramienta político-pedagógica para una educación antirracista en la escuela, en el contexto de la educación básica brasileña. La metodología se ancló en una revisión bibliográfica y el análisis documental de la Ley N.º 10. 639/03. Con aportes en las referencias y en el texto de la ley referida, es evidente que del escenario de desigualdades raciales y exclusiones sociales de la población negra es necesario que las políticas públicas reparadoras y las acciones afirmativas son necesarias para combatir los prejuicios raciales en la sociedad brasileña. En este sentido, se corrobora para la resignificación y valorización de la población negra en los aspectos culturales, sociales, científicos, políticos, entre otros. Por lo tanto, se vuelve importante deconstruir prácticas estereotipadas que están presentes en las instituciones escolares, buscando a través de una educación antirracista reconocer la contribución de la población negra en la construcción de la sociedad brasileña.

**PALABRAS CLAVE:** Educación antirracista. Currículo. Decolonialidad.

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## **Introduction**

It is known that Brazilian society is formed by an ethnic-racial diversity that characterizes its population and culture. Thus, it is remarkable that this same plurality, in its majority, is not represented with equity in the fields of development and propagation of knowledge. This fact occurs because societies formed by different racial groups are crossed by racism, as is the case of Brazil, and in which race is given symbolic evaluative and segregationist constructions.

In this context, sustained by Eurocentrism, Brazilian education is marked by the exclusion of the black population. Thus, therefore, based on a Eurocentric teaching that contributed to the erasure and silencing of the knowledge and ancestry of the dominated groups. The confrontation to change this reality goes back to the period of slavery, if we think about the struggle and resistance of enslaved blacks to maintain their culture and identity, until reaching the current social movements, especially the Brazilian black movement.

Given this scenario, after struggles and demands of social movements, important measures to combat ethnic-racial inequalities were conquered, especially in the field of education, such as the enactment of Law 10.639/2003, (BRAZIL, 2003) that makes mandatory the development of themes on Afro-Brazilian and African History and Culture in the Brazilian public and private education network.

Thus, "these legislations provoke an epistemic shift in the hegemonic logic of a common Western-based culture, which challenges the adoption of pedagogical practices that have not been silent in the face of Eurocentric legacies" (MARQUES; CALDERONI, 2020, p. 99, our translation), so that it contributes to the assumption of new interpretive approaches on national identity with some non-Eurocentric assumptions, "because it clearly proposes to broaden the focus of curricula not trying to replace a Eurocentric focus with an African one" (OLIVEIRA; CANDAU, 2010, p. 09, our translation).

In this perspective, the objective of this article was to analyze the implementation of Law 10.639/03 as a political-pedagogical orientation in the context of Brazilian basic education, focusing on the disciplinary areas History and Geography, without losing sight of the other disciplinary areas in the context of the curriculum.

This text is part of the production of knowledge related to master's research in progress, which has been developed in the Graduate Program in Geography of the Vale do Acaraú State University – UVA, within the scope of the reflections of the Research Group Geography, Teaching and Teacher Training (GEFORD) and the Study and Research Group on University

Pedagogy (GEPPU), both registered at CNPq and certified at UVA, in which the main author participates as a student researcher.

The methodology was anchored in a bibliographic review of authors such as Santos (1996, 2007), Mignolo (2008), Maldonado-Torres (2007), Silva (2010), Santos (2005), Gomes (2012), Munanga (2005) and Rocha (2011), along with the documentary analysis of Law No. 10.639/03. Through this contribution, the absences and silences verified historically when it comes to the issues related to the African and Afro-Brazilian matrices that are, to a large extent, supported by the so-called epistemicide (MIGNOLO, 2008; MALDONADO-TORRES, 2007), which is responsible for delegitimizing the possibility of such references being valid and potentially fostering knowledge.

For a better exposition, the article was organized as follows: this introduction, which presents the problematics, objectives and methodology; In the first topic we discuss the notion of epistemicide in order to understand its consequences in the areas of knowledge, which consequently guarantee the delegitimization of forms of knowledge produced by non-dominant groups. The second topic presents a brief contextualization of events that culminated in the implementation of Law 10,639/03, and finally, the final considerations, with some reflections on the need for a greater approach to the theme and its effective insertion in the educational field.

### **On symbolic erasure: epistemicide in debate**

Due to the processes of exclusion suffered by the black population, there is a strong limitation of the reach of black population to the places of access, dissemination and sharing of officialized knowledge. This fact has contributed to the establishment of a system of discrediting the models of knowledge produced by Africans, indigenous people and their descendants. Based on this scenario, it is necessary to ponder about the construction of official narratives and identity references from biases that disqualify other cultures, knowledge and worldviews, based on a hierarchical perspective that, in the limit, does not recognize non-hegemonic epistemologies. About this hegemonic system that advocates the universalization of knowledge, we rely on the abyssal thought of Santos (2007) (our translation), who argues that:

It consists of a system of visible and invisible distinctions. Invisible distinctions are established through radical lines that divide social reality into two distinct universes: the "on this side of the line" and the "on the other side of the line." The division is such that the "on the other side of the line"

disappears as reality, becomes nonexistent and is even produced as nonexistent (SANTOS, 2007, p. 21, our translation).

In this dialectical relationship, all epistemology produced outside the European hegemonic axis, conceived as the "other side of the line", is delegitimized, being reduced only to beliefs, since they were elaborated by human beings, who from the point of view of Europeans, are incapable of producing legitimate knowledge. However, on the "this side of the line" represented by Eurocentrism, it is validated as universal, since it constitutes a knowledge constructed by Europeans who describe themselves as the only ones with the intelligibility to produce knowledge.

The predominance of Eurocentric epistemes in dialogues and formative spaces is directly linked to the absences of other epistemes, since the former, self-affirmed as universal, have been denying and silencing the narratives and histories of the so-called subhuman peoples. Like this

The fundamental characteristic of abyssal thinking is the impossibility of the co-presence of the two sides of the line. The universe "on this side of the line" only prevails to the extent that it exhausts the field of relevant reality: beyond the line there is only inexistence, invisibility and absence (SANTOS, 2007, p. 01, our translation).

In this way, the knowledge produced outside Western Europe went through a process of contesting the validity of knowledge and to point out which should be the subject and the object of knowledge. In other words, the invalidation of practices, ways of being, languages and knowledge of the peoples under European domination configured a way of expropriating the legitimacy of African worldviews and of the original peoples, "marked" as uncivilized and delayed, constituting, in this way, what has been called *epistemicide*.

In the process of dismantling the system of the modern-colonial world, it is necessary to highlight another *locus* of enunciation that, based on the production of other epistemes, give answers to the hegemonic discourse that, in the pretense of universalization, marginalized a plurality of knowledge. On this occasion, it is corroborated with Reis (2020), when he makes the following statement:

In the face of the acculturating and civilizing pressure of European models, which produce subjectivities, aesthetic standards, moralities and sensibilities, local, geopolitically situated knowledge is affirmed, which stands against the epistemological legacies of Eurocentrism and against the social, racial and epistemic injustices that are intrinsic to them (REIS, 2020, p. 09, our translation).

With input in the citation, it is necessary to develop a thought that makes visible the other epistemes hidden by Western thought, denouncing the privileges that the white man elected for himself from the project of modernity/coloniality. In this process of confrontation, it is necessary to think about the constitution of an epistemological subject that thinks from / on the borders of coloniality, which means thinking from the populations that had/have their voices silenced and denied, that is, through "an act of epistemic disobedience" (MIGNOLO, 2008, p. 324, our translation). Among other words, it constitutes the removal of hegemonic thought to later read the world from the perspective of subjects reduced by the Eurocentric legacy.

Through reflection, it is necessary to question the reasons why, in discussions about the origins and forms of elaboration of knowledge, propositions prevail that eliminate from their theoretical-conceptual framework the knowledge produced by black and indigenous peoples to the detriment of Eurocentric knowledge, which they titled as superior and giving themselves the right to impose their universality.

Santos (1996) points out that European domination was not limited to physical territories, but also to symbolic ones, a process that caused the marginalization/invalidation of forms of knowledge linked to subjects conceived as different. For this author, European expansion not only implied the genocide of indigenous and African peoples, but also the epistemicide of the knowledge of such enslaved populations. It also adds that

Strange peoples were eliminated because they had strange forms of knowledge because they were sustained by social practices and strange peoples. Epistemicide was much broader than genocide, because it occurred whenever it was intended to subordinate, marginalize [...] (SANTOS, 1996, p. 104, our translation).

Given this situation, the extermination of African and Afro-Brazilian knowledge is guaranteed by arrangements that involve the production and dissemination of knowledge of blacks through a range of different strategies, such as the contestation and invalidation of epistemologies and forms of African knowledge and, also, the little presence of black women and black men in institutionalized knowledge positions. The absence of content related to black/African issues in official curricula is also highlighted.

The erasure of black culture and existence is the basis of the challenges verified by the black population to remain captive to the school banks, considering that the school system sometimes acts as the main instrument responsible for promoting the process of epistemicide and the whitening of minds and behaviors. This situation, thus, collaborates so that the black

population does not fit the standards and norms defended and sustained by our educational system.

In this context, it is necessary to question the ways in which the notion that is still so present in the representations that determine who should be the subjects of knowledge and the knowledge considered legitimate is sustained. The difficulty of debating and unveiling the variables that interfere in the organization of official teaching programs and the consequent silencing of the themes and contents related to blacks is configured as a strategy developed by Eurocentrism that, in order to propagate European knowledge as universal, excluded and denied the plurality of different knowledge.

In this way, the subjects are educated/trained to ignore the place of knowledge and production of ideas given from black and African matrices. Due to black epistemologies being denied in official curricula, the black population and other subjects are not allowed the possibility of knowing the world, as well as their organizations from an Afrocentric knowledge. According to Silva (2010, p. 101-102, our translation):

It is through the link between knowledge, identity and power that the themes of race and ethnicity gain a place in curricular theory. The curricular text, understood here in a broad way – the textbook and paradigmatic, the oral lessons, the official curricular guidelines, the school rituals, the festive and commemorative dates – is filled with national, ethnic and racial narratives. In general, these narratives celebrate the myths of national origin, confirm the privilege of dominant identities, and treat dominated identities as exotic or folkloric. In terms of racial representation, the curricular text clearly retains the marks of the colonial heritage. The curriculum is undoubtedly, among other things, a racial text. The issue of race and ethnicity is not simply a 'cross-cutting issue': it is a central issue of knowledge, power and identity. The knowledge about race and ethnicity embodied in the curriculum cannot be separated from what children and young people will become as social beings. The question then becomes: how to deconstruct the racial text of the curriculum, how to question the hegemonic narratives of identities that constitute the curriculum?

Given this contribution, we agree with Mignolo (2008, p. 295, our translation), when he states that "the path to the future cannot be built from the ruins and memories of Western civilization and its internal allies", that is, it must be recognized that the project of European modernity has serious flaws, since it subordinates and belittles an immense repertoire of different knowledge. Overcoming such failures requires thinking from another *locus* of enunciation, so that only on the basis of another epistemological matrix will it be possible to build critical knowledge.

In this bias, the proposition of the insertion of contents of Afro-Brazilian History and Culture in the school context aims to present the expansion of the horizons of contemplation and production of knowledge that can no longer be restricted to Eurocentric knowledge. This is the reason why there is a need to break with the installed framework, in order to hinder the appropriation and operationalization of this measure in political-pedagogical projects and official programs, making it impossible to develop pedagogical practices that contemplate the ethnic and cultural diversity that makes up the classroom. The following is a brief contextualization of events that culminated in the approval of Law 10,639 in 2003 (BRASIL, 2003).

### **Contextualization of Law 10.639/03: possibilities for curricular decolonization**

In the context of the approval of Law No. 10,639/03, it is important to highlight some events and paths materialized in history that triggered important changes in favor of the ethnic-racial segment. Thus, it is noteworthy that, initially, the educational legislation denied the black population the right to have access to education. Regarding this situation, Decree 1,331-A, of February 17, 1854, regulated in article 69: "it established that slaves would not be admitted in the public schools of the country, and the provision of instruction for black adults depended on the availability of teachers" (DECREE 1. 331-A apud ROCHA, 2011, p. 17, our translation). Teachers were not required to teach blacks, if they wanted to, they could teach on Saturdays, Sundays, and holy days.

According to Rocha (2011, p. 17, our translation),

Decree No. 7,031-A of September 6, 1878, in turn, established that blacks could only study at night. The night school was open only to adult clientele, over 14 years old and essentially male. A companion law of December 5, 1824, prohibits the leper and the negro from attending public school.

Decree No. 7,031-A, of September 6, 1878, which established that blacks could only study at night was another strategy to make it impossible for the black population to enter school. However, before the social configuration established in the period of the Abolition of Slavery, the Republic in Brazil sought the restructuring of the country, and for this "conferred on the slaves, seen as alien, the condition of human person and the First Constitution of the Republic predicting the granting of citizenship and equality" (CUNHA JÚNIOR, 2011, p. 13, our translation).

In the periods of the end of the Empire and the beginning of the Republic, there was investment by the Brazilian State so that immigrants "could adapt in the country, while blacks, who for so long were free labor, ended up renegeing on the lack of schooling and social marginalization due to the absence of public policies" (MOURA, 1988, p. 25, our translation). According to Rocha (2011, p. 17, our translation),

According to some authors, education was an element that was taken into account during the process of abolition of slave labor. It was necessary to form cadres of workers necessary for a free society. It can be said that there was a concern of the public power with the importance of education as an element of social inclusion. But such inclusion, for the former slaves and their descendants, was carried out in an absolutely marginal way, since it constitutes a duality of education, representing the inequalities between two social groups. There was a school to anticipate the society of the time with its needs and another for the workers. In other words: the different school for specific audiences in which some have access to material wealth and the others do not.

With input in the citation, it is analyzed that the abolition of slavery, in its initial phase in the republican period, along with social and educational inclusion for blacks and their descendants was placed in a limited way. This is because "there was a thought rooted in the Eurocentric vision with the ideology of racial supremacy, which reinforced stereotypes, emphasizing marginalization and non-access to education" (SISS, 2003, p. 29, our translation). The Constitution of the Republic of the United States of Brazil, dated 1891, in paragraph 6 of article 72 does not present elements for an effective implementation of the premises of racial equality. As a result of this absence, it culminated in the invisibility, once again, of the black population. This fact "evidenced in paragraphs 1 and 2 of article 70, which excluded beggars and illiterates from political rights, a condition that was the majority of black former slaves" (ROCHA, 2013, p. 10, our translation). Also, according to the author:

During the colonial period until the Republic, popular education, as it is understood today, was not a concern for the public power. The vast majority of slaves did not attend school, as their time was required almost exclusively for productive activity. The Catholic Church, at the time responsible for primary and secondary education, allowed only white and wealthy people to receive this formation, which was offered to them in their own homes or directly with the Jesuits in the convents. Children of settlers had opportunities to learn to read and write, thus progressing in the educational field, while according to Marcus Vinícius Fonseca (2001), the schooling of blacks and Indians "takes place only between the gaps of the colonial system and as a form of resistance and contestation. Legally, in Brazil there was a determination to deny access to reading and writing to slaves. Even if the masters proposed to bear the costs, education, with the school characteristics, was denied to the slaves" (ROCHA 2011, p. 16, our translation).

The discussions about racial issues in Brazil, however, were taking shape and groups were formed with a view to building a thought of resistance and social inclusion. In this sense, according to Santos (2005, p. 25, our translation),

From the 1940s to the 1970s, several black social movements erupted in the search for social insertion of the Afro-Brazilian population, such as the Black Experimental Theater (TEN) in 1944, the National Council of Black Women and the First Congress of the Brazilian Negro, in 1950, and the Unified Black Movement (MNU) in 1978.

In the 1970s, other organizations were emerging aimed at strengthening the national black identity based on the fight against discrimination and prejudice and contrary to the myth of racial democracy established in our country.

Such groups debated alternatives to reducing racial disparity and inequality. Among other factors, the movements paid attention to the educational issue as a fundamental point, since an exclusionary system was perpetuated for years (SANTOS, 2005, p. 26, our translation).

Already in the 1980s, there continued to be many debates about the conditions of education in our country, presenting the vision of equality, social justice and quality in education. According to Müller and Coelho (2013, p. 25, our translation):

In 1983, the then Federal Deputy Abdias do Nascimento proposed a bill, No. 1,332/83, which provided for the inclusion of the teaching of African and Afro-Brazilian History and Culture in primary, secondary and higher education. However, the said project was not approved.

The Citizen Constitution dated 1988 had in its conception great influence and effective participation of social movements, among them the movement of educators and of black people. Santos (2005, p. 30) points out that "it represented a milestone, because, unlike previous constitutions, it brought, as one of its premises, the rejection of prejudice, discrimination and racism, representing a significant advance for Brazilian society".

Item IV, of Article 3 of the Federal Constitution of 1988, ratifies the need to combat discrimination in socio-racial relations, let's see: "promote the good of all, without prejudice of origin, race, sex, color, age and any other forms of discrimination" (BRAZIL, 2004, p. 7, our translation). Like this

[...] in 1990, the Zumbi dos Palmares March in 1995 was the milestone, which established the cry about the condition of black Brazil, triggering a national

program to confront racial inequalities in the country (MÜLLER; COELHO, 2013, p. 20, our translation).

In January 2003, Federal Law No. 10,639 (BRAZIL, 2003) was approved and promulgated, sanctioned by the government of President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, meeting the decades-long demands of the Black Movement. This segment had been fighting for years for the Brazilian State to recognize the existence of racism and abolish the discourse of the myth of racial democracy that, for a long period, was strategically propagated and, unfortunately, is sometimes still present today. This myth continues to influence the Brazilian social imaginary by considering that everyone is treated socially equally, in order to deny the racism that privileges white people to the detriment of black people.

Thus, as a social policy of recognition of the successful differences of the period of enslavement of blacks in Brazil, as well as the recognition of the participation of the black population in the historical process of this country, the social and popular movements, through struggles, managed to approve in 2003 the Guidelines for Multiracial and Interethnic Education to be implemented in the country's basic education schools. According to Opinion No. 003, of March 10, 2004,

This law is exactly one of the ways of affirmation and recognition of African and Afro-Brazilian culture and history, emphasizing self-esteem and the importance of this culture in the Brazilian conjuncture and formation (BRAZIL, 2004, p. 30, our translation).

Thus, Law 10.639/2003 (BRAZIL, 2003) states that Afro-Brazilian culture and history are inserted in the school curriculum. The National Curriculum Guidelines for the Education of Ethnic-Racial Relations and for the Teaching of Afro-Brazilian and African History and Culture approve and substantiate the inclusion of the law, which aims to correct injustices, combat discrimination and prejudice, emphasizing social inclusion and the full exercise of citizenship to those who are inserted in the Brazilian educational system (BRAZIL, 2004, p. 35, our translation).

In this perspective, the Guidelines show the need for special policies that reverse the exclusionary pattern established in Brazil, which historically prevented many black Brazilians from having access to school education and its permanence (BRAZIL, 2004, p. 40, our translation).

According to Opinion No. 03/2004, which establishes the National Curriculum Guidelines for the Education of Racial Ethnic Relations and for the Teaching of Afro-Brazilian and African History and Culture, it had great importance in this legal process, since it justified

the need for the guidelines as a strategy to implement this law to the demands of the black and Afro-descendant population in the field of education. As exemplified in one of the excerpts taken from the introductory questions of the aforementioned opinion:

The opinion seeks to offer a response, among others, in the area of education, to the demanded Afro-descendant population, in the sense of affirmative action policies, that is, reparation policies, and recognition and appreciation of their history, culture, identity. It is a curricular policy, founded on historical, social, anthropological dimensions arising from the Brazilian reality, and seeks to combat racism and discrimination that particularly affect blacks. In this perspective, it proposes the dissemination and production of knowledge, the formation of attitudes, postures and values that educate citizens proud of their ethnic-racial belonging - descendants of Africans, indigenous peoples, descendants of Europeans, Asians - to interact in the construction of a democratic nation, in which all, equally, have their rights guaranteed and their identity valued (BRAZIL, 2004, p. 13, our translation).

The opinion is presented as affirmative action and reparative policy of recognition and appreciation of history, culture and black identity, which needs to enter the walls of basic education institutions of public and private networks, bringing transformations in the curricular policies of basic education. This is the result of Opinion No. 3, of June 17, 2004, which establishes National Curriculum Guidelines for the Education of Ethnic-Racial Relations and for the Teaching of Afro-Brazilian and African History and Culture (BRAZIL, 2004). Highlighting article 2 which says:

Art. 2º The National Curriculum Guidelines for the Education of Ethnic-Racial Relations and for the Teaching of Afro-Brazilian and African History and Culture consist of guidelines, principles and foundations for the planning, execution and evaluation of Education, and have as their goal, to promote the education of active and conscious citizens within the multicultural and pluriethnic society of Brazil, seeking positive ethnic-social relations, towards the construction of a democratic nation (BRAZIL, 2004, p. 19, our translation).

In this case, the guidelines operate as a regulatory instrument by guiding the principles and foundations that guide pedagogical practices and educational assessments. They also determine the goals to be achieved with regard to the formation of Brazilian citizens, in the sense that they understand the multicultural and pluriethnic society that is the country, through more positive ethnic-racial relations in the educational process, focusing on the construction of an equitable and democratic nation, in which all forms of racism are fought, prejudice and discrimination.

Regarding the Opinion, it describes that in the fight against racism and for the development of an education in which difference is respected, the construction of pedagogies that seek, in fact, to effect changes should be guided. In this sense, he points out:

Pedagogies to combat racism and discrimination elaborated with the objective of educating positive ethnic/racial relations aim to strengthen among blacks and awaken among whites' black consciousness. Among blacks, they will be able to offer knowledge and security to be proud of their African origin; for whites, they can allow them to identify the influences, contribution, participation and importance of black history and culture in their way of being, living, relating to other people, especially black people. They will also be part of a process of recognition, on the part of the State, society and the school, of the social debt they have in relation to the black segment of the population, enabling an explicit position against racism and racial discrimination and the construction of affirmative action at the different levels of education in Brazilian education (BRAZIL, 2004, pp. 16-17, our translation).

With regard to pedagogies to fight racism, Opinion No. 03/2004 adds:

Such pedagogies need to be attentive so that everyone, blacks and non-blacks, in addition to having access to basic knowledge considered fundamental for life integrated into society, competent professional exercise, receive training that enables them to forge new ethnic-racial relations. Therefore, there is a need, as we have already seen, for qualified teachers to teach the different areas of knowledge and, in addition, sensitive and able to positively direct the relations between people of different ethnic-racial belongings, in the sense of respect and correction of postures, attitudes, prejudiced words. Hence the need to insist and invest so that teachers, in addition to solid training in the specific area of activity, receive training that enables them not only to understand the importance of issues related to ethnic-racial diversity, but to deal positively with them and above all to create pedagogical strategies that can help re-educate them (BRAZIL, 2004, p. 20, our translation).

It should be noted that the mandatory teaching of Afro-Brazilian and African History and Culture should not be restricted only to the disciplines suggested by Law 10.639/03, such as Artistic Education, Literature and History of Brazil, on the contrary, it should also be taught in other disciplines in order to contribute to correct the injustices suffered, historically, by black peoples. In this perspective, Opinion No. 03/2004 considers that:

The teaching of Afro-Brazilian and African History and Culture, the education of ethnic-racial relations, as explained in this opinion, will be developed in the daily life of schools, at different levels and modalities of teaching, as content of disciplines,(4) particularly, Artistic Education, Literature and History of Brazil, without prejudice to the others(5), in curricular activities or not, work in classrooms, in science and computer laboratories, in the use of reading room, library, playroom, recreation areas, sports court and other school environments (BRAZIL, 2004, p. 20, our translation).

It is also worth mentioning another document that promotes Law 10.639/03, this being the National Plan for the Implementation of the National Curriculum Guidelines for the Education of Ethnic-Racial Relations and for the Teaching of Afro-Brazilian and African History and Culture. Regarding the topic of Elementary School, the Plan states that:

In elementary school, the act of educating implies a close relationship between children, adolescents and adults. This relationship needs to be based on egalitarian treatments, considering the uniqueness of each subject in its cultural, family and social dimensions. In this sense, the education of ethnic-racial relations should be one of the structuring elements of the pedagogical political project of schools (BRAZIL, 2009, p. 49, our translation).

Law 10.639/2003 (BRAZIL, 2003) on the one hand aims to promote the deconstruction of racial prejudice and, on the other, to develop the construction of the valorization of blacks starting from the presentation of positive points of their ancestors since their existence and experience on the African continent and, later, from the African diaspora in Brazil. In this way, it is understood a mechanism to combat racism still perpetuated in school through teaching. Thus, according to Gomes:

The school, as a social institution responsible for the organization, transmission and socialization of knowledge and culture, reveals itself as one of the spaces in which negative representations about blacks are disseminated. And for this very reason it is also an important place where these can be overcome (GOMES, 2003a, p. 77, our translation).

In this perspective, from the importance that the school assumes within society as an institution that transmits and preserves a certain culture and knowledge, in this case being an education that privileges white Eurocentric standards, it becomes a place-space that segregates. The school, historically, is one of the social agents responsible for negatively portraying the black being and its culture, due to sometimes remaining presenting an image that inferiorizes it. Thus, it is necessary to approve educational legislation, such as Law 10. 639/03, so that there is the development of intercultural educational processes, ensuring the mediation and valorization of pedagogical practices in which the plurality of knowledge is respected and legitimized, so that they confront the colonial heritage still present in the school curriculum.

As for the term "colonial heritage" used here, it refers to the curriculum model used in schools, which despite the end of colonialism in the country, still insists on the selection and curricular organization that privilege teaching from the Eurocentric perspective. In this regard, Nelson Maldonado-Torres (2007) observes how colonialism remained present throughout the process of building Brazilian society through coloniality.

[...] it remains alive in didactic texts, in the criteria for good academic work, in culture, in the common sense, in the self-image of peoples, in the aspirations of subjects and in many other aspects of our modern experience. In this sense, we breathe coloniality in modernity on a daily basis (MALDONADO-TORRES, 2007, p. 131, our translation).

Coloniality, as a result of an imposition of power and colonial domination, affects the ideological structures of the people and penetrates the subjectivity of the subjects. As a result, they understand that society, even after the breaking of the bond of this domain, the bonds imposed by colonialism are still alive. Brazilian society, in order to continue legitimizing an elitist white minority, has limited the black population to silencing and exclusion, however, they continue to react and resist the system of oppression that has been imposed on them, in such a way that they continue to fight for the recognition of their identities, for the right to difference and the legitimation of their own epistemologies.

The school, in this perspective, educative institution and stage of diversity, acts directly in the education of citizens, so that because of the social function that it has, it is up to it to develop practices that recognize and value, in fact, the subjectivities of all students.

When dealing with black identity, it is understood that the school still shows itself as a strong ally in the process of maintaining the invisibility of black people. This is present in the curriculum that, consequently, has the textbook as an instrument that helps in the reproduction of the exclusion of the black population. The image of black citizens appears in an inferior way, which strengthens discrimination and the dissemination of prejudiced and exclusionary ideas of both black identity and its history and black culture. Thus, a negative imaginary is created, as Gomes points out:

Black identity is understood, here, as a social, historical, cultural and plural construction. It implies the construction of the look of an ethnic/racial group or of subjects who belong to the same ethnic/racial group on themselves, from the relationship with the other. Building a positive black identity in a society that, historically, teaches blacks, from a very early age, that to be accepted it is necessary to deny oneself, is a challenge faced by black Brazilians (GOMES, 2003b, p. 171, our translation).

With regard to the formation of black identity in a positive way, it is understood as a painful process for some black people, that in many cases the black subject herself/himself denies his identity, his blackness, that is, tries "whitening" his phenotypic traits and/or denies his ancestry so that he can be part of a certain social group and be better accepted in Brazilian society. This reality of denial is perpetuated in different spaces, such as communication

channels, social networks and even at school. In the specific case of the school, for example, in many textbooks there is a lack of awareness for the resignification of the black person, in such a way it is presented in the condition of slave, that is, in a condition that denies the existence of this before the process of invasion of the African continent by the Europeans.

Another aggravating factor to the treatment of ethnic-racial issues refers to the initial training of teachers who, due to the absence of contents that contemplate the complexity of such themes in their educational path, end up reproducing the hegemonic discourse. Regarding these issues, Silva (2001, p. 141, our translation) points out that:

The process of selectivity of the curricular contents, the hidden curriculum, the invisibility and the repression of the image and culture of the segments without historical prevalence, in our society, are some of the mechanisms produced to maintain the hegemony of the dominant ideology of this whole process is configured in the Eurocentric curriculum in force in Brazilian schools, at all levels of education.

It is also added that, in most or a large part of the school institutions, the textbook is considered the official prescriptive curriculum of the schools, which contributes to the fact that many educators are reproducers of the ideas contained in this didactic resource. The teacher, thus, ends up reproducing a European vision of the world and people, and, in many cases, about the culture, the identity of black people. This view contributes to the permanence of coloniality in the curriculum, which is reproduced through a monocultural teaching, which discriminates and does not value the cultural diversities of students. The reflection of this teaching is precisely the denial of culture, identity and way of life that have been produced by black peoples. In this relationship, the school, in which the plurality of cultures and ways of being should prevail, becomes a reproductive agent of a single pattern, being, therefore, that of culture and white people.

It is from this scenario of racial inequalities and social exclusions that reparative public policies and affirmative actions are necessary. Thus, it is urgent to implement legal documents that support the production of legal strategies, which aim to reduce disparities in access to an equitable education for all, regardless of race and that respects the cultural diversity of which Brazilian society is composed.

Law 10.639/2003 (BRAZIL, 2003) is of paramount importance for the fight against racial prejudice in Brazilian society, so that it provides the resignification and valorization of the black population from various cultural, social, scientific, political aspects, among others. In this way, for the authors Oliveira and Candau (2010, p. 32, our translation), the law seeks to

"deconstruct the myth of racial democracy; adopt pedagogical strategies to value difference; strengthen the anti-racist struggle and question ethnic-racial relations based on prejudice and discriminatory behavior."

In this way, the law makes it possible to contribute to the construction of an equitable and democratic society, in which differences are valued/respected and blacks are recognized as historical social subjects.

### **Law 10.639 in the educational field: challenges and possibilities of anti-racism in legislation**

In the universe of the school, the knowledge in circulation is plural not only due to the diversity of contents explored in this space, but also because of the complexity of the subjects who live in it. This relationship constitutes the school environment as an absolutely central space for the formation of subjects capable of living in a multiracial society, prepared to understand that the differences that individualize them cannot be mechanisms to justify racial inequality, as well as epistemicide/genocide of some to the detriment of others.

From this context, it is necessary that the school breaks with this strategic place that it occupies, that is, it is necessary that it abandons the monocultural and ethnocentric character impregnated in the school curricula. As a new space for formation, implement reflective contents that dialogue with social demands and that the classroom becomes a place of formation for equity, in the sense that differences are recognized and respected, without having to reproduce the same thoughts and/or be equal to the Westernized standard (white/male/straight/Christian).

In this perspective, the broadening of the view on the absence of narratives that effectively contemplate the cultures and histories of Africans in diaspora, as well as of the original peoples becomes necessary. This pervades, therefore, the questioning of the supposed neutrality of didactic-pedagogical resources and the narratives of education professionals. Otherwise, when entering the school institution that reproduces the hegemonic cognitive parameters, the non-white student is forced to deny essential elements of the constitution of his identity. In this process of denial, he begins to desire for himself the ethnic and cultural traits of the other, so legitimized and exalted in school, as well as in racist society.

The propagation of impossible equality, to the detriment of real diversity, inserts the black and indigenous student in a quest to be who he is not. Such a structure is also responsible for building in the white student the understanding that he is the "right" representation of

humanity, generating a false identity reality that will probably contribute to this, in your social relations, keep reproducing racism.

The presence of racism in school institutions is realized in the naturalization that guarantees a certain comfort zone of Eurocentrism in the power structure of the school and a denial of the protagonism of the entire school community in this construction, which sustains racism even through silence and omissions, as Munanga (2005, p. 15, our translation) tells us:

Here is the great challenge of education as a strategy in the fight against racism, because the logic of scientific reason that says that biologically there are no superior and inferior races is not enough, as is not enough the Christian morality that says that before God we are all equal, so that the heads of our students can automatically stop being prejudiced. As educators, we must know that although the logic of reason is important in the formative and informative processes, it does not modify by itself the imaginary and the negative collective representations that one has of the black and the Indian in our society.

Thus, because of this Brazilian negationist position, in assuming racism as an organizer of institutions, it becomes significant to demarcate the achievements in the sense of legislation. Thus, from the implementation of Law 10,639 in January 2003, (BRAZIL, 2003) amending the Law of Guidelines and Bases of Education 9.394/96, begins a series of achievements of black men and women who, over decades, had been presenting proposals and claiming actions in educational contexts in order for black epistemologies to achieve visibility in the educational context.

In this sense, the Law presupposes that the community and the school curriculum address, transversally, the History and African, Afro-Brazilian and Indigenous Cultures, that is, that it is not limited only to thematic projects, sequenced activities or specific events (Black Consciousness Month and Indian Day, for example). In other words, the proposal of the law proposes the encounter, recognition and daily walk together, so that it is able to break the Eurocentric epistemological hegemony and, consequently, advance with the anti-racist struggle in the school environment.

Another point that we highlight about Law 10,639 concerns the understanding that all education professionals, and not only in the disciplines of History and Arts, but also in all areas, such as Geography, should seek to contemplate contents related to ethnic-racial relations. This requires a summary review of the curricula and teaching/pedagogical practices that have been developed in the school.

Reframing the school in this sense is a task of all people involved in the educational process, regardless of the area and/or their ethnic-racial belonging. In this way, the teaching of ethnic-racial contents should give rise to an anti-racist education that seeks to strengthen identity, as well as ancestry and recognition of the processes of resistance of these peoples "in order that this knowledge, fundamental in the construction of worldviews and behaviors and positioning, contributes to the project of educating for racial equality" (SANTOS, 2009, p. 22, our translation).

In this perspective, the school, as an institution that promotes the educational formation of all citizens, has the duty to develop a work in favor of the strengthening of cultures, and not only Eurocentric knowledge. It should also enable the resignification of the image of the black and the indigenous, because "it is up to the school in its formative process, to develop an education aimed at subjects so that they present more comprehensive and evaluative human conceptions of the person" (MARTINS; GOMES, 2016, p. 01, our translation).

Considering an education focused on the construction of a society in the perspective of racial equality in the country, it is essential to introduce in the teaching of the disciplines that make up the school curriculum of the theme about ethnic-racial relations, with the objective of reviewing positions and positions related to the various ethnic worlds.

Among the general competencies established by the National Common Curricular Base (BNCC), we can observe contexts pertinent to the processes of anti-racist education, such as:

Valuing the diversity of knowledge and cultural experiences and appropriating knowledge and experiences that allow you to understand the relations of the world of work and make choices aligned with the exercise of citizenship and your life project, with freedom, autonomy, critical awareness and responsibility. To know yourself, to appreciate yourself and to take care of your physical and emotional health, understanding yourself in human diversity and recognizing your emotions and those of others, with self-criticism and the ability to deal with them. Exercise empathy, dialogue, conflict resolution and cooperation, making oneself respected and promoting respect for the other and human rights, with the reception and appreciation of the diversity of individuals and social groups, their knowledge, identities, cultures and potentialities, without prejudices of any nature (BRAZIL, 2018, p. 25, our translation).

Also, according to the BNCC, we can observe that the construction of school curricula must contemplate principles present in the processes of an anti-racist education:

In Brazil, a country characterized by the autonomy of federated entities, marked cultural diversity and deep social inequalities, education systems and networks must build curricula, and schools need to develop pedagogical

proposals that consider the needs, possibilities and interests of students, as well as their linguistic, ethnic and cultural identities. [...] the educational equality on which singularities must be considered and met (BRAZIL, 2018, p. 20, our translation).

In this perspective, with the mobilization of the school community in a participatory way, it becomes possible to promote formations in order to stimulate the perception of the exclusionary socio-historical structure, as well as a re-education for the visibility of other knowledge that rests, many times, bodies and minds previously denied and silenced. However, for such a change to occur, there is a need for the school to effectively recognize the demands of the public it serves, so that, by focusing on racial relations within the institution, it is able to promote the careful choice of literary, theoretical and informative works, provide opportunities for debates and activities that perceive the body as a repository of ancestral knowledge, as well as the development of articulated intervention plans that allow the construction of a plural and meaningful school curriculum for all.

### **Final remarks**

The centrality of Eurocentrism in the school curriculum, the stereotypes present in the didactic materials that associate the black population only with negative elements contribute to the perpetuation of a racist society. It is important, therefore, to put into practice Law 10.639, that is, to teach Afro-Brazilian and African History and Culture in an appropriate way, since it presupposes retelling our history that was built not only by the white, but also by the groups said to be subordinated, which are original and Afro-Brazilian peoples.

In this perspective, it becomes important to break with this idea of homogeneity, which to the extent that it denies ethnic-racial diversity, prevents blacks from having access to their rights. The importance of the Law operates in the urgency of deconstructing stereotyped and prejudiced practices that are still present in school institutions, seeking through an anti-racist education to reeducate the dominant groups, creating situations for them to question their privileges and, above all, the recognition of the contribution of the black population.

In this way, a conception of curriculum and pedagogical proposal that denies diversity has devastating results for the school community, especially for those subjects whose existence is crossed by the traits of their otherness, because consequently such subjects will have their possibilities of reading the world limited, as well as their subjectivation processes will also have negative effects.

For there to be, thus, changes in the identified framework, it is essential that both the curriculum and the pedagogical proposal are built with the bias of contemplating the wealth of knowledge and epistemologies supported by our cultural diversity. The construction of the Political-Pedagogical Project should be elaborated by all the subjects involved in the school, as well as representations of the community, so that it is possible reflections, analyses and discussions about the real needs and the social reality, which in the future will be expressed in the pedagogical and didactic activities that will guide the actions of the school.

From the existence of specific legislation that provides for the development of contents of African and Afro-Brazilian History and Culture in the country's school institutions, it is possible to perceive that the initiatives and measures applied for the promotion of equitable education continue to be, in their majority, centered, exclusively, by proposals and strategies of the black movements and/or black subjects that recognize the urgency and need to work on the ethnic-racial theme.

However, although we recognize the importance of the law, we call attention to work on the history and culture of peoples who have been/are historically silenced not only because it is supported by legislation, but because we believe that everyone should seek to develop an awareness of historical reparation and develop pedagogical practices that break the hegemony of Eurocentric narratives that delegitimize other epistemes.

The confrontation of racism and so many other discriminations does not occur magically, nor for the promotion of discussions and approaches that effectively seek to break with a teaching based on the Eurocentric bias restricted in the specific commemorative days, since it is about facing more than five hundred years of telling a single version of the facts and stories. Therefore, it is necessary to understand and incorporate the resistances and the processes of struggle for rights, led by historically marginalized subjects in the official curricula.

It is also necessary to recognize that the law does not have the capacity to instantaneously transform a reality that is historical and is rooted in the practices and imaginary of society. Thus, through it, there is the possibility of creating and developing strategies and processes of reflection that should promote awareness and awareness of those involved, considering that respect for differences requires the diversity of narratives and epistemologies in the curriculum.

In this sense, investing in the reconstruction or reinvention of a policy that confronts the Eurocentric system responsible for the silencing and erasure of the knowledge produced by the

minorized groups, in the educational field requires a change of epistemological nature, considering that the transformation in the education system can only emerge to the extent that other contents are inserted.

Finally, we emphasize the need to reflect on the reasons for the absence of themes on ethnic-racial issues in the initial training of teachers in undergraduate courses. The institutions of basic education and the institutions of higher education respond to the practices of extermination of the possibility of the black being a subject of knowledge, through the onslaughts of epistemicide and, therefore, we defend that in both places-educational spaces is required the application of a logic that confronts the Eurocentric universality and begins to contemplate the existing pluriversity.

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