

CULTURE AND SYMBOLIC REPRESENTATIONS IN PUBLIC EDUCATION: CHALLENGES FOR LAW 10.639/2003 IN THE TOCANTINA AMAZON



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ABSTRACT

Objective: To analyze the historical and symbolic context of religions and the influence on the applicability of law 10.639/2003 in the school context of Tucuruí-PA. **Methodology:** The research was of the documentary type and a report of experience with bibliographic and image survey, in addition to reporting an experience of an extension project carried out in a public school in the municipality of Tucuruí-PA. The procedures for document and image evaluation of the selected documents were used. **Results:** 20 documents were found that help in the debate for compliance with the legislation. 7 symbolic images were cataloged, namely: hydroelectric power plant (1), railroad power plant (1), images representing Christian religions (5). No monuments of Afro-religions at strategic points in the city were found. The experience report showed a difficulty in complying with the legislation for the teaching of Afro-religions, showing a discriminatory context of these in the school. **Conclusion:** The historical context of the city of Tucuruí-PA shows an invisibility of Afro-religions that has moved towards discrimination. The images that reinforce and enhance Christian symbols, especially evangelical religions in the strategic places that represent the city, such as: on the municipal flag, in tourist spots and on the federal highway of main access to the city, draw attention because they are strategic points of passage for people. These findings show a potential indication for the difficulties encountered in complying with Law 10.639/2003, which determines the content of Afro-religions and racial issues that involve enslaved blacks in the teaching of Brazilian schools, shown in the experience report of the project "Building Identities with Commitment".

Keywords: Education, Law 10.639/2003, Culture, Afro-religions.

INTRODUCTION

The Brazilian historical and social construction is associated with a rich cultural and religious formation influenced by indigenous people, colonizers and enslaved people with a diversity of spiritual practices, religious traditions, art, music, dance, among others. Thus, studying Afro-religions generates a deserved visibility and provides the opportunity to know the history of our country, which even after years of affirmative action, are still little talked about and known by society and even less by the school community (Freyre, 2003; Brazil, 2003).

In Brazil, there are two main identification terms for religions that descend from African countries, namely: religions of African origin and Afro-Brazilian religions (Prandi, 2000). In this study, it was decided to use the term Afro-religions because the main researcher of this work is an Afro-religious called IFA, which is an African religion, for this reason, the term Afro-religion was used, as it includes all those of African origin and the IFA.

The teaching of Afro-religions in the school community is supported by Law 10.639/2003 which, when sanctioned by the Federal Government in 2003, suggests a range of possibilities for educators to address themes involving African and Afro-Brazilian culture, religions (Brasil, 2003).

This law amended the Law of Guidelines and Bases of National Education (LDB), Law No. 9,394, of December 20, 1996 to include in the official curriculum of the Education Network the mandatory teaching of Afro-Brazilian history and culture in all schools, from elementary to high school, later corroborated by law 11645/2008, which also included the teaching of indigenous history and culture. However, the law has already completed twenty years last year and the applicability of law 10.639/2003, which contemplates the study of Afro-Brazilian and African culture in schools, still seems to be a complex task on the part of educators when it includes Afro-religions (Brasil, 1996; Brazil, 2008).

Educators are understood by management servers, the administrative technical team and teachers, they stand out for being professionals who have an important role in building a society that promotes equity between classes, in addition to promoting discussions in the school community that lead to anti-racist postures, because, when students have contact with other cultures and religious creeds, they come to know and learn the appreciation of Brazilian cultural diversity, being able to promote mutual respect as well as inclusion (Brasil, 2006).

Therefore, it is up to this class to promote discussions that point out the true meanings and meanings of Afro-religions as a cultural and resistance group, their contribution to the construction of identity, seeking to identify discourses that have contributed to the erasure and silencing associated with the marginalization of/of Afro-religions, which have a secular occurrence (Brasil, 2006).

Thus, this research arises from emerging issues that deserve to be highlighted in Brazilian secular society. For this reason, studies that bring to the light of science research that contributes to Afro-religions, especially in the northern region of Brazil, can help to reduce the gaps in knowledge regarding this problem. In this sense, there is a lack of studies on these religions in the city studied. Trying to reduce these and other issues, we sought references from local researchers and some works were consulted, such as: *A Black Scream: poetizing awareness* (Santos, 2021a); *Felipa Aranha: the warrior of the Amazon* (Santos, 2021b); *Amazonian Narratives, stories told by our people* (Santos, 2021c); *City and company in the Amazon: management of local development territory* (Trindade Jr. and Rocha, 2002), where the readings make no reference to Afro-religions, which reinforces the need for studies that address this problem.

In this sense, we verified the need to carry out a more attentive and in-depth research, as there is a lot of knowledge related to Afro-religions that need a focus on the greater involvement of educators, especially teachers who are on the front line in dealing with students, and it is up to them to commit to taking actions that foster discussions and promote anti-racist education in favor of a more inclusive society. Fair.

Within this perspective, the study aimed to analyze the historical and symbolic context of religions and the influence on the applicability of law 10.639/2003 in the school context of Tucuruí-PA.

METHODOLOGY

STUDY DESIGN

This research is configured as a study of experience report associated with a bibliographic and image documentary survey (Marconi and Lakatos, 2010). The documentary and image survey allow us to visualize a phenomenon from the historical point of view of documents, images/photographs, and in the case of this research, also from the perspective of legislation. The experience report is a type of methodological presentation,

which, although superficial, when associated with other methods, strengthens a presentation of the reality of a given study problem.

LOCUS OF RESEARCH

The strategic location of Tucuruí has always been the target of economic interests, initially by colonizers who exploited plant and mineral resources. An interest that culminated in the forties in the construction of the Tocantins Railroad. Thus, with the passage of time and the change in the political and social scenario, the State (Federation) began to see the Tocantins River as a potential source for the exploration of electricity, due to the abundant rapids in the region. This interest culminated in the construction of the Tucuruí Hydroelectric Power Plant (UHE-Tucuruí), which was not directly aimed at local progress, but was inserted in the context of the Grande Carajás Project.

The city of Tucuruí, located on the banks of the Tocantins River, constituting an important trading post in the region, has a total area of 2,086 km², and according to estimates from the 2022 Brazilian Census, its population was 91,306 inhabitants (IBGE, 2022).

DATA COLLECTION

A survey was carried out in the libraries of the State University of Pará (UEPA) and the Federal University of Pará (UFPA). In addition, a survey was carried out in the Department of Culture and Education of the municipality of Tucuruí-PA in search of documents that demonstrate the applicability of law 10639/2003. A Google Scholar search for national and complementary documents was also carried out.

Evaluation by documentary analysis

A documentary survey was carried out in the public libraries of local universities and electronic media as mentioned above, where the analysis of the works found followed the guidelines of the analysis of Bardin (2010), as a form of synthesized condensation and classification of information, for consultation and storage.

Evaluation by image analysis

The analysis of the photographs presented was carried out using the historical-semiotic proposal of Mauad (2004). This author established five categories for the analysis

of photographic images: 1- the photographic space, 2- the geographical space, 3- the space of the object, 4- the space of figuration and 5- the space of experience. For this study, the analysis of the physical geographic space (1) was carried out, where the location, year, landscape attributes were portrayed, as well as the changes and trajectories over the years of the years.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

EXPERIENCE REPORT

The experience reported in this study was carried out at the Ana Pontes Francêz school with students of both genders from high school, teachers and education technicians, serving 25 classes and approximately 625 students/year. The enactment of law 10.639 of 2003, which made the study of African and Afro-Brazilian culture mandatory in basic education and instituted the date November 20, the commemorative day alluding to Black Consciousness, also proposing changes in the monocultural matrix to consider the richness and contribution of diversity to the understanding of national culture and history, aroused the interest in making a macro project of the Ana Pontes Francez school entitled "Building Identity with Commitment".

The project, started in 2015, brought to the school mentioned above discussions of topics such as: racism, discrimination, quotas in universities, Afro-religiosities, with a respectful and responsible approach with the deserved sensitivity that involves the complexity of this theme. For this, partnerships were sought with people from the local black movement, as well as the community of terreiros who were willing to contribute to the discussions held at the school. With this partnership, there was a contribution to the enrichment of the school curriculum, promotion of fundamental values of respect, tolerance and understanding of the themes. In addition to combating stereotypes, prejudiced and discriminatory attitudes towards students practicing these religions.

In this way, and over the years, questions and curiosities were brought to school without us being able to solve them. It was clear that when the school was provoked to clarify tensions on the Afro-religious theme, what was seen was silence in the midst of estrangement and ignorance on the part of the technical and pedagogical team, students and even the community itself. As a result, when someone with proven competence emerged in the school community, he was invited to contribute to the school's project to talk

about Afro-religions. However, there was no progress because there were many gaps that were not filled due to lack of information.

Thus, after this observation, the need arose to carry out a data survey on this information in the municipality. First, they were searched in the Municipal and State Education Departments, without a return of data that would elucidate the search. A fact that led some educators to organize with students and teachers to seek information about these spaces and their leaders.

In this sense, a group of students, mediated by a teacher from the school, carried out a search that located some terreiros in the city of Tucuruí, where several conversations took place with the intention of demystifying the ideas that remain in the popular imagination when it comes specifically to Afro-religions, among them: association with diabolical sects, a place where evil is worshipped, where people do evil to good people, a place of magic and secrets.

Since then, the pedagogical actions of the Ana Pontes Francez school have been strengthened and every year, innovating and deconstructing prejudices in relation to Afro-religions, their customs and rites. Therefore, by promoting the contact of students with this knowledge, understanding at school, the contribution to a society and equity was realized for students and their families, or even for those who are practitioners of Afro-religions. Thus, from the knowledge generated, paradigms are broken and new knowledge can be generated in the community.

It is important to highlight that the difficulties encountered by the technical team and teachers when they addressed the theme of Afro-religions in the school were recurrent. In this way, and through the systematic exercise, new ways of perceiving this culture were established in the school space.

Thus, the culture coming from blacks descended from enslaved people was resignified, thus, according to Bergamaschi and Gomes (2012), such concepts arise with the intention of changing the prejudiced and discriminatory culture in relation to these peoples, as they claim images, thoughts and attitudes more consistent with the reality about them.

From this perspective, it was possible to speculate that the subjectivity of the approach and the identities of the teachers also caused slippage in the specific meanings of their sayings of Afro-religions, negatively affecting the possible cultural contributions to the local population.

In recent years, there has been an insurgency of the terreiros in Tucuruí-PA, arising from the organization and concern of the Afro-religious to legalize their spaces with operating permits and licenses. As well as the increase in young people calling themselves members or sympathizers of Afro-religions. These particularities are socially relevant for the so-called Traditional Communities of Terreiros (CTTro) and for the community itself.

Therefore, it is necessary to bring elements of historical, social and cultural relevance to school and academic spaces, enabling the visibility of Afro-Brazilian and indigenous culture, since the religion of these communities is not being given value in school spaces in this city. This absence causes weaknesses in the construction of identity and social ballast, understanding that it is from knowledge that paradigms are broken and new knowledge is generated in the community (Brasil, 2006).

Thus, there may be a contribution to the enrichment of the school curriculum, promotion of fundamental values of respect, tolerance and understanding, in addition to combating stereotypes, prejudiced and discriminatory attitudes towards students practicing these religions. Therefore, when students have contact with other cultures, religious creeds, they come to know and learn to respect and value the cultural diversity existing in our country, to be able to promote mutual respect as well as empathy (Brasil, 2004).

Thus, by promoting the contact of high school students with this knowledge and its understanding, the school will contribute to a more just and equitable society where students who have family members or are practitioners of Afro-religions can learn about these traditions within the school and contribute to the strengthening of cultural identity as well as the promotion of religious self-esteem (Gomes, 2007).

In this sense, it is up to the school to make all students feel welcomed, represented, valued and that themes like this provide a broader and deeper perspective on religious issues. It can also contribute to the improvement of social, historical and cultural issues, which results in the development of critical thinking skills, empathy and intercultural understanding with a more inclusive, diverse and enriching education for all students.

DOCUMENTARY AND IMAGE SURVEY

The trajectory of education in Brazil from the colonial period to the present day emphasizes the absence and/or difficulty of access to education and the religiosity that enslaved blacks had. As well as the marks left in the construction of the discourses that forged the social and cultural construction of the Brazilian people and that are maintained to

this day. Chart 1 presents the 20 historical documents raised that help to understand and serve to discuss this problem.

Chart 1 presents the documentary survey considered relevant for the discussion of the theme addressed.

Document Reference	Document Title	Summary description
Pará (1870)	Law No. 661/1870	Provincial Law No. 661, of 31-10-1870, creation of the district of Alcobaça and annexed to the town of Baião.
Brazil (1971)	Law of Guidelines and Bases of Education No. 5,692/71	Law 5.692, of August 11, 1971 Law of Guidelines and Bases of Education, known as the New LDB. This law establishes the guidelines and Bases for the Teaching of 1st and 2nd degrees, which had as its main objective to provide students with the necessary training for the development of their vocational potential, qualification for work and preparation for the conscious exercise of citizenship;
Tucuruí (1993)	Municipal Law No. 3,841 of December 23, 1993.	Establishes the municipal flag, which will become a symbol of the Municipality of Tucuruí and provides other provisions.
IBGE (2000)	Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics	2000 Demographic Census that talks about the general characteristics of the population
Pinto (2001)	Slavery, escape and the memory of quilombos in the Tocantins region	It speaks of the demarcation of black territory. Mocambo do Mola had 300 people led by Maria Felipa Aranha.
Brazil (2003)	Law 10.639/2003	Law sanctioned on January 9, 2003, which amends the Law of Guidelines and Base of National Education (LDB), making the study of Afro-Brazilian history and culture mandatory in school curricula.
Tucuruí (2003)	Municipal Law No. 5634 of April 2, 2003	Establishes the name of "Lions Club" to the street that is being built at the roundabout of Avenida Veridiano Cardoso, interchange with Avenida Tancredo Neves - Cohab. Tucuruí City Council.
Brazil (2004)	National Curriculum Guidelines for the Education of Ethnic-Racial Relations and for the Teaching of Afro-Brazilian and African History and Culture	Approved on May 18, 2004 with opinion 03/2204. It is a pedagogy to combat racism and discrimination elaborated for the education of positive ethnic/racial relations that aims to expand the debate on a topic of high relevance and proposes to bring to the school

		environment contents, thoughts and materials that value the diversity present in this country.
Wedderburn (2005)	New bases for the teaching of African history in Brazil. In: Anti-racist education: paths opened by Federal Law No. 10.639/2003	This book aims to contribute to educators/teachers information and strategic knowledge that enable the understanding and combat of racial prejudice and discrimination in the pedagogical and educational relations of Brazilian schools.
Brazil (2010)	Law 12.288/10. Statute of Racial Equality	Law No. 12,288, of July 20, 2010. This Law establishes the Statute of Racial Equality, intended to guarantee the black population the effectiveness of equal opportunities, the defense of individual, collective and diffuse ethnic rights and the fight against discrimination and other forms of ethnic intolerance.
IBGE (2010)	Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics. Cities and States: Tucuruí	2010 Demographic Census that talks about the general characteristics of the population, religion and people with disabilities.
Campelo, Conrado and Ribeiro (2015)	Metaphors of Color: Morenity and Territories of Blackness in the Constructions of Black Identities in the Pará Amazon	This article published in April 2015 surveys issues of being black in the Amazon and how their presence is still invisible, especially in Pará. Being brown is how blacks are called in the region, therefore, their identity mark of the region, from their metaphors and hyperboles, to a shared identity/culturally, politically and symbolically manipulated, in which, in a non-linear process, the indigenous myth that configures the arguments that triggered the debate is founded.
Carvalho (2018)	History of education of the black population: the state of the art on education and ethnic-racial relations (2003-2014)	The article entitled History of black education: the state of the art on education and ethnic-racial relations (2003-2014) published in 2018 brings results of a research more specifically on the "History of the Black Population" where 31 articles were selected and analyzed in Brazilian journals in the area of education (2003-2014). The most worked theme was on the process of insertion/exclusion of the black population in formal or non-formal schooling. It was found that the scientific contribution studied in the set of

		articles is extremely important, especially when identifying the difficulties of implementing law 10639/2003 in Brazilian school curricula as well as in basic education.
Days (2018)	How many steps have already been taken? The issue of race in educational laws: from the LDB of 1961 to Law 10.639/2003	Talks about the advances and setbacks in education for ethnic-racial relations within school spaces
Tucuruí (2018)	Municipal Law No. 9,936/2018, of April 02, 2018	Establishes the Bible as Intangible Heritage of the Municipality of Tucuruí
Tucuruí (2018)	Municipal Law No. 9,937/2018, of April 02, 2018	Provides for the construction of a monument to the Bible on BR 422 in front of the Fire Station, and makes other provisions.
Tucuruí (2019)	Municipal Law No. 10,019, of June 19, 2019	Provides for the construction of a Marian Monument between Brasília Avenue and Raimundo Veridiano Cardoso Avenue, near the Avenida Store
IBGE (2020)	Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics.	2020 Demographic Census that talks about the Population by color or race
Campelo (2022)	In Search of Justice of the Orixás: Aspects of Religious Intolerance and Racism against Religions of African Origin in Belém	This is a study on religious intolerance and racism against terreiros in the city of Belém, Pará, based on the report produced by the African Matrix Working Group of the Public Security Council of Pará (CONSEP-PA).
Tucuruí Virtual Museum (2024)	Virtual Museum of Tucuruí. From Alcobaça to Tucuruí	The Virtual Museum of Tucuruí was created by a group of Tucuruí citizens, mostly children or relatives of former employees of the extinct Tucuruí Railroad, with the aim of informing the population about its history through documents, photos and reports of former children of the city.

Source: The authors.

THE HISTORICAL PROCESS OF CONSTRUCTION OF EDUCATION IN TUCURUÍ-PA

The Virtual Museum of Tucuruí (2024), presents some historical facts dating back to the colonial period, around 1,625, when Friar Cristóvão de Lisboa, at the behest of the Portuguese crown, began a process of catechization and formation of missions to continue indigenous education, which began since the discovery of Brazil. During this period, the region was part of the Province of Grão-Pará, governed by Captain Mor Bento Maciel Parente, who was in office between 1,622 and 1,626. In this context, the first inhabitants of

the region that today corresponds to the municipality of Tucuruí were the Assurinis Indians of Trocará and the Gavião da Montanha (Pinto, 2001).

During the period in which José Nápoles Teles de Menezes was governor, the hamlet of São Bernardo de Pederneiras was founded, on the banks of the Tocantins River, in the municipality of Baião, aiming to strengthen control and prevent the escape of enslaved people from Cametá. Later, Teles de Menezes established the registry of Alcobaça, with a military and customs character. According to Pinto:

In the district of Juaba, on the banks of the Itapocu Creek, the quilombo of Mola or Itapocu was formed in the second half of the eighteenth century, one of the most important focuses of black resistance in the Tocantins region. More than three hundred blacks, under the leadership of the black Maria Felipa Aranha and, later, her successor Maria Luiza Piriá or Pirisá, lived there for several years without being threatened by the legal forces. In the municipality of Mocajuba, the quilombos of Icatu and Putiri were formed; and, in the Municipality of Baião, freed and runaway blacks joined forces in the formation of the Paxibal quilombo (Pinto, 2001, p. 337).

The name changes and the reconfiguration of Tucuruí were motivated by political and economic interests, reflecting the constant disputes, being renamed to Parish of São Pedro do Alto Tocantins on October 31, 1870, by Law No. 661, as it was a more populous place in that region of the river. Later, in 1875 it was renamed as the Parish of São Pedro de Alcobaça, through the decree of Law No. 839 (Correia, 2017).

In the 1890s, the concession for the construction of a railroad between Alcobaça and Boa Vista, in Goiás, marked a significant change in this region. This concession was formalized by Decree No. 9,405, of March 21, 1885, ensuring an important development for this region (Brasil, 1885).

From 1894, with the installation of the Araguaia-Tocantins River Navigation Company and the construction of the railroad, the region experienced a significant population increase. There was a migratory flow of people from various parts of Brazil, especially from the Northeast and inhabitants of nearby cities in Pará, among the main ones were Cametá and Mocajuba, which demarcated the development of the lower Tocantins region (Tucuruí Virtual Museum, 2024).

Due to this brief history, we highlight two specific aspects, namely: education and religiosity in Tucuruí. When investigating these aspects, it was necessary to resort to memory. As Brito (2016) states, "every historical source is thought of from a place in memory". Like this:

The formation of a memory is linked to the discourses that were produced and assimilated in each subject, so these discourses will be transmitted, passed on, seeking to form an "identity", whether national or local (Brito, 2016, p. 31).

In this context, education in Tucuruí has undergone many changes throughout its history. According to the Tucuruí Virtual Museum (2024), the first educational records date from 1,940 to 1,950, showing that local education was mainly provided by women, authorized by their parents and under the custody of conservative or religious families. These teachers, often with only high school education, performed their function seriously and were committed to fighting illiteracy, especially in the extensive rural area.

In 1960, with the arrival of the Sisters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul in Tucuruí, and with the support of the population with donations from businessmen, the Nossa Senhora da Conceição School was built, which taught classes from the 1st to the 4th grade, being until today, a local reference of quality in education. In the same decade, the Frei de Vila Nova State School, known as the Francisco de Assis Rios School, located in the center of the city, was founded (Tucuruí Virtual Museum, 2024).

In the 1970s, education was the responsibility of the federal and state governments. The schools operated in buildings rented or provided by merchants and/or farmers, usually in precarious conditions and the teachers who taught from the 1st to the 4th grade were paid by the state. And those who wanted to continue their studies had to move to other cities, such as Belém, Fortaleza or Recife.

As a result of the search process for the illustrations, seven historical images were found and selected, including six photographs, and one image of the Tucuruí flag.

The construction of the railroad, in which the concession document for construction was given by decree No. 862 of October 16, 1890. On December 24, 1908, the first stretch of approximately 43 km was inaugurated and extinguished by decree No. 60,508 of March 27, 1967 (Brasil, 1890; Brasil, 1967), potentially moving the city's economy (Figure 1).

Figure 1- Old Central Station of Tucuruí



Source: Author's Personal Collection (2024). Public domain: <https://www.museuvirtualtucurui.com.br>

The photograph presented above shows the central station building built in masonry and wood with an access ramp for pedestrians and materials to be transported when boarding and disembarking the train.

In view of this, education in Tucuruí in this period was considered a privilege, mainly serving the children of the employees of the Tocantins Railroad, influential merchants and local politicians.

Another important historical moment for the city of Tucuruí was the construction of the Hydroelectric Power Plant (Figure 2). During this period, schools were once again equipped to privilege, this time, to serve the children of the employees of the companies involved in the mega construction of the work (Virtual Museum of Tucuruí, 2024). The hydroelectric plant was inaugurated on November 22, 1984 during the military government of João Batista Figueiredo. The Tucuruí dam, made of land, is 11 km long and 78m high, the water unevenness varies with a station between 58 and 72 m with 23 floodgates, the dam also serves as access to the city of Tucuruí composing the state highway PA 263 (Almeida, 2021).

Figure 2 - Tucuruí Hydroelectric Power Plant



Source: Author's Personal Collection (2024).

The image shows a panoramic view of the Tucuruí Hydroelectric Power Plant, with the 23 open floodgates, which also serves as access to the city of Tucuruí and passage to other municipalities such as Novo Repartimento and Cametá.

From the educational perspective, through the Law of Guidelines and Bases (LDB) of Education No. 5,692/71, 1st and 2nd year courses were implemented, expanding pedagogical assistance from the states to the municipalities. In 1980, education ceased to be a privilege of a few and became a reference in public education in the city of Tucuruí, offering technical courses that included: Buildings, Laboratory Technician, Administration and Teaching, with higher education teachers from several states of Brazil. The city stood out for its residential villages and elementary and high schools, attracting many people from the surrounding region in search of a better quality education (Brasil, 1971).

In 2,010, the schooling rate of children aged 6 to 14 years in Tucuruí was 94.9% compared to other municipalities in the state, ranked 79 out of 144 municipalities, and nationally, ranked 5,043 out of 5,570. Regarding the Basic Education Development Index (IDEB) of 2021, the initial years of elementary education in the public network reached 4.8 points, while the final years obtained 4.5 points. Tucuruí occupied positions 41 and 22 out of 144, respectively (IBGE, 2022).

These data show a significant advance in education and teaching in the city of Tucuruí, with a high schooling rate, however, the educational performance measured by the

IDEB suggests that there is still room for improvements and advances in the quality of education offered in Tucuruí, especially in the final years of elementary school.

INFLUENCE OF RELIGION ON EDUCATION

By historicizing the educational and religious path of the municipality of Tucuruí, it was possible to perceive that there was a strong influence of various religious denominations, and educational of the peoples who populated this place. The indigenous people had their own ancestral knowledge and religiosity in their culture. The Portuguese, on the other hand, brought the Catholic religion and the enslaved blacks contributed to African-based religions through contact with the colonizer. Thus, their culture and also religion were influenced by those who maintained contact during the long working and resting hours (Pinto, 2001).

In this context, it was possible to perceive from the data in Table 1 available on the IBGE platform (2010), that there are several religious denominations in the Municipality:

Table 1 - Main religious denominations in Tucuruí

Religion groups	Percentage distribution of the resident population (%)						
	Brazil	Major regions					Tucuruí
		North	Northeast	Southeast	South	Midwest	
Roman Catholic	64,6	60,6	72,2	59,5	70,1	59,6	55,6
Total evangelicals*	22,2	28,5	16,4	24,6	20,2	26,8	31,9
Evangelical Mission	4,0	4,8	3,4	3,9	5,0	4,1	7,4
Evangelicals of Pentecostal Origin	13,3	20,1	10,1	14,3	10,9	16,6	22,7
Evangelicals not determined	4,8	3,6	2,9	6,3	4,3	6,1	1,8
Spiritist	2,0	0,5	0,8	3,1	2,0	2,3	0,4
Umbanda and Candomblé	0,3	0,1	0,2	0,4	0,6	0,1	0,1
No Religion	8,0	7,7	8,3	9,0	4,8	8,4	10,9
Other religiosities	2,7	2,5	2,0	3,4	2,2	2,7	1,0
Don't know/no statement	0,1	0,1	0,1	0,1	0,1	0,1	0,1
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Source: IBGE (2010) with adaptations made by the authors.

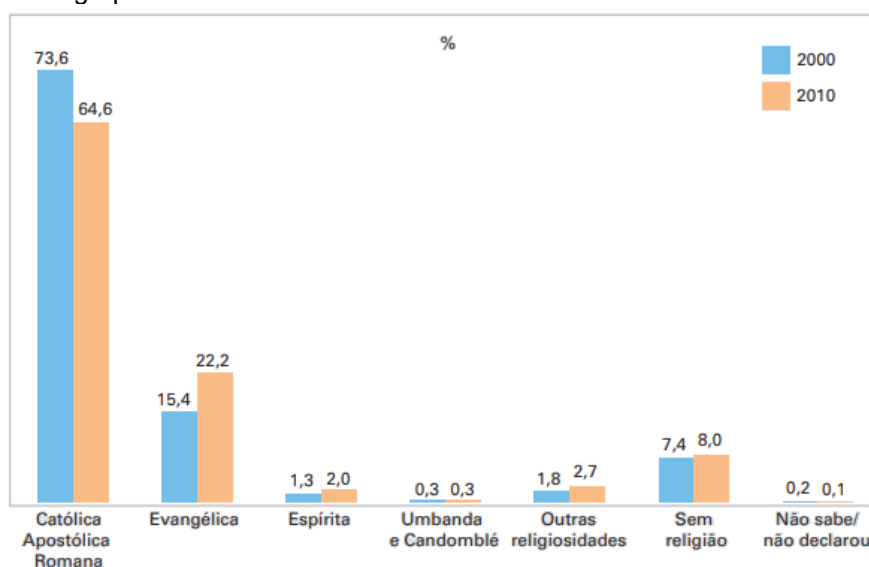
*Total data of evangelicals: consider a cut outside the total percentage of this table

The data presented in Table 1 and Figure 3 show a scenario of religions, indicating an increase in evangelicals, who represented about 22% (approximately 42 million) of the Brazilian population in 2010 (IBGE, 2010).

The data presented in Table 1 show that in the city of Tucuruí in 2,010 there were almost 32% of evangelicals and in greater numbers, 55.6% of Catholics. However, in the national scenario (Figure 3) shows a decrease of 9% of Catholics between 2,000 and 2,010 and an increase of 6.8% of gospels in the same period. On the other hand, African-based religions represent only 0.1% in Tucuruí (Table 1) and in Figure 3 these religions represent only 0.3% without any increase in the 10-year period (2000-2010) (IBGE, 2010).

Thus, historically, the process of discontent with the doctrines practiced in the Evangelical Mission and Pentecostal Churches has stimulated the opening of evangelical congregational spaces that are not obliged to follow all the precepts and canons imposed by these denominations (Araújo, 2023), contributing to more evangelical churches being opened, without greater gnostic criteria and encouraged by tax exemption. This treatment is not observed with religions of African origin and shown by numerical data (IBGE, 2010).

Figure 3 Percentage of the resident population, according to religious groups in Brazil according to the 2000/2010 IBGE Demographic Census



Source: IBGE 2000; IBGE 2010.

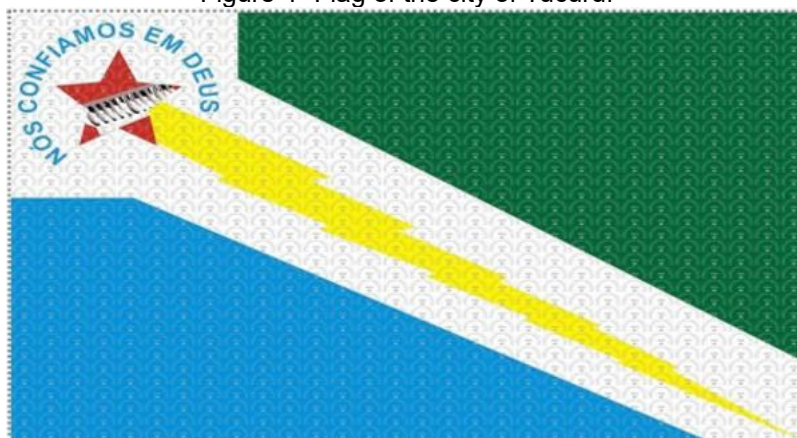
From this perspective, it can be seen that in the municipality of Tucuruí the evangelical churches are predominant by quantity and size, highlighting: the Baptist Church, located in the center of the city and the Assembly of God church and those located in the Permanent Village. Both draw attention for the sumptuousness and grandeur of the buildings.

In this sense, it is possible to perceive that the predominance of hegemonic religions, the so-called Christian historically, are taking over public spaces, legitimized by political

support for Christian religions and contempt for others, which include those of African origin, where the secularity of the state has been ignored.

It is possible to observe this hegemony in the words on the flag of the municipality that bears the following phrase: we trust in God (Figure 4). The flag was instituted in 1993, which became a symbol of the Municipality of Tucuruí, through Municipal Law No. 3,841 of December 23, 1993. The law describes the characteristics and symbology of the flag: The rectangular shape of the flag, with predominant colors green and sky blue. The characteristics of the flag mean: white stripe in the center: peace; red star, at the top left: the city of light; Green color: jungle; sky blue color: water that generates energy; yellow lightning: electric power; the central part of the star will have the design of a Tucuruí Hydroelectric Power Plant; and circling the star, the phrase "We trust in God" will be inserted, which will represent all the faith that the people of the Municipality have in the Creator of the Universe.

Figure 4- Flag of the city of Tucuruí



Source: Tucuruí Museum (2023). Public domain: <https://www.museuvirtualtucurui.com.br>

In turn, another symbol located on the federal highway BR-422, at the entrance to the city of Tucuruí, which has heavy traffic of cars, motorcycles and pedestrians, is a "monument to the Bible" (Figure 5), which symbolizes the predominant religion in the city, the evangelical (Figure 6). This is the main access to the city and the only point of departure and return to the permanent village. The monument was inaugurated on July 8, 2018, erected through Municipal Law 9.936/2018 that recognized the Holy Bible as intangible heritage of Tucuruí and Municipal Law 003/209.937/2018 that authorized the construction of the "Monument to the Bible". The work was built by the Assembly of God

church, in addition to marking the end of the celebrations of the 84th anniversary of the church in the Municipality.

Figure 5- Monument to the Holy Bible at the entrance to the city of Tucuruí.

a) Rear view.

b) previous view.



Source: Tucuruí Museum (2023). Public domain: <https://www.museuvirtualtucurui.com.br>

Right ahead, in a central median at the first roundabout when entering the city, a new monument of Christian symbol appears, a fish (Figure 6). This monument was erected according to Law No. 5634, of April 2, 2003, which gives the name of "Lions Club" to the street that was built and also called "Lions Club Square", the public place at the roundabout of Avenida Veridiano Cardoso, interchange with Avenida Tancredo Neves - Cohab.

Figure 6 - Fish symbol at the roundabout with median



Source: Tucuruí Museum (2023). Public domain: <https://www.museuvirtualtucurui.com.br>

Likewise, the Tucuruí waterfront was recently inaugurated, a beautiful source of luminous water bringing again the same symbol that confirms the hegemony of evangelical religions in the municipality (Figure 7). The symbol of the fish can be seen in a monument in the center of the Peacock Bass square, as well as the configuration of the square seen from above, has the shape of a fish. This square was recently inaugurated in 2024, being

considered one of the main tourist attractions in the city, with an intense volume of people, as it has toys for children, a restaurant for adults, in addition to the traditional street vendors.

Figure 7 - Edge of Peacock Bass Square (symbolizing a fish)



Source: Tucuruí City Hall (2024). Public domain: <https://www.museuvirtualtucurui.com.br>

On October 19, 2024, the Catholic community of Tucuruí gathered at a time to celebrate the laying of the cornerstone of the Marian Monument (Figure 8). The event, led by priests from the São Paulo episcopal area, was attended by several community leaders and Father Ivo, pastor of the Parish of São José de Tucuruí.

The monument was erected in accordance with Municipal Law No. 10,019, of June 19, 2019, which provides for the construction of a Marian Monument between Avenida Brasília and Avenida Raimundo Veridiano Cardoso, near Loja Avenida.

Figure 8 - Laying of the Cornerstone of the Marian Monument in Tukurui.



Source: Public domain: <https://tucurui.portaldacidade.com/noticias/cidade/unidos-na-fe-pedra-fundamental-do-monumento-mariano-e-lancada-em-tucurui-1434>

The data presented above show a majority of the so-called Christian churches with a predominance of evangelicals in the city of Tukurui. The monuments supported by the public power, are predominantly for these religions, supported by the executive and legislative power that approve the laws permitting the constructions. This was not observed for Afro-religions with an evident lack of interest in them, contributing to their silencing and erasure.

For these reasons, cases of vandalism of images and monuments associated with the cult of African-based religions are not isolated. The cases frequently seen in Florianópolis, the ritualistic practices present in the religiosity of African matrices, are historically denied in this city. The invisibility of these practices enabled a discursive construction based on the absence of Afro religiosity and which resulted in a lack of identification with African culture. The denial of a religious culture. Often in a violent way as mentioned in the study cited above, as well as the "subtle" denial shown in the present research with the exaltation of an evangelical/Christian and Catholic/Christian Christian symbolism supported by the public power with strategic direction, arranged in key points of the city such as: single access highway, central roundabout for the distribution of flow to neighborhoods, tourism and leisure spaces. However, monuments in public spaces intended for Afro-religions are not identified at strategic points in the city (Da Silva Pinheiro, 2020).

Thus, it becomes important that these practices as acts and spaces of resistance and negotiations with hegemonic political and religious cultures. It is also considered that

these clashes continue to be necessary for the preservation of terreiros and spaces of worship, based on the relations with public and private spaces that are pluralized by conceiving aspects of their existence, historically denied, but which continue in the struggle to remain visible (Da Silva Pinheiro, 2020).

Peiper's text (2018) whose objective was to highlight the religious element as central in the film "Theorem of 1968", making a critique of bourgeois society from the point of view of religion. The context of the film shows the unexpected arrival of a visitor to the home of an upper-class family, revealing that each one has a demon and a divine in themselves, a process that takes place from the structure: seduction, confession and transformation. In this way, the visitor (character in the film) causes a restlessness in the traditional bourgeois family (father, mother, daughter, son and maid). After the announcement that the "intruder" would leave, a family crisis is established, exposed in the confession of what each member of the family did to the visitor, promoting a feeling of deterritorialization in the face of the lack of foundation evidenced in the family's daily life.

With this, religion can be understood as the manifestation of something unknown and that destructures what we already have in everyday life, recognizing an abyss that permeates everything. In this text, several "images of the desert that are interposed to the narrative" are also used, which symbolically and intentionally seeks to relativize everything, especially the values of bourgeois society (Peiper, 2018). This is also related to the present study, which uses images and monuments of religious symbols to relativize everyday issues, especially in this case, the invisibility of other religious manifestations existing in the community.

De Azevedo and Da Silva Ferreira (2018) advance in this debate when they state that, currently, there is an approximation between the church and the reality of social networks, seeing it as a new environment interconnected to the so-called "offline" environment traditionally known and recognized by the churches, because in both there is the religious man, eager to relate, even if in a different way, with himself and with God. However, this is only possible with the full recognition that the future of the church passes through new formats, where digital media will not only be a form of communication, but also a construction of identities, relationships and communities.

In the context that the present research shows the results, the persuasion movement that many churches and political groups are making in the direction of showing strength, both political and religious hegemony in order to gain power, and with it privileges, becomes

increasingly dangerous, where the permanence of other religious manifestations such as the example of Afro-religions can be understood as threats to the structure in place.

However, Bellotti (2011) contributes to this discussion when he states that it is up to the historical field to analyze and investigate in order to produce knowledge that stimulates a broader view of religion as a phenomenon, all too human. And that this knowledge allows the promotion of dialogues and understandings in contemporary society, so infected by intolerance, violence and prejudice.

LIMITATIONS OF THE RESEARCH

The main limitations found in this research were: reduced population context in a single city and reports of experiences that generate results from initial indicators.

CONCLUSION

After analyzing the documentary survey, the images and the experience report of the project "Building Identities with Commitment", it was possible to conclude that there is legislation that meets what the Brazilian constitution determines and encourages about the secular state. However, the historical context of the city of Tucuruí-PA shows an invisibility of Afro-religions that has moved towards discrimination. The images that reinforce and enhance Christian symbols, especially evangelical religions in the strategic places that represent the city, such as: on the municipal flag, in tourist attractions and on the federal highway of access to and from the city, draw attention because they are strategic points of passage for people.

These findings show a potential indication for the difficulties encountered in complying with Law 10.639/2003, which amends Law No. 9394, of December 20, 1996, which establishes the guidelines and bases of national education, to include in the official curriculum of the Education Network the mandatory theme "Afro-Brazilian History and Culture". From this perspective, the content of Afro-religions, as well as Education for Ethnic and Racial Relations in the teaching of Brazilian schools, become possible, as it is possible to perceive in the experience report of the project "Building Identities with Commitment"

However, further studies are recommended in this direction, which verify the components of historical context and images related to religious culture in other Brazilian cities with research with a more robust qualitative or quantitative methodological approach in order to refute or confirm the thesis presented in this study.

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