


BLACK QUILOMBOLA WOMEN AND THE ART OF EDUCATING AND NARRATING THEIR STORIES¹

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Driellen Barroso Coutinho² and Gilcilene Dias da Costa³

SUMMARY

The text addresses the art of educating and narrating black quilombola women, weaving intersections between education, gender and race. It aims to dialogue about the experiences, knowledge, songs, dances and resistances of black women, having as its locus an Afro-descendant territory of the quilombola community of Nova América, located in the mediations of Cametá and Oeiras do Pará, historically invisible by society and public power. A participatory and narrative intervention research was carried out, based on Cultural Studies in Education and Intersectional Black Feminism. The results present the black women-voices of the community in their arts of existing/resisting for an anti-racist and anti-sexist education.

Keywords: Education. Culture. Gender. Race. Black quilombola women.

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² Degree in Portuguese Language Letters from the Federal University of Pará (UFPA), Master's student in Education and Culture (UFPA/PPGEDUC), Member of the ANARKHOS research group at the Federal University of Pará, Professor in the municipal network of the municipality of Oeiras do Pará, Pará, Brazil.

E-mail: driellencoutinhob@gmail.com

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0009-0000-3562-9579>

LATTES: <http://lattes.cnpq.br/3301892731707177>

³ PhD in Education from the Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul (UFRGS, 2008), Associate Professor IV at the Federal University of Pará (UFPA/CUNTINS), linked to the Faculty of Language, Permanent Professor at PPGEDUC/UFPA and PGEDA/REDE EDUCANORTE, coordinator of the Anarkhos Research Group at the Federal University of Pará (ANARKHOS/UFPA), Cametá, Pará, Brazil.

E-mail: gilcileneufpa@gmail.com

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7156-5610>

LATTES: <http://lattes.cnpq.br/2934771644021042>

INTRODUCTION

STARTING THE CONVERSATION

In this text we will weave broader relationships between the studies of education, gender and race, with emphasis on the black women-voices of an Afro-descendant territory of the quilombola community of Nova América, located in the mediations of Cametá and Oeiras do Pará, of which the author of this study is a part.

The study is part of the Cultures and Languages research line of the Graduate Program in Education and Culture at the Federal University of Pará, Cametá Campus, in the years 2022 to 2025, to map the experiences, knowledge, songs, dances and resistances of black quilombola women, seeking to hear and know their life narratives and their arts of existing/resisting, in the struggle for an anti-racist and anti-sexist education.

We assume the life narrative, particularizing the written narrative and the orality of black quilombola women, as bases for the life record materials and for the educational dynamics of these women, with the possibility of (re)inventing themselves and recognizing themselves as protagonists of their actions in today's time. Given this, we outline as a **General Objective** for the present study: to map the elements of the art of living, singing, narrating, dancing that permeate the condition of the black quilombola woman, thought/narrated by herself. The **Specific Objectives** have the intention of: mapping the quilombola spaces, to know the memory of the daily life of black women, through the reports of the pioneers who weave their trajectory full of struggle, resistance and boldness in the quilombo; propose-carry out experimental dancing activities in school spaces and outside them, such as the dance group ARQUINA and the samba de cacete group "Raízes Negras"; and finally, to produce a documentary with black voices, with aspects of the daily life of EJA students and the women-voices of the dance group "Raízes do quilombo".

The **study problem** allows us to raise some questions: how to weave, propose, foster and carry out cartographic confluences in education, gender and race? What inventive deconstructions do black women-voices and their arts of living provoke to the body, to dance, to education? How to enhance the narratives and resistances of black quilombola women in the face of subversion of gender standards in the community? When we think about public policies for the EJA modality, which audience are we talking about? How can school education transform the lives of black women excluded from these processes in the community?

This academic study, of a narrative nature, is based on the perspective of Cultural Studies in Education (Ana Carolina Escosteguy, Marisa Costa, Rosa Silveira, Luiz Henrique Sommer), especially in studies on Intersectionality (Carla Akotirene) in education, gender and race, its developments with the art and culture of black quilombola women, understanding the narratives or life stories of black women collaborating in the research from the perspective of Black Feminism (bell hooks, Angela Davis).

The theoretical studies helped in the conceptual and analytical approach and the construction of a social and cultural cartography of the black quilombola woman, in the intertwining of voices-black women intellectuals and the community. The emergence of feminist studies and black feminism allowed us to understand the condition of existence of women in society, especially the black quilombola women of the researched community, highlighting the transformative potential of these studies as a mechanism to get out of women's invisibility, the questioning of racism and the non-acceptance of patriarchal submission.

Regarding the **theoretical-methodological path** of the present study, we rely on the Cartography of Cultural Studies in Education, in the social and cultural bias, articulated with the aspects of the visibility of black women in education, made possible by intellectuals of Intersectional Black Feminism. The methodology was carried out through a participatory and narrative research-intervention, where we interviewed black women and community leaders, to know their life stories and the history of the quilombo itself. The interlocutors are social agents from within the spaces mapped and experienced in the community, which were proposed for the present study. Therefore, in this deed, three black women from the community were interviewed, basic education schools were mapped, community centers and two dance groups were mapped. To carry out all these steps of the research (in the years 2022 to 2024), we obtained the proper consent of the participants and community leaders, given the reliability of the researcher, who is also a resident of the researched community.

The **results and discussions** present a transformative potential for the paths of an anti-racist and anti-sexist education, problematize the roots of racism and patriarchy, opening spaces for black quilombola women-voices to narrate their life stories, daily struggles and challenges, yearnings for education and freedom. And so we have a research-intervention woven by women-voices, an attentive and perceptive look of those who are present in society, but always invisible: the black quilombola woman. A study that

praises the black quilombola woman, with her culture and ancestral knowledge, songs and dances, the inventiveness of quilombola art, the educational processes and the challenges of daily life in the quilombola community of Nova América, Oeiras do Pará.

Between the pulse of voices, dancing, between the movements of knowledge, experience, poetry and science, we present this study. It is not easy to say when it starts. We believe that, at this moment, it is important to reflect on the question: what artistic, political, and educational threads do we weave in bringing the living conditions of black quilombola women in the community? In an attempt to express questions and positions through writing, we have the feeling that we cannot reach many answers, but we can exercise speech and listening through the word to express the world we inhabit, live, belong to, and thus continue on this path of writings of black women-voices.

THEORETICAL-METHODOLOGICAL ITINERARIES

In the first thoughts of the research, there was the principle of mapping the practices of black female youth in their daily lives that were part of the actions that the dance group ARQUINA (Associação Remanescente Quilombola de Nova América) was producing, because it was from the observations extracted from these meetings that the interest of this new cut of study emerged. Thus, the first step was to meet with the black female youth through conversation circles, the criteria used for this were: the union of these young black women for a presentation of the patron saint of the community: Our Lady Immaculate Conception, celebrated on December 10, a moment in which all members of the community are present.

Regarding the processes of narrative production, bell hooks (2019) suggests the proposal to "theorize the experience of being black". By assuming this position in the writing of this work, one tries to escape the fallacy that many black people are convinced that their life trajectories are not complex, nor important and, therefore, are not worthy of becoming the focus of research. In the face of the pain and confrontations that go through their lives, many consider that it is difficult to talk about the experiences of blackness, as a result, this writing portrays elements of the voices of black women, who report their daily lives. In this bias, therefore, the theoretical-methodological aspect presents the initial movements and compositions that refer to what was produced-carried out during the process of construction of the study to be exposed as if it were an experiment in

Cartography of Cultural Studies, thus emphasizing the black voices of women in the bias of meanings that encompassed their saying.

Such an effort to expand black female power stems from the results of so many struggles and resistances that brought to the social scene the presence of women as political and cultural beings with their projects of freedom, their authorship, collective changes and transformations, such as the dance group entitled Samba de Cacete de Vila Costeira, in the mediations of the community of Nova América. In the meantime, it is proposed to activate collective mechanisms of power and resistance of black quilombola women in their socio-educational processes, to narrate and reinvent themselves as political beings through reports that culminate in their exit from the invisibility and potentialities of these speeches. Women, in general, who lived/live being deprived of their rights and freedoms, therefore, as previously said, women have been and are historically silenced.

Given the above, the work of Grada Kilomba (2019) seeks the necessary theoretical contribution to think about the place of the narrative of the self and, consequently, to combine the dimensions of the life stories of black women from the quilombola community. The author affirms the importance of narrating her history and assuming black action amid hegemonic history, so repeated and oppressive. It also brings the proposal to "make an absolute opposition to what the colonial project predetermined" (Grada Kilomba, 2019, p. 19). Supported by this narrative methodology, we set out to carry out the research-intervention of inserting black women in the school space, in art and culture, to give visibility to black knowledge and voices from the artistic and transformative powers in the lives of each one of them, thus promoting an emancipatory, democratic and anti-racist education. Questions arose about this and emphasize that the different discourses distort the reality experienced by black women:

Black women were thus placed in various discourses that distort our reality: a debate about racism where (sic) the subject is a black man; a gender discourse where (sic) the subject is the white woman; and a discourse about the class where (sic) "race" has no place. We occupy a very critical place, in theory (Grada Kilomba, 2019, p. 56).

Quilombola women go through this intersectional condition, as the violence suffered is intensified, marked not only by the social inequality of being a woman, black and poor, but also by the abandonment of the State in the face of their basic needs and human dignity, so black women face specific types of violence, in addition to domestic violence.

Grada Kilomba highlights an important issue that helps to think about the black voices of these women, when she says that:

It is extremely important to have this (auto)biographical perspective [SIC] when working with the phenomenon of racism, because the experience of racism is not something momentary or punctual, it is a continuous experience that crosses the (self) [SIC] biography of the individual, an experience that involves a historical memory of racial oppression, enslavement and colonization. (Grada Kilomba, 2019, p. 85).

The approach to the narrative of black women enables not only the problematization of the experiences of confronting racism, but the understanding of how these women create their ideas about the racial reality in their lives, thus enabling the reconstruction of black experiences in racism and patriarchy itself. The decision about what is relevant and what will make up the women's voices was based on the elements that trigger discussions about racism and the social categories that cross the relations of knowledge-power.

About Cultural Studies, they originally emerged in England, but nowadays it is an international phenomenon (Escosteguy, 1998; Oliveira, 1999; Mattelart; Neveu, 2004). Despite this geographical decentralization of Cultural Studies, no fixed concept operates similarly in all territories, on the contrary, a theoretical multiplicity has been created. The British historical context of Cultural Studies outlines its emergence, as it encompasses the academic Campus – proposing interdisciplinarity to study culture and politics – due to the various social movements of the time.

With an interdisciplinary methodological bias, Cultural Studies also seeks to understand, in contemporary industrial societies and their power interrelations, how the performance of culture in the most diverse thematic areas: gender, feminism, national and cultural identities, identity politics, postcolonialism, popular culture, discourse, texts and textualities, mass media, postmodernity, multiculturalism and globalization, among others, as in the elements researched in the community of Nova América and Vila Costeira.

Culture, therefore, breaks with the identification of the object and elements of the implication of the notion of culture as a practice of black women, in the sense of being active in the production of meanings, powers, intersections, that is, it includes all the constitutive forms of a cultural formation of the life and cultural practices of the quilombo of Nova América. In this sense, culture

[...] it can no longer be studied as an unimportant, secondary and dependent variable about what makes the world move; it has to be seen as something fundamental, constitutive, determining both the form and the character of this movement, as well as its inner life (Hall, 1997, p. 06).

This academic study, of a research-intervention nature, is based on the perspective of Cultural Studies in Education, especially the studies of the cartography of black quilombola women, understanding the narratives and life stories of black voices, narrators of the emergence of feminist studies, proposing the need to build memories of this movement, historical records and a follow-up of the subjects that marked the emergence and evolution of feminist thought. Thus, being able to know how black women have transformed the world and transformed themselves over time, by using school education, involving art as a mechanism to get out of invisibility about the importance of thinking about gender articulated with racial belonging, pointing out that racism and sexism must be worked together, "[...] both for the definition of policies against social discrimination, and the very redefinition of the concept of action for citizenship." (Ribeiro, 1995, p. 2017).

Therefore, this research takes a methodological approach – the seams of the black voices of quilombola women who bet on experiences, musical lyrics, art, culture and educational processes carried out in the community studied. It is about the courage to propose other ways of researching in the Academy. Only in this way can it be possible to think about reality critically, to then transform it. Narrate their trajectory, their daily lives, making an intersectional analysis of the elements that constitute this research.

The techniques used for the production of the research-intervention were participant observation, interviews and individual conversations (oral reports). It is necessary to mention that, through the narratives, it was sought to highlight the cultural knowledge of black women, along with the educational processes of these artistic manifestations through black voices. Another important meeting was an article by Lélia Gonzalez in the book "The Place of the Woman", published in 1982. The author focuses her analysis on the fact that, by not paying attention to the racial issue, the complicity of white women with the domination of black women is demarcated; Thus, focusing only on the categories of gender and class, studies on Brazilian women contribute to the naturalization of racial inequalities. For González, black women are victims of a triple oppression: race, gender and social class.

Supported by this methodology of research-intervention-cartographic, we set out to meet black women in the community, in the school space, in art and culture, to listen to

black voices from the artistic and transformative powers in the lives of each one of them, thus promoting an emancipatory, democratic and anti-racist education. In the context of this research, the narratives of black women who have been resisting patriarchy and machismo for decades need to be documented and listened to, to understand what forms they have sought in Education to counteract the pre-existing social ills in their places of experience, since they are factors that list their visibility, as many are seeking access to education.

From this, the criterion of "African goddesses" was used, based on the perspective of Grada Kilomba (2019), to name the black women-voices of the research, seeking to connect education, art and culture, to highlight the relevance of the different modes of resistance amid established preconceptions, to demystify them, as well as, It sought to identify the singularities of the women interviewed to the African goddesses, addressing perspectives intertwined with feminism, this being one of the selection criteria of the research and, mainly, that they were interested in sharing their memories and life experiences. Among these aspects, 8 (eight) participants were selected for the master's research: women in the municipality of Oeiras do Pará, aged between 22 and 57 years, all had access to school education, however, due to the difficulties faced, they did not continue their studies, as is the case of EJA students. And for this article, we selected 4 (four) interviewees, as described below.

Before outlining the profiles of the guests for the research, it is important to emphasize that their identities were preserved and here in this study they were all able to choose an African goddess that they identified with to be named. The first invited to participate in the research was *Ísis*. This girl calls herself strong to face all adversities, despite her fears due to the many situations she experienced in her family (researcher's view). The second guest, *Oxum*, has been seeking independence since she was very young, she managed to study and learned to be a dedicated student, she knows the Portuguese language superficially. The third guest, *Iansã*, has always had family help, is very independent affectively and financially, travels a lot, actively participates in the meetings of women in the community. The fourth guest, *Ala*, has origins and experience in the municipality of Oeiras do Pará, calls herself a woman without labels, with effervescent self-esteem. The fifth guest, *Sekhmet* is an EJA student, currently lives in a family, and considers herself a very happy person, despite facing many difficulties at home, such as violence from her partner. The sixth guest, *Bast*, one of the most powerful voices we had contact with, has authority, with a quilombola woman's personality, works and studies in

search of a better life for herself and her family. The seventh guest, *Lemanjá*, an EJA student, mother, faces the goals of life with audacity, one of them is at home, leads and deals with the obligations of the house. The eighth guest, *Hator*, is called joy, African beauty, mother, fights for her goals daily.

It is necessary to ratify that it is time for feminist studies to focus on the construction of narratives of the lives of black women who have been silenced, excluded, and violated for so long, because it is known that they have much to contribute to the discussions of the intersections of differences in the socio-educational sphere. In the case of black women, the main focus of this work, they are doubly silenced and made invisible, both by the historical oppression of patriarchy and by the imposition of the racist culture that permeates the marginalization of the quilombo of Nova América. "We have been silenced", as Grada Kilomba points out in "Memories of the Plantation" (2019): "it is not in fact that we have not spoken, our voices have been stolen from us and represented by white, white women. The act of speaking is dialogical, it is spontaneous between those who speak and those who listen." The author works with the concept of "mask", when analyzing the painting of Anastácia with the mask on her face, which, according to Kilomba, recreates the project of silencing and therefore belonging, since being heard is linked to belonging.

In this bias, we sought to identify black women who meet the criteria listed with Young Adult Education (EJA), as it was possible to connect and enter the quilombola community to do the research, especially with black women, addressing perspectives intertwined with black feminism, culture and art, so that these women would have interest and opportunity to share their memories and life experiences. As a result, this study intends to think about the condition of black quilombola women, based on their narratives and ways of living, educating, resisting that they met in an EJA classroom, community leaders and black youth, initially considering the intersectional perspectives in education, gender and race.

BLACK WOMEN FROM THE QUILOMBOLA COMMUNITY OF NOVA AMÉRICA - OEIRAS DO PARÁ

Placing black women at the center of the debate, when it comes to this theme, is a way of not falling into misconceptions, recurrent in works on the feminine universe: what forms of resistance, articulated by black women, can we glimpse, when we come across the history of black quilombola women? In this sense, it can be said that a large part of the

history of the colonized, enslaved black Brazilian people has its roots of resistance in the culture of the quilombos, given that, alluding to the studies of Beatriz Nascimento (1985), the quilombos are identity territories built since remote times, of eminently Afro-descendant tradition, which found a quilombola culture that is present in the social and collective formation of countless black communities throughout Brazil.

It is here that the Remanescente do Quilombo de Nova América community and the Vila Costeira community must be inserted, as producers of a particular culture, experienced in the daily lives of its inhabitants, who have historically resisted all forms of oppression. As a result, the process of resistance of the communities studied reflects their cultural productions forged in the day-to-day life of each resident, in the batches of flour, rounds of samba de cacete, dances, narratives, songs and constant struggles of the social movements in which they are staunch participants.

In Figure 01 and Figure 02 we have the portrait of the first contact with the community, to dialogue about the constitutional rights and duties that black people need and are provided for by the Federal Constitution of 1988. At this meeting, the entire board of directors of the Quilombola Association of Nova América came together to collectively highlight the importance of projects capable of enhancing the voices of women in the quilombo. Returning to the portrait, in Figure 01, it is possible to observe the local fruits that were harvested and made available to the participants.

Figure 1 – Local food harvest



Source: Researcher's Archive (2024).

Figure 02 – ARQUINA Board of Directors



Source: ARQUINA Coordinator (2024).

About Figure 02, the subjects who were at the meeting are observed discussing and thinking about possibilities that could bring social improvements to the quilombola population. As previously mentioned, on this day, the first contact with the women of the community was highlighted, it was also possible to highlight the importance of each speech and each one of them, and the relevance of narrating, dancing and singing, thus developing the work of welcoming, affection and listening. With this bias, all the elements observed with the ancestral quilombola culture were intertwined.

Given this, a meeting was proposed specifically with women and, based on these meetings, the aim was to produce music, litanies, writings and voices that seek "hidden stories" in narratives (Grada Kilomba, 2019, p. 27). Since we are not black women concerned only with the oppressions that affect us, because, "first of all, we dive into the scenario of narrative disputes to discuss and problematize the ways of being in the world." (Djamila Ribeiro, 2017, p. 51), being protagonists of their history. The perspective of the "place of speech" occupies spaces of resistance, as it helps to think about the world from the places and spaces that we are producing, experimenting and occupying. (Idem, p. 53). Together we will produce dissonant voices, echoes, reverberations, noises, and these constructions destabilize the hegemonic narratives expressed in multiple spaces, including those of the Academy.

For bell hooks (2019), the control over black women was one of the main measures in the process of enslavement of black people, as breaking their identity and inferiorizing them was extremely important for the maintenance of white families. We dialogue with the author, when we conclude that

African women received the shock of this massive brutalization and terrorization not only because they could be victimized through their sexuality, but also because they were more likely to work in the intimacy of white families than black men. Since the slavers observed the black woman as a saleable cook, nurse, maid, she needed to be so exhaustively terrorized that she would passively submit to the will of the white owner of the owner, and her children. To make his product saleable, the slaver had to ensure that no rebellious black woman's servant would poison the family, kill the children, burn down the house, or resist in any way. (Bell hooks, 2019, p. 17-18).

In the midst of this, Brazilian society still goes through many scenarios of repression and dehumanization, black quilombola women go through situations of insecurity, impotence and embarrassment because they believe that, because they are from the Rural Zone and do not have their own houses to shelter, they need to perform brutal work, to have the basics that are food, without rights to remuneration for their services rendered.

Because of this, it is important to highlight the life stories of these black women who have several sources that can be analyzed.

After the conversations with the group of women, socially constructed by moments of experiences and exchange of experiences, in a holistic and integrated way, the black quilombola women were able to express themselves, and many of them manifest sadness and embarrassment when reporting their moments of pain and oppression.

Figure 03 shows *Ísis*, interviewee 01 of the research, who came to brighten us with her life story and move us with her struggles, encouraging us to face the challenges of daily life.

Figure 03 – Local singer



Source: Researcher's Archive (2024).

I worked and didn't earn anything financially, barely the things they gave, sometimes I didn't even get food, when I went from here in the countryside to the city it was just to work and serve, we were humiliated because we wanted to study to change our lives, but we also went through a lot of humiliation, even as a thief they accused me of being black and being their maid.

The fact that we left the countryside for the city, I was 16 years old, this arrival in people's homes, who have been living in the city for a long time, we didn't have that contact with these people, I immediately felt discriminated against in the first house I went to. It was like punishment to serve as a nanny, to walk on the street and in the sun so that the child would not cry and return inside the house and not every day the lady of the house was in a good mood, there were days when she was very stressed, she wanted to take it out on me, and the fact that she did not pay me, of not giving me anything I found this with great discrimination. When I asked to leave, I didn't get anything....

The fact of work, a lot of work, washing, ironing, cooking, taking care of children, the time I had to study was only at dawn, for me to take a test I got up at 4 am to study, because from 7 am, I wouldn't have time anymore, until 6 pm that I would take a shower to go to school, I always studied at night because I needed to work.

(Interviewee 01, *Ísis*, Student, 27 years old)

Our hypothesis is that from feminist theory, especially black feminism, it is possible to claim the "place of speech" of the black quilombola woman, since one of the objectives of black feminism is to mark the place of speech of those who propose them, it is perceived

that this marking becomes necessary to understand realities that were considered implicit within the racial hegemonic normalization of Brazilian society.

For bell hooks (2019), the control over black women was one of the main measures in the process of enslavement of black people, as breaking their identity and inferiorizing them was extremely important for the maintenance of white families. We dialogue with the author, concluding that, in the speech of this interviewee, the silence is broken and there is the opportunity to explain her ideals, reflected in the understanding of the violence experienced daily, thus ratifying the importance of the place of speaking and listening and embracing them.

Figure 04 shows *Oxum*, interviewed 02 of the research, followed by her report.

Figure 04 – EJA student



Source: Researcher's Archive (2024).

My name is the African goddess Isis, I'm 37 years old, my life in childhood was very remarkable, an act happened, which is still remarkable in my life today, it was when I was 18 years old, I was a maid in a house in Belém do Pará, one day my boss's son who didn't live with us, He showed up one afternoon to take a shower. On this day he took the gold cord he had and kept it in the drawer of his mother's room being my boss. But he thought I was left in the bathroom, and then I went in. Since that day my life has turned upside down, he came to accuse me, that he would have stolen the cord, at that time I was seven months pregnant, he pushed me and cursed me with a lot of profanity, it was a horrible thing and he denounced me. When they decided to take me to the police station, he remembered where he had kept it. He rushed to the police station to withdraw the complaint. To this day it makes me barely remember this scene.

(Interviewee 02, *Oxum*, Servant, 37 years old)

This research ventures into a theoretical and practical discussion about a brief historical movement of feminist studies, as it is known that women in general have lived/live being deprived of their rights and freedoms, therefore, women have been and are historically silenced by several factors that intersect, such as race, class, gender, but they resist and risk possibilities of transgression in the environments where they live, as in Vila de Nova América/ Oeiras do Pará. That is why we brought reports from women belonging to the quilombo to think about ways to articulate them, transversalizing them with other

markers and understanding that one marker is not greater than another, but that the sum of them can annihilate subjectivities and identities when not observed, is what this work risks trying to produce.

In short, such an effort to expand female power stems from the results of so many struggles and resistances that brought to the social scene the presence of women as political beings, with their projects of freedom, changes and collective transformations. In the meantime, it is proposed to activate collective mechanisms of power and resistance of black quilombola women in their socio-educational processes, in order to narrate and reinvent themselves as political beings and their places of speech, stories that culminate in their exit from invisibility and potentialities of these speeches. Black women, in general, who lived/live being deprived of their rights and freedoms, because, as previously said, black women were and are historically the most silenced.

EJA STUDENTS: THE ART OF NARRATING ONE'S OWN STORY

Figure 05 - EJA student



Source: Researcher's Archive (2024).

In Figure 05 we have *Iansã*, interviewee 03, left in evidence, as a form of power and urgency to claim their voices, since the crossings through which black women need to walk to be seen as protagonists of their own battles, disturb, and think about how many sexist narratives they had to face and experience so that they could be seen and heard, as in this event that took place in the community of Costeira. Thinking about a black woman, mother, student and producer of her own history, reveals another of the great feminine powers that emerged/emerge from the struggles of feminist movements throughout our history.

The narratives of the self can be read as an active work, inviting us to reflect on the limits of one's own existence, on the forms of domination experienced by each woman in the daily life of social life and on the masculine power of the institutions that affect us

incessantly. Strengthening the experience of freedom in this transformative activity of writing oneself and exploring the intertwining of social experiences with everyday experiences in which multiple characters appear, the report of interview 03, 57 years old, follows.

I wake up at 5:55 am, make coffee, bathe my daughter and comb her hair, and then the father takes her to school. After the return we go downtown, walking, because there is only one bicycle. I am the mother of two daughters, one studies in the morning and the other in the afternoon, the older one always rides her bike to our work, while we walk. Every day this same route, I get home exhausted from work, I still need to sweep the house, wash dishes and make dinner, after all this, I take a shower and come to the side of the road to wait for the bus to come to school, because the entrance is at 7 pm until 10 pm, I return home and sleep, because in the morning the same routine as the woman farmer. These are my challenges, day to day, because I need to work to support my family, I went back to school to improve my learning and for new job opportunities, and to give a good education to my children, and that I can graduate and work in the lightest service. (EJA student, *Iansã*, Farmer, 57 years old)

When enslaved, black women were forced to work in agriculture, as were most EJA students, or even performing domestic services. "They were "in charge" of a very hard work, working during the day with men, in the fields, performing the same tasks. In addition, women took up with their sons and daughters the work of cultivating subsistence foodstuffs." (Dias, 2020, p. 364). The "domestic slaves" (Nepomuceno, 2020, p. 383) were in a way spared from the heavier work of farming and in the main house they could wear European-style clothes, however, they were subjected to all kinds of harassment and even rape, as they became an easy target for the masters they served.

In the midst of a scenario of deprivation and struggles for the conquest of places of speech and for rights, insurgencies and appeals to the stigma of accentuated fragility due to physical, cultural and identity diversities, the struggle of other social minorities could be accentuated, as is the case of deaf women who, since previous centuries, have been seeking autonomy over their language, his body and his identity. This event arises from the gaps with feminism, it emerges, therefore, as a subversive and libertarian movement, which not only requires space for women in social spheres, whether at work, in public and political life, in education, in the economy, among others, but requires struggle, mainly, for a new form of family and social coexistence, in which women have the freedom and autonomy to decide about their lives, work and bodies.

The student also explained the importance of study in her life: "study transformed me first and now I am contributing, positively, to improving the lives of other social subjects"

(Interviewee 03), talked about the good relationship with some of her colleagues, wonderful teachers, one of them, the Portuguese language teacher, for teaching her.

Continuing the exhibition of handicrafts, in Figure 06 it is possible to observe the handicraft production of interviewee 04, *A/a*, then her report.

Figure 06 – Handicrafts produced by black women from the quilombo



Source: Researcher's Archive (2024).

I wake up at six in the morning, make breakfast and then do the housework, such as: washing clothes, sweeping the house, and making food, I am a mother, I have two daughters, I am single, I live in the countryside, on BR 422, Trans-Cametá and I live with my parents. My biggest challenge is to study at night, because it is tiring, sometimes I am exhausted, even so, I do not think about giving up my study, I am studying in order to give a better life to my daughters, everything good I do is for them, my dream is to see them well in the future, and I am fighting to fulfill my goals and my desires, because I have a dream of being a nurse, my mother always says that it is never too late to dream. (EJA student, *Winger*, Farmer, 37 years old)

What is intended with these discussions is to establish a debate on how the combination of oppressive social categories are used to suffocate black women, highlighting how the relations of knowledge-power work together, delegitimizing the identities of these women. It is important to pay attention to the fact that "inequalities are created by the way power articulates these identities; they are the result of a structure of oppression that privileges certain groups to the detriment of others." (Ribeiro, 2017, p. 33). This structure reinforces colonial societies, causing these identities to be oppressed and disqualified at all times. However, these women resist, dream and fight daily for a better present and future for themselves and their families.

Workshop "Leaking Images": Stories Told by Women

In this workshop, the debate continued through an interview with the dance group "Raízes Negras". Workshop: Leaking images: stories told by women. General Objective: To understand the daily struggle of women from the "black roots" group who occupy various roles in society, through women's voices, as well as to reflect on their own condition. Territory mapped: dance group "black roots". Approximate time for the process: 2 months.

Character of the presentation: cultural show. Number of Participants: 12. Target audience: school community. Didactic resources: recorder, photographic resource, speaker.

In the first moment, we heard Dona Lurdes Carvalho (representative of the dance group), about the life of each of the women present in the group and the history of confrontation of the group. After this moment, we had a dialogue with all the dancing components. It is worth mentioning that questions were asked, such as: when did the dance group start? How many women participate? How many songs were created? Other guiding questions arose during the course of the meeting.

Figure 07: Lourdes in the art of singing and dancing



Source: Researcher's archive (2024).

In the echo of the meeting, other social subjects arrived and sat in chairs to listen to the narratives that Dona Lurdes, making it a collective proportion, since some arrived to listen, others to listen and speak. In intrinsic movements, the delicacy of arriving at slow steps, sitting carefully, listening attentively and speaking with respect was applied, culturally forging stories. At one point, everyone had talked about themselves and the daily life of the community, starting with the creation of the group "black roots". In this space, we discussed the movements of the group, its creation, who the participants were, the importance of the group and from this, the reports of other women were narrated in authenticity, with a bias of intersections of memories of machismo, pain, strength and struggle, through the look and resistance for new experiences of perseverance of so many other women existing in the quilombo.

Narrating involves sharing and proceeding communally with these women, it can be said that it is about the immersion of sharing, welcoming and listening. The roots of the narration are in the people (Benjamin, 1987), artisanally the communities are dazzled by stories, ranging from everyday knowledge, through the spheres of care, tactics of struggle and territorialization. The cult of oral tradition is the "[...] possibility of living a continuum,

despite different historical space and times" (Conceição Evaristo, 2010), "is the black paradigm in the face of historical continuity" (Sodré, 1988). The experience felt from the dance, according to the dance group, goes beyond the resistance of many women in the quilombo, it is echoed in the spiritual and intellectual strength as a power of the leaders.

Memory is the place of emergence of history that has not been written, says Lelia Gonzalez (2020), "memory is fictional, since it introduces the creative imagination, develops a space of fantasy of the real, is not infamous, it is famous, it summons the escape from modern/colonial discourse, traces affectation scenes and roots community experiences". As the idea of people was stronger and its greatest demands were for survival, I thought of an entire community/Costeira that was inserted in a dual strategy and reality of narratives. Dona Lurdes always ponders words of affirmation of herself and her culture, her speeches give authority and pride to many quilombola women, as they echo the recognition of blackness, the honor of her color, she sees in herself a body loaded with stories and in dance a movement of expression, she places herself as sensitive and flexible, capable of giving life to culture. "These women struggle to dispel these hegemonic discourses that impact them with negative images, behaviors that resist and insist on depriving them" (hooks, 2020). To corroborate this interpretation put into reality, Grada Kilomba (2019) assures that:

[...] Black women, because they are neither white nor men, come to occupy a very difficult position within a patriarchal society of white supremacy. We represent a kind of double absence, a double Outrity, for we are the antithesis of both whiteness and masculinity. In this scheme, the black woman can only be the "Other" and never the self. (Kilomba, 2019, p. 190)

The narratives permeated by experiences point out dimensions of choices and potentiating paths, allowing the evaluation of situations and their territorial implications, being forged through creation, action and sensitivity, in addition to producing existential configurations, enabling the preservation of the itineraries assumed and the strengthening of the positions to be recognized in the face of the modern/colonial order – which seeks to deal with information and knowledge displaced from experience, while the knowledge produced in black communities is constituted through living experience. As a result, questions that stand out and help in the construction of this study will be brought to reflection.

Grada Kilomba (2010) makes a criticism:

Writing this book was indeed a form of transformation because here, I am not the 'Other', but the self, not the object, but the subject, I am the descriptive Art and decolonization of my own history, and not the described (...) I become the narrator, and the writer of my own reality, the author and the authority over my own history. In this sense, I become the absolute opposition of what the colonial project predetermined. (Kilomba, 2010, p. 12)

The author, through personal and conceptual narratives, deciphers the emergence of a critical consciousness of ontological racism in Western thought, that is, it is a text that proposes to study the discursive-performative operations of racism, based on its discursive applicability of power. Movement is considered the action in which the body positions itself in the anti-colonial act, traces the exercise of decomposing bodily stiffening and feeding new tactics of resistance.

FINAL THOUGHTS... WALKING WITH BLACK WOMEN

The crossings of this study lead me to write this conclusion in the first person, for the sake of challenges and learning. These are racial, gender, and educational crossings that concern me and my advisor and all the black women who were part of this research, pointing to the power of narrative-seams, of the circularity between word and listening, also of a feminist epistemology and another. Therefore, this writing addressed the various life paths of black quilombola women, as well as their encounters with blackness and their struggles.

This was my first meeting to begin the dialogue with women, reported in experiences; The study proposal was presented and the reasons that led to the study of the theme presented were briefly reported. For a long time I was erasing and erasing what I wrote in the conclusions. After all, at this moment we reflect on the relevant issues of work and its importance in women's lives. Before any inspiration, he wrote and erased, in the constant movement of uncertainty, wear and tear and impotence. Then, chaos set in again and I kept asking myself: what moved my flights?

I decided to take a break again and go in search of new stories of women: I listened to my students, black women, inspiring and powerful, I reflected on everything I was willing to do in this study and at this moment, fatigue had dominated. So, how to have breath in the moments when even our dreams seem to have no meaning anymore? I looked at everything that was arranged in my study room: my desk with my books, the photos of the women who inspire me: mother and grandmothers. On the desk were all the books I had brought for reflection for this study, it was time to revise! There was Carolina Maria de

Jesus' book stored in a drawer. At this point I started to look at its pages and among those that were marked, I identified one that caught my attention.

[...]It's raining. I can't pick up paper. The day it rains I am a beggar. I'm already really clumsy and dirty. I already wear the uniform of the indigent. And today is Saturday. The favela residents are considered beggars. I want to see how I'm going to die. No one should entertain the idea of suicide. But nowadays those who live until the time of death come, is a hero. Because those who are not strong are discouraged. I saw a lady complain that she got the bones in the Refrigerator and that the bones were clean. And I like meat so much. I was nervous listening to the woman lament because it is hard to come into the world and not even be able to eat. (Carolina Maria de Jesus, 2014, p. 61).

At that moment I paused and reflected on the time we are living in, the catastrophes that culminated in the death of thousands of people, between breathing, looking and reading, I remembered the history of many families and the struggles I also suffered to be able to remain firm to the present day as a black woman and quilombola. I confess that many questions jump out at all times in my reflections, because when we reach the end of a stage, we reflect on the power of the experience that moved us at that moment, in the conversation circles and in the meetings. In a certain way, at this moment, I can say that we have reached the end of this journey of extraordinary experiences.

I wonder if all the questions raised at the beginning of this study have been answered at some point, I come to the conclusion that I cannot answer this question. When I began the study presented here, I confess that I had no idea of the power of the experience, of the countless readings they built, of the paths trodden, of the readings carried out and of the bureaucratic issues that arose along the way and that were resolved. I was able to meet knowledge, listen to the narratives of many women's lives, or rather, I was enhancing the voices of many, since this meeting allowed me to be more human, powerful in the life of EJA.

In this pulse of the poetry of life, I met women from EJA. I met Dona Dinailda and more than quickly we became friends. At EJA, I was able to reflect on the lives and struggles of women, because they live in a patriarchal society. The reflections that I have been able to weave and sew in this study are still few, close to everything that this theme can worry us about. In this sense, some reflections on the paths taken in this study, as well as the power of the experience of workshops with women from EJA become unsettling, pulsating and poetic. As exposed in the course of this study, we sought to bring to the academic visibility of the narratives of black women through their writings of themselves in

their processes of schooling, affective and family life, the world of work, configurations of the struggles for their place of speech, in the face of the challenges and resistances of living in a patriarchal and racist society.

In dark times, it is necessary to resist in a political, poetic and creative way within the environments we live in. I nurtured all the inspiration that moved my life, my grandmother's and my mother's, these reasons intensified my tensions, since going to meet knowledge and reflect on the condition of women were the poetic movements that I found in dark times. Times are dark for those who believe in the art of encounter; of the encounter with education that produces meanings, narratives, arts, music, experiences and (re)existences. In this journey as a researcher, I think that reflecting on the condition of women, especially black women, is in a way, reflecting on my own condition within all the environments I frequent, a reason that shows the daily and unsettling tension of movements, speech and the work space.

When I started reading for this text, I had no idea of the breadth of this theme. In these moments of meetings and readings, it was impossible not to reflect on my condition as a black woman, therefore, my gaze was modified and transformed during the readings-encounters. Weaving reflections on the conditions of women is, in fact, an exercise in resistance, struggle and daring, I say this, because times are dark for dreamers, but it does not fail to bring with it the power of voices echoing through the backyard of the quilombo. Dreams make me get up every day: dreams of a more humane, more egalitarian and supportive world, in which there is respect for diversity, in addition, recognizing the stories, voices and struggles of women as legitimate. This text-encounter is a poetic-resistance look, it is a woman-text, a powerful text of the struggles of many voices that for a long time have remained silenced, erased and forgotten. As a result, I ask myself, every day, why I chose a research topic on black women and many answers come when I reflect on the whys, perhaps because it was chosen by him before.

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