

Artigo

# INTERVIEW WITH PROFESSOR RAFAEL SANZIO ARAÚJO DOS ANJOS – CIGA-UNB / PROJECT GEOAFRO TO NOVA ESCOLA REVIEW

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**English Version: Cleison Leite Ferreira**

**THEME: CHILDREN OUT OF QUILOMBOLA SCHOOL**

**REPORTER: ANNA RACHEL FERREIRA**

**BRASILIA, FEBRUARY 3, 2014.**

Anna Rachel Ferreira (ARF) - The LDB (Lei de Diretrizes e Bases) of 1996 does not mention the Quilombolas Communities. We know that in some aspects the problems with the access to schools are similar to the problems faced in the riverine communities, in the rural zone, and in the indigenous population, for example. Both specified on the law. Which would be the followed orientation when we talk about quilombos?

Professor Rafael Sanzio (PRS) - It is important not to lose sight that exists in space and in the Brazilian population a large territory and people not part of the “Official Brazil”. In this context, we can insert the quilombolas populations, which were excluded secularly of the country and of the priority actions in the decision-making sector. Prejudice and exclusion mark the history of Africa in Brazil and the quilombos, which are considered “the past of Colonial Brazil”, had recently started to have attention of the State and one of them is in the Transitory Devices of the Federal Constituion of 1988. Even with this constitutional prerogative, there is a series of institutional and political impediments that break the public policy and make it impossible the regularization of the ancestral territories. The State management model for quilombo issues is marked by spraying of the institutional responsibilities. As a result it weakens and delays the necessary joints. In this direction, the LDB is one more of many evidences of the “invisibility” and of the “negation” of these communities in the power to decision-making sector and this result is very sad for a country where the majority population has an African ancestry.

ARF – Are there children out of school in quilombos? What are the most frequent reasons for this exclusion?

PRS - A first point is that the official Brazil has not yet conducted a large national registry to answer some basic questions: how many territories exist with these African origin? What is its population estimate? What are the territories occupied with the wide

range of their identity references? The lack of these basic data for any more effective management action hides reality and becomes part the scope of public policies, especially education for children and adolescents of the quilombos, which is the most relevant and the most affected. If the country (society and state) does not clearly assume and does not recognize as a priority the necessary repairs to the quilombos and to other segments historically segregated in Brazil, we will continue to see many Afro-Brazilian children and adolescents out of school.

ARF - Some problems we identified that affect the communities mentioned in the first question are: the distance between the school and the house of children; lack of transport supply; discrepancy between education and local reality; communities located in border whose responsibility is not assumed by local governments; and a high rate of distortion age-grade elapsed by repetition that generates evasion. These questions apply to the reality of quilombos? To what extent?

PRS - Ideally, every school in a quilombo territory had in its educational programming; in the organization of physical space; and training of its teachers, the basic references for the demystification of Africa still associated to slavery and misery. It would be essential that schools in quilombola territory perform actions that valorize the cultural-identity references of the quilombo community for the necessary rescue of student self-esteem. These basic premises are undermined by all these institutional, political and infrastructure aspects listed in this question and that do not have perspective of solution, because contemporary quilombos are not part of the political priorities as previous reference.

ARF – Are there specific problems of quilombola communities that make children give up studying?

PRS – Yes. First the demands of work; of study (the community has no school for the continuation of the elementary school, neither high school); the attractiveness and seductions of the dominant system (which come mainly by satellite dishes ...), among other factors. The result is a systematic migration of young people to the “big city” and a “disruption” of family ties (parents and grandparents), and especially the basis of ancestral identity that is affected with this process. In this sense, the oral tradition, a fundamental component of the transfer of knowledge in a quilombola community is at risk. For example, in Brasilia is increasing the number of young people from the large territory Kalunga (that covers some municipalities of Goiás and Tocantins), who come to study, work and get together on weekends to “strengthen in their references” and to maintain the identity link, given the systematic situations of vulnerability they face in the prejudiced society.

ARF - According to the Ministry of Education, 92% of schools in quilombo communities are located in rural areas. Is the reality very different in urban quilombos?

Is there any study that show us whether children of urban quilombos are going more to schools than children of quilombo located in the rural areas? Is there this relation?

PRS - We are talking about a complex context of social and territorial exclusion in a continental country with an estimated number of more than 5,000 records of quilombo sites, it is therefore difficult to have a standard situation in this type of schooling. There are more articulate states with greater organization of agents-actors involved in the demands of quilombos and these situations directly affect the level of reach to school services. In Bahia, for example in the municipality of Nilo Peçanha, some communities can keep their children in the community school to the 1st stage of primary school. After this stage they are indicated to go to the city (the municipal seat) every day by bus to continue their studies. Prejudices records among students in rural and urban areas often occur in this process and the mapping of exclusion in the classroom, as reported by some researchers, show that students from the quilombo communities come together in isolation, to survive the pressures in the school environment. This highlights the size of losses in the broad sense (social, bodily, psychological, among others), caused to such students.

ARF - We know that providing high school is poor in many rural communities. Is this the reality in the quilombos? Do the students conclude elementary school? Until what year do quilombolas often remain in schools? For what reason?

PRS - have treated this subject in the previous question, but data like this can only be answered with property from the official inclusion of all Quilombola sites of Brazil in the Census every 10 years by the Federal Government. The data may allow more precise information on the actual situation of youth education in contemporary quilombos and impairment levels. It is foolhardy to deal with issues such as those with inconsistent data.

ARF - We know that in some communities of the countryside, the governments and the residents consider early childhood education as “a place where the child will be cared for in the absence of the father” and when the child in question lives with parents, the school supply is considered unnecessary. Is there supply and demand in early childhood education in these communities? What is the point of view of the quilombolas about this issue?

PRS - The lack of school for centuries to the population of African origin in Brazil has created attitudes, fears, different values and especially apprehensions and suspicions. Many parents think that their children stay at home is safer than going to a school that discriminates. Hence the importance of children be appreciated at school, and thus they may be important agents to change the mentality of the oldest in the family who did not have opportunity or were excluded at the school they attended. We returned this sense, the importance of teacher training in this process as a structural component. If education professionals are not prepared to deal with the issues of ethnic discrimination and appreciation of Africanities in Brazil, no doubt, we will maintain a large secular problem, which in the present, as in the near future may generate tensions in society.

We cannot forget that this is the millennium of cultural conflict, warned us thinkers and theorists at the end of the last century and Brazil is in this process.

ARF - Nucleation and multigrade classrooms have been quite alternatives adopted in the countryside to address the lack of infrastructure and teachers. How it has been done in the quilombola communities? Do they manage a nucleated school for several quilombos or have to go to the urban area? If going to a school outside the quilombo, what are the consequences for students?

PRS - Every emergency solution is relevant for a given period. But when it loses this reference and becomes permanent, then we have a big problem, a justified deviation of management. I think this type of institutional solution should be banned! Education is one of the pillars of citizenship, whether it is often improvised, the human being is being compromised in its existence.

ARF - Today, schools often teach about quilombola communities as quilombos no longer existed. This contrasts with estimates of the federal government that say there are about 3,000 quilombos in Brazil. Do you believe that this is a factor that hinders the development of schools in these communities and the view of them?

PRS - The official Brazilian historiography is still pending a reconstruction of the “invisibility” and “interpretation” of some fundamental segments of the formation of its territory and its population. Indigenous and African origin are those who suffer most from this “abyss”, especially in the educational process. The dominant social thought in Brazil have real difficulties in understanding that quilombo is present and when “sees” that the quilombos are in contemporary Brazil usually occurs amazement as the numbers of traditional communities of survivors African roots (even with inaccurate data). The fundamental question is that the “visibility” of contemporary quilombos bothers because it brings out the pending demands of Brazil Colonial biased. In the conservative structures the question of quilombola territories brings out a structural point that is the “land”, which still has the meaning of “power” and descendants of enslaved Africans have “land” in Brazil has never been part of colonial strategies and not this historical moment. Setting this boundary of the secular conflict is the thread’s set of difficulties (institutional and political) in the resolutions of these Afro-Brazilian ethnic territories, and the school, which is the main agent of transformation of traumatic exclusion with inclusion possible, is one of the segments more committed to this secular neglect.