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The educational experience of the Juruna People: the community pedagogical work in the construction of a border school

A experiência educativa do Povo Juruna: o trabalho pedagógico comunitário na construção de uma escola fronteiriça

La experiencia educativa del Pueblo Juruna: el trabajo pedagógico comunitario en la construcción de una escuela fronteriza

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Abstract: The discussion centers on how the Juruna people of Km 17 – a stretch located between the municipalities of Altamira and Vitória do Xingu in the State of Pará – have been utilizing the existing school in the Boa Vista community to delineate their identity boundaries. The objective is to analyze the construction of Juruna identity in relation to the pedagogical thinking and practices of the Boa Vista village school, highlighting, within school practices, compliance with the legal precepts of indigenous school education policy and the strengthening of ethnic identity, particularly during the process of ethnogenesis. The field research employed ethnographic techniques, including open interviews, photographic records, and participant observation. The school, which historically served attempts at homogenization, is now conceived as a boundary as it is re-signified by other cultures. Among the subjects in question, it was observed that the Francisca Juruna School, chosen by them as the primary social structure for ethnic strengthening, plays a significant role in affirming the group's indigenous identity as it seeks to safeguard the maintenance of identity boundaries, contributing to the updating of diacritical signs and fostering a sense of ethnic belonging.
Keywords*:* Juruna of Km 17; Indigenous School Education; Interculturality; Pedagogical Project.

Resumo: Discute-se como os Juruna do Km 17 – trecho localizado entre os municípios de Altamira e Vitória do Xingu, Estado do Pará, vêm utilizando a escola existente na comunidade Boa Vista para a demarcação das suas fronteiras identitárias. Objetiva analisar a construção da identidade Juruna na sua relação com o pensar e o fazer pedagógico da escola da aldeia Boa Vista, sinalizando, nas práticas escolares, o atendimento aos preceitos legais da política de educação escolar indígena e o fortalecimento da identidade étnica, especialmente quando em

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processo de etnogênese. A pesquisa de campo fez uso de técnicas etnográficas, entre elas entrevistas abertas, registros fotográficos e observação participante. A escola, que historicamente serviu às tentativas de homogeneização, hoje é pensada como *fronteira* na medida em que é ressignificada por outras culturas. Entre os sujeitos em questão, percebeu-se que a Escola Francisca Juruna, eleita por eles como principal estrutura social de fortalecimento étnico, desempenha relevante papel na afirmação da identidade indígena do grupo na medida em que busca zelar pela manutenção das fronteiras identitárias, contribuindo com a atualização dos sinais diacríticos e com o sentimento de pertença étnica.
Palavras-chave Juruna do Km 17; Educação Escolar Indígena; Interculturalidade; Projeto Pedagógico.

Resumen: Se discute cómo los Juruna del Km 17 – tramo ubicado entre los municipios de Altamira y Vitória do Xingu, Estado de Pará, han estado utilizando la escuela existente en la comunidad Boa Vista para la demarcación de sus fronteras identitarias. El objetivo es analizar la construcción de la identidad Juruna en su relación con el pensamiento y la práctica pedagógica de la escuela de la aldea Boa Vista, señalando, en las prácticas escolares, el cumplimiento de los preceptos legales de la política de educación escolar indígena y el fortalecimiento de la identidad étnica, especialmente en un proceso de etnogénesis. La investigación de campo utilizó técnicas etnográficas, entre ellas entrevistas abiertas, registros fotográficos y observación participante. La escuela, que históricamente ha servido a los intentos de homogeneización, hoy se piensa como frontera en la medida en que es resignificada por otras culturas. Entre los sujetos en cuestión, se percibió que la Escuela Francisca Juruna, elegida por ellos como la principal estructura social de fortalecimiento étnico, desempeña un papel relevante en la afirmación de la identidad indígena del grupo en la medida en que busca velar por el mantenimiento de las fronteras identitarias, contribuyendo con la actualización de los signos diacríticos y con el sentimiento de pertenencia étnica.
Palabras clave: Juruna do Km 17; Educación Escolar Indígena; Interculturalidad; Proyecto Pedagógico.

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Introduction

It is known that the intensified Indigenous mobilizations in the context of Brazilian territory since the 1970s, coupled with the emergence of support organizations, have helped establish the idea of school as a tool for accessing information and essential knowledge for the survival and self-determination of Indigenous peoples (Silva, 2001). The demands resulted in the guarantee by the country's highest legal instrument—the Constitution of the Federative Republic of Brazil of 1988—of an education "respectful of their languages and cultures, their distinct ways of living and thinking, and the valuation of their knowledge and processes of production and transmission" (Silva, 2001, p. 31).

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However, it is a fact that the realization of this school as an instrument of identity affirmation remains a pragmatic and political challenge. The relationship of reciprocity in recognizing the cultural diversity of Indigenous peoples often remains limited to legal texts. It is necessary to build intercultural relationships so that the school can more significantly contribute to the right of Indigenous peoples to assert who they are.

But how can this institution, rooted in its colonizing conception related to the civilizing idea of the Indigenous, contribute to the identity affirmation of these subjects? What is the meaning attributed to Indigenous School Education by communities in the process of ethnic emergence? These are the questions we seek to discuss while reflecting on the construction of Juruna identity in relation to school in this Indigenous territory, with the aim of analyzing the construction of Juruna identity in relation to the school in the Boa Vista village, highlighting, in school practices, adherence to the legal precepts of the Indigenous school education policy that, among other things, is based on a project of autonomy and valorization of Indigenous culture[4].

The subjects of this study belong to the Juruna ethnicity and refer to themselves as Yudjá. They are located in an area known as Aldeia Boa Vista, along the Ernesto Accioly Highway (PA 415), which connects the municipalities of Altamira and Vitória do Xingu in the state of Pará, with the area being 17 km and 30 km from the respective municipalities[5], as shown in Figure 1.

[4] It is recorded that the research was authorized to be conducted and published, as well as the images contained within it.

[5] Historically, the Juruna have identified and been recognized as from Km 17. As relations with the municipality of Vitória do Xingu/PA became more official, the community has identified itself as belonging to Km 30, referencing the geographical and administrative territory of Vitória do Xingu. This movement not only reinforces the activation of local public policies, given their presence in the administrative space of the municipality, but also indicates that political relations have tightened with this municipality and its agents. For this work, we will maintain the reference to Km 17, as it has been presented more emphatically in the discourse of the research participants.

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Figure 1 – Location of Aldeia Boa Vista - Segment Vitória do Xingu-Altamira

Source: Google Earth, obtained from IBGE.

Until the 1990s, they were identified as small rural producers, primarily benefiting from cassava, which was the main source of income for the group at that time. By the end of this period, they became part of the process of ethnic emergence, reflecting changes in the national scenario due to Indigenous mobilizations regarding the legal treatment afforded to Indigenous peoples by the Brazilian state. In the early 2000s, this collective had its ethnic identity recognized by indigenist organizations and began to claim rights related to this recognition, including land regularization and access to public health and education policies specific to their needs.

The Indigenous origin of the group is evoked through the bloodline of the matriarch Francisca de Oliveira Lemos Juruna, a significant figure in the history of social changes stemming from the implementation of economic plans carried out in the Amazon region. Lima (2009, p. 8) studied the process of ethnic emergence experienced by the Juruna/Yudjá from Aldeia Boa Vista, conducting her analysis based on "the perception of the various mechanisms of identity reconstruction engendered by the group". In her concluding remarks, the author states that "the Juruna of km 17 constitute an ethnic group that has established the limits of its border through the re-signification of elements of culture considered traditional" (Lima, 2009, p. 192).

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For a better description of the paths taken in this research – that of the practical search for this approach, which Ethnography borrows from Anthropology as a method by enabling the disruption of our "lifestyles and our ideas of existence" and imposing "reflection on the multiplicity of ways of life" (Peirano, 2014, p. 385), as the opportunity to abandon vast crossings for isolated islands. Empirical experience, in turn, is what establishes the bridges of contact between the two subjects – the researcher and the research subjects. Everything gains relevance: "Events, occurrences, words, texts, scents, flavors, everything that affects our senses – is the material we analyze and that, for us, are not merely collected data, but inquiries, sources of renewal" (Peirano, 2014, p. 380).

It is also noted the "first and most important quality of good ethnography": to surpass common sense regarding the uses of language (Peirano, 2014, p. 386), because, "[i]f fieldwork is done through lived dialogue that is later revealed through writing, it is necessary to go beyond the Western common sense that believes language is basically referential." The images brought forth throughout the work, therefore, are understood as language, communication, as they contribute to the expression of the reality that one wishes to present.

The field research took place at the School M.E.I.F. Indígena Francisca de Oliveira Lemos Juruna, located in the village of Boa Vista since the 1970s, which only received the name of the matriarch in 2012. A series of relationships are being articulated around it that make it an emblematic political tool in the organization of the group. It is also a mirror of the changes affecting the community following the construction of the Belo Monte hydroelectric plant.

We adopted open-ended interviews as study techniques, in which we heard the perspectives of leaders, parents, guardians, teachers, students, and community members who currently have no direct ties to the school. This strategy allowed for a more comprehensive understanding of the school's representation for these individuals, which was also evident in the analysis of the school's Political-Pedagogical Project. In relation to this, an effort was made to establish a dialogue between Brazilian legislation concerning Indigenous School Education, the discourse of the school as reflected in the document, and the actual practices observed in the field.

The indigenous issue in the Brazilian context and its legal framework in education

Promulgated in 1988, the Federal Constitution of the Federative Republic of Brazil, the country's principal legal instrument, embodies the ideals, values, and aspirations of this nation. Among the innovations of the Magna Carta, resulting from a process of overcoming the previous military regime, is the public recognition of the right to diversity, the right to difference, and the pluralism of ideas and conceptions. Regarding the indigenous issue, the

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Constitution allocated an exclusive chapter, recognizing in Article 231 "their social organization, customs, languages, beliefs, and traditions, and their original rights over the land they traditionally occupy, with the Union being responsible for demarcating, protecting, and ensuring respect for all their property" (Brazil, 1988). The legitimacy to seek judicial recourse in defense of their rights and interests, as well as those of their communities and organizations, is guaranteed by Article 232.

After centuries of extermination, territorial expropriation, and integrationist policies imposed on Indigenous peoples, the legal guarantee of a new treatment is not the result of the goodwill of the Brazilian state, as Fernandes (2010, p. 72) warns us, but rather the "pressure and demands of the subjects who have led the struggle for a society that recognizes itself as plural." It is the result of intensified social mobilization starting in the 1970s, in which various agents, including NGOs, universities, associations, researchers, and Indigenous peoples, played a role; the latter found support from the others, as they had shown resistance to actions aimed at denying their identities since the beginning of the colonization process.

Formal education, introduced by religious orders, can be characterized as the main strategy historically adopted for the integration of Indigenous peoples into national society. Through school, "children and adults would be educated to act in a new life and according to a new order" (Coelho, 2008, p. 112). However, legislative advances have contributed to Indigenous peoples viewing school education as a "conceptual instrument of struggle" (Ferreira, 2001, p. 71), as an institution that is both "native" and "exogenous" (Silva, 2001), or as Tassinari (2001, p. 47) proposes, as a "border," in that it "[is] also a space of encounter between two worlds, two forms of knowledge, or, still, multiple ways of knowing and thinking about the world".

This kind of transition or inversion of the role of the school over time is associated, according to Ferreira (2001), with the emergence of non-governmental indigenous organizations and the formation of the indigenous movement. The Comissão Pró-Índio de São Paulo (CPI/SP), the Centro Ecumênico de Documentação e Informação (CEDI), the Associação Nacional de Apoio ao Índio (ANAÍ), the Centro de Trabalho Indigenista (CTI), the Operação Anchieta (OPAN), and the Conselho Indigenista Missionário (CIMI) are some of the main non-governmental organizations that emerged in the late 1970s, still during the military dictatorship, focused on defending indigenous causes, as highlighted by the author. From 1974 onwards, indigenous leaders also began to mobilize towards political organization, notably with the formation of the União das Nações Indígenas (UNI) in 1980. Regarding meetings, the I National Meeting on

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Indigenous Education, organized by CPI/SP and held in 1979, gained prominence, involving various representations engaged in alternative education projects. At this politically oriented event, education was conceived and claimed as a "factor of self-determination and respect for indigenous rights" (Ferreira, 2001, p. 88).

Close to the realization of the Constituent Assembly, the National Foundation for Memory of the Ministry of Culture and the Museum of the Indian in Rio de Janeiro promoted the "National Meeting on Indigenous Education" in 1987; an action that brought together 27 entities, organizations, and national institutions, with working groups discussing school curricula, proselytizing religious missions, bilingual education, and coordinated action mechanisms. The meeting also called for the creation, by the Ministry of Education and Culture, of a dedicated body to execute, monitor, and evaluate the new education model proposed jointly by indigenous peoples, educators, and organizations (Ferreira, 2001).

Starting with the creation of the UNI in the 1980s, various national and regional indigenous meetings and assemblies were promoted. The "I Indigenous Meeting of Brazil," titled "Indians: Historical Rights," took place in 1981 in São Paulo with the support of CPI/SP. The event featured the participation of 32 indigenous leaders and constituted an "important step in the collective struggle of these peoples in defense of rights, mainly those related to health, education, and land demarcation" (Ferreira, 2001, p. 96). As a result of these meetings, representatives of peoples and organizations developed a program to restructure Brazilian indigenous policy, centered on the recognition and respect for the social and cultural organizations of indigenous peoples, as well as their future projects, which would encompass differentiated and specific forms of education. Their demands were heard and became present in the Constituent Assembly of 1988.

Ferreira (2001, p. 102) highlights in this phase the gatherings of indigenous teachers in Brazil, from which emerged "new conceptions of education, based on the traditional processes of socialization of indigenous societies and the reinterpretation and creation of new action alternatives," as well as the foundation of organizations such as the General Organization of Bilingual Tikuna Teachers - OGPTB. The movement with the greatest direct and indirect effect on the policy of indigenous school education was that of Indigenous Teachers from Amazonas and Roraima, given the large proportion of the school population, carried out with the support of CIMI and OPAN at first, and later with financial resources from international organizations, collected by the teachers themselves. By the end of the first meeting, still in 1988, the school demanded by the indigenous teachers was defined: "bilingual, focused on the culture of each people;

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traditional (linked to the traditions of each people); conscientizing (aiming at self-determination); in defense of indigenous rights, evaluated by the community itself; and regulated at the federal law level" (Ferreira, 2001 p. 107).

In the subsequent meetings, specifications regarding the curriculum, calendar, and teaching materials were added to the discussion, culminating, in the fifth meeting held in 1992, in a proposal for the preliminary debates of the Law of Guidelines and Bases of Education (LDB). On December 20, 1996, Law No. 9.394 was enacted, establishing such guidelines, encompassing, in articles 78 and 79, part of the demands of the indigenous movement, in addition to article 32, which guarantees indigenous communities the use of their native language and their own learning processes in regular elementary education. For Fernandes (2010, p. 83), the innovation of the LDB lies in the provision of formal education to indigenous peoples based on the promotion of "the recovery of historical memories, reaffirmation of ethnic identities, and appreciation of the languages, cultures, and sciences of indigenous people".

The National Education Plan – PNE, Law No. 10,172, enacted in 2001, has objectives and priorities that include "raising the educational level of the population, improving the quality of education at all levels, and reducing social and regional inequalities regarding access to and successful retention in public education [...]" (Fernandes, 2010, p. 84). The PNE identified the challenges in implementing a national policy that would ensure an intercultural and bilingual education model for indigenous communities, partly due to a lack of clarity regarding the distribution of responsibilities among the Union, States, and Municipalities. It also emphasizes the need for legal regularization of these schools to encompass existing experiences and encourage new ones. In this regard, it established guidelines and goals, among which the responsibilities of the states for the legal education of indigenous schooling stand out, in collaboration with the municipalities, under the overall coordination and financial support of the Ministry of Education.

In 1998, the Ministry of Education (MEC) published an edition of the National Curriculum Reference for Indigenous Schools aimed at teachers. It is a formative document, without normative function, intended to "encourage reflection on curricular development and the existing or potential pedagogical experiences within indigenous schools" and to support the development of curricular proposals (Brazil, 1998). The foundations that compose the proposal of the curricular reference are: i) Multiethnicity, plurality, and diversity; ii) Indigenous education and knowledge; iii) Self-determination; iv) Indigenous educational community; and v) Intercultural, community-based, specific, and differentiated education. These foundations imply the recognition of the diversity of ethnic groups and how the

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indigenous school, drawing from the knowledge of these peoples, their political, organizational, religious, and economic systems, can contribute to the autonomy and management of future projects. It is a community-based education, also open to other knowledge and to constructive dialogue among them (Fernandes, 2010).

Resolution nº 003, dated November 10, 1999, established the National Guidelines for the Structuring and Functioning of Indigenous Schools, instituting specific norms and legal arrangements, with curricular guidelines for intercultural and bilingual education, aimed at affirming and maintaining their ethnic diversity (Brazil, 1999). Article 2 sets forth the basic characteristic elements of an indigenous school, based on: its location in areas inhabited by indigenous communities; the exclusivity of service to indigenous communities; the right to education provided in the mother tongues of the communities served, as an instrument for preserving the sociolinguistic reality of each people; and a specific school organization. In Article 3, this resolution considers the participation of the community in defining the model of organization and management of the school, respecting their social structures, architectural characteristics, cultural and religious practices, their own forms of knowledge production, economic activities, and the use of educational material appropriate to the sociocultural context of each people.

In 2012, Resolution nº 5 of the Basic Education Chamber of the National Education Council defines the National Curriculum Guidelines for Indigenous School Education in Basic Education, "guided by the principles of social equality, difference, specificity, bilingualism, and interculturality, which are the foundations of Indigenous School Education" (Brazil, 2012, art. 1). Part of the objectives of the resolution references preceding documents to the text, possibly an attempt to reaffirm the proposal without losing sight of the principles that underpinned it. The pedagogical project of schools in Indigenous communities, as prescribed in art. 14, must express autonomy and school identity as important references to ensure the right to differentiated, intercultural school education, and must present the principles and objectives in accordance with "the curriculum guidelines established nationally and locally, as well as the aspirations of Indigenous communities regarding school education" (Brazil, 2012).

Specifically regarding the curriculum of Indigenous schools, the guidelines, from an intercultural perspective, are as follows:

> Art. 15 - § 1 The curricula of Basic Education in Indigenous School Education, from an intercultural perspective, must be constructed based on the ethnopolitical values and interests of Indigenous communities concerning their societal and school projects, as defined in the political-pedagogical projects. § 2 As a dynamic pedagogical component, the curriculum must be flexible, adapted to the sociocultural contexts of Indigenous communities in their Indigenous School Education projects (Brazil, 2012).

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Another important legal milestone in promoting rights for indigenous peoples was Brazil's ratification in 2002 of Convention No. 169, known as the "Convention on Indigenous and Tribal Peoples in Independent Countries", proclaimed in 1989. This legal instrument emphasizes the autonomy of indigenous communities to define what they consider best for the development of their collectives. Thus, according to Article 7:

> 1. The people concerned shall have the right to choose their own priorities regarding the development process, as it affects their lives, beliefs, institutions, and spiritual well-being, as well as the lands they occupy or use in any way, and to control, as far as possible, their own economic, social, and cultural development. Furthermore, these peoples shall participate in the formulation, implementation, and evaluation of national and regional development plans and programs likely to affect them directly (Brazil, 2002).

These highlighted aspects imply the need to understand educational practices directed at indigenous communities in accordance with indigenous conceptions of the world, humanity, and the particular forms of sociocultural, political, economic, and religious organization of these peoples, in order to ensure the community-based construction of an intercultural and differentiated pedagogical project, that is, grounded in intercultural education, understood here, according to Candau (2012, p. 242), as "a fundamental element in the construction of educational systems and societies committed to democratic building, equity, and the recognition of the different sociocultural groups that comprise them."

In this understanding, it is pertinent to bring here the meaning of the expression political-pedagogical project according to Veiga's interpretation (2010, p. 13): "every pedagogical project of the school is, also, a political project since it is closely articulated to the sociopolitical commitment to the real and collective interests of the majority population." This position of the author, in which the inseparability between the political and the pedagogical is explicit, allows us to infer that, being a tool for collective work, it must provide the valorization of the school's identity, the participation, the knowledge, the orality, and the history of each people through a dialogue with other knowledge produced by different social groups.

The legal historical path of indigenous school education shows how indigenous peoples have not been alienated from the processes of schooling imposed upon them since colonization. The principles and guidelines of indigenous school education, legally established, indicate the constitution of a mature project, the result of the ideas, texts, and experiences of many agents (both indigenous and non-indigenous), committed to the possibility of thinking about a differentiated school. When positioning herself on this issue, Meliá (1999, p. 16) asserts that indigenous education is not a hand outstretched in waiting for alms, but rather "a hand full that offers our societies an otherness and a difference that we have already lost." In this sense,

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> the pedagogical action for otherness is not a discovery made by western and national society to offer to indigenous peoples; on the contrary: it is what indigenous peoples can still offer to national society. Thus, there is not a problem of indigenous education; rather, there is an indigenous solution to the problem of education (Meliá, 1999, p. 16).

The perspective of practical understanding of interculturality in the context of indigenous schools can only begin with the visualization of the identity of indigenous peoples in this project. To that end, fieldwork with the communities is fundamental to give voice to the subjects who once fought for recognition of the right to difference and today seek to realize it through public policies, such as indigenous school education. In this sense, we present the experiences lived by the Juruna of Km 17 concerning the construction of a school capable of reflecting the ideals present in the model of indigenous school education, claimed by the indigenous movement and enshrined in legislation, as well as their constant struggles to assert themselves in the face of the Other.

The pedagogical experience of the Juruna People's school at Km 17

The Juruna ethnicity (yuru "mouth" and una "black") is distributed among at least four groups in the region of the middle Xingu, in the southwest of the State of Pará, namely Paquiçamba, Muratu, and Furo Seco, within the Indigenous Land – TI Paquiçamba, as well as the Juruna of Km 17. Among them are the Juruna of Km 17, descendants of the matriarch Francisca de Oliveira Lemos Juruna, who have occupied an area of 36 hectares, marked in red in figure 2, along the Ernesto Aciolly highway, which connects the municipalities of Altamira and Vitória do Xingu. Located in a space bounded by farms with large, minimally productive land areas designated for cattle ranching, the village also becomes a symbol of resistance, as, being surrounded by large estates, the Juruna signify their territory as a space of belonging, cultural expression, and identity construction.

The Juruna from the middle Xingu, unlike those who migrated to the mouth of the Manitsauá River, a tributary of the Xingu River, currently one of the groups residing in the Xingu Indigenous Park, have not managed to maintain a high degree of cultural distinctiveness (Oliveira, 1970; Lima, 2009). The movements resulting from extractive activities, the union of Indigenous people with riverside dwellers or Northeasterners, and their presence in urban areas, among other factors, reinforced the stigmatized idea of cultural loss or extinction. It is precisely because of this stigma that the Juruna from Km 17 were seen for a long time as small farmers, producers of flour, but not as an ethnic group. This perception

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was influenced by the integrationist policy of the Brazilian state during the 1960s and 1970s, which denied any citizenship rights to ethnically differentiated peoples and promoted the image of Indigenous people as a temporary situation, as total integration into national society was expected (Lima, 2009).

Such events do not occur in isolation from the national context. In the 1970s and 1980s, the movement for territorialization intensified, in which Indigenous peoples sought recognition of their ethnic identity by indigenist organizations. Among this group were the Tinguí-Botó, Karapotó, Jeripancó, and Tapeba, among others in the northeastern region, who began to be referred to as "new ethnicities" or "emerging Indians" (Oliveira, 1998). This process is described using metaphors such as the journey of return in ethnographies like Oliveira's (1998, p. 64), considering that "[ethnicity necessarily implies a trajectory (which is historical and determined by multiple factors) and an origin (which is a primary individual experience, but is also embodied in knowledge and narratives to which it becomes attached)]." Other authors, such as Parente (2016), prefer the term ethnogenesis, described by Bartolomé as "the process of constructing a shared identification based on a pre-existing or constructed cultural tradition that can sustain collective action" (Bartolomé, 2006, p. 43).

In the 1990s, however, the group began the movement to claim Indigenous identity to the official authorities, contributing to Brazil adopting a policy of recognition of the cultural diversities of Indigenous peoples, thus breaking with the culturalist theory that describes peoples and cultures from a retrospective perspective rooted in isolation. With the political support of the Indigenous Missionary Council (CIMI) and Indigenous leaders living in the urban area of Altamira, recognition as an ethnic group was formalized with the responsible authorities in the early 2000s, following a series of claims made during various events and mobilizations organized by Indigenous peoples living in different areas who had not had their rights recognized.

On the other hand, although the community is assisted by specific policies for indigenous peoples, Oliveira (1976) argues that the process of ethnic emergence is continuous and requires the maintenance of boundaries, as it is precisely the contrast that is the essence of ethnic identities. In this sense, the school becomes a space for identity affirmation. According to Oliveira (1978, p. 23), ethnic identification consists of a "mechanism by which an individual, or a group, guarantees their recognition as a member of the larger, inclusive group." The indigenous schooling was the mechanism activated by the Juruna of Km 17 to help mark the group's ethnic belonging, asserting them as indigenous before the surrounding society, as they share the aspirations and achievements of indigenous peoples – the larger group, through an education that reflects their identities.

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The Francisca de Oliveira Lemos Juruna School has existed in the Boa Vista community since the 1970s, when it already had the significant task of "improving life" for families through the literacy of the children and grandchildren of Dona Francisca. Today, it is regarded by the community as its main political instrument, responsible for leading most of the social organization of the group as it distributes economic resources and status among community members, reinforcing the process of ethnic affirmation among children. This context led to the construction of the Political-Pedagogical Project of the school in 2016, a moment when the community was experiencing the upheavals of the construction of the Belo Monte Hydroelectric Plant and undergoing various internal changes, such as the selection of its leadership.

When specifically addressing the pedagogical proposal of the school within the context of an indigenous area, attention to this document must be guided by the constitutional principles that recognize Indigenous School Education as a right of indigenous peoples, ensuring the affirmation of ethnic identities, the appreciation of traditional languages and knowledge, as well as their historical memories articulated by the vital association between school/society/identity. Therefore, it must be in accordance with the autonomous societal projects of each indigenous people. In this direction, the school and its pedagogical proposal are sociocultural spaces where intercultural pedagogical experiences must center on the specificities and particularities of identity and well-being. Candau (2012, p. 237) argues that incorporating an intercultural perspective across various educational spheres is indispensable to promote "school learning processes from the standpoint of guaranteeing everyone's right to education", and if we wish to reiterate this right, "we must affirm the urgency of addressing issues related to the recognition and appreciation of cultural differences in school contexts".

The expression of autonomy and school identity concerning the PPP (Pedagogical Political Project) of the Francisca Juruna School is imbued with indicators of the temporal period that includes the pursuit of ethnic recognition before official bodies, the reestablishment of boundaries in relation to non-indigenous people, and the mitigation actions regarding the construction of the power plant. On the other hand, the school is also conceived as an environment for strengthening family ties, as a place of gathering, memory, learning, and expression of indigenous identity through opportunities to narrate the story of the indigenous grandmother who lived through the difficult times of the rubber boom and resisted the attacks from the Kayapó, during occasions when they paint themselves for community festivities or sing what they have learned in the Juruna language.

In this sense, the general objective of the school, namely, "to value and strengthen the Juruna identity, contributing to the improvement of the quality of life and the defense of

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indigenous rights" (PPP, 2016), reaffirms the vision of the community, reflected in Silva's comments (2001, p. 31) regarding the critical review of the role of the school following the emergence of indigenous movements in the final years of the military dictatorship, stating that the school "could be something 'in favor' of the Indians: an instrument for access to vital information and knowledge for their survival and their self-determination".

Article 14 of Resolution nº 5/2012 affirms that the PPP (Political Pedagogical Project) is an important reference in guaranteeing the right to differentiated school education, and must present the principles and objectives of Indigenous School Education, according to the curriculum guidelines established nationally and locally. However, the general objective of the school encompasses much more the second part of the article, presenting the "aspirations of indigenous communities regarding school education" (Brazil, 2012). The school is understood, from this objective, first as a space for identity affirmation, second as a pathway to improve the community's quality of life, and third, as a political space for the defense of rights. Even though it is not at the center of the document, the discourse of cultural valuation and affirmation is quite present in the PPP. Among the existing references in the document regarding the actions to be adopted to promote them is the methodology adopted by the school:

> We must here encourage this specific and differentiated way of teaching and learning, through our projects, research with more experienced knowers of our people, conversation circles, dance, painting, crafting, living in the fields, in the streams, in hunting, in fishing, during cultural festivals, within families, and in the community in general. All of this aims to transmit our values to the younger ones (PPP, 2016)[6].

It can be inferred that the difference, associated with the specific and differentiated way of teaching and learning, is constructed from symbolic expressions. Dance, body painting, handicrafts, and the interaction among relatives are signs of Juruna identity fostered by the school, whose appropriation has been gradually taking place. In 2017, at the beginning of the field research, while accompanying the students' preparation for the September 7 parade, we observed that body painting was mastered by only a few members of the community, generally those with a closer kinship to Dona Francisca. On the day of the parade, which took place in the municipality of Vitória do Xingu, the students had to be at school early, as only one person would be doing the painting so that they could present themselves properly "characterized" at the event.

[6] Despite being an official document, the political-pedagogical project of the Francisca Juruna school does not contain page numbering, which is why there is no mention of these in the citations throughout the work.

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During a program commemorating Indigenous Peoples' Day, which occurred during the field research, we observed a change in this scenario. Some female students began to master the technique of body painting, although without much appropriation of the meaning of the designs. The emphasis on the feminine is due to the girls taking the lead in actions aimed at strengthening identity, promoted by the school. Each one, exemplifying the distributive nature of culture as discussed by Barth (2000), is at the forefront of an activity. While one paints, another makes necklaces and hair accessories, and another leads the singing in the presentations, showing that the Juruna women from Km 17 have been playing an important role in guiding the ethnic affirmation of the group over time, as illustrated in the Figure 2.

Figure 2 – Student performing body painting in programming related to "Indigenous People' Day"

Source: The authors.

When discussing the return journey of northeastern Indigenous groups, Oliveira (1998) emphasizes the role played by the group's leadership. According to him, ethnogenesis, or return journeys, only took on such significance because the leaders also acted in another dimension, "performing other journeys, which were pilgrimages in a religious sense, aimed at reaffirming moral values and fundamental beliefs that provide the basis for the possibility of a collective existence" (Oliveira, 1998, p. 66). The author continues:

> the emergence of a new Indigenous society is not merely the act of granting territories, of purely administrative "ethnification," of submissions, political mandates, and cultural impositions; it is also that of sharing meanings and values, of the baptism of each of its members, of obedience to an authority that is simultaneously religious and political. Only the elaboration of utopias (religious/moral/political) allows for the overcoming of the contradiction

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> between historical objectives and the feeling of loyalty to origins, transforming ethnic identity into an effective social practice, culminated by the process of territorialization [...] (Oliveira, 1998, p. 66).

The effective social practice of ethnic identity is felt in the reappropriation of manifestos that mark indigenous origins. Among these, symbols gain even greater relevance in the way children are also inserted into a system favorable to the deconstruction of these markers and have incorporated many of the habits of the local, urban population. Nascimento (2014, p. 292), when questioning the simplistic and uncritical use of interculturality by the national educational system, states that this view "reduces the cultural complexities of indigenous peoples to a few symbols such as: food, dance, clothing, and heroes." In another analysis, we can consider the resistance of these cultural traits in an emerging community as the effort of these indigenous people to assert who they are, or who they have become, since the construction of identity requires the existence of a symbolic system or, in Woodward's (2000, p. 18) words, "identity is marked through symbols" and "[it is] through the meanings produced by the representations that we make sense of our experience and of what we are".

The appreciation and strengthening of Juruna identity, described as the main objective of the school, seems to be a tangential issue compared to the repeated instances in which the document mentions the struggle of indigenous peoples for the defense of rights. Among the specific objectives, for example, is the aim to "form young warriors, becoming leaders and professionals committed to the struggle of our people" (PPP, 2016), directly related to the main objective concerning claims for rights. Conversely, the guarantee of state assistance can be read as an emblematic representation of the identity of these indigenous people, considering their process of ethnic emergence.

The support of the State allows them to be recognized as indigenous by public bodies and, by extension, by society, even if such recognition is limited to the visibility of public policies present in the community, such as the services provided by the Special Indigenous Health District (DISEI), which maintains a nursing technician permanently at the local health post. According to Beltrão et al. (2009), the normative support translated indigenous identity into an "authentic fundamental right" insofar as this identity becomes the recognition of the belonging of individuals and ethnically differentiated peoples and the respect for the autonomy and self-determination of their social, economic, and political institutions. As a consequence of this normative framework, the Brazilian State must materially implement such rights.

In this context, differentiated public policies emerge, such as access to higher education for indigenous peoples through affirmative actions (Beltrão *et al.*, 2009) and indigenous school

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education. The school is seen as a proactive instrument of the State in fulfilling its duty to politically confront historical inequalities and discriminations faced by indigenous peoples, in affirming their identities and in the possibility of exercising other life projects, for which differentiated education must safeguard.

As a result of this political aspect of the school, the Juruna of Km 17 establish alliances with other ethnic groups in the region. The fact that students from the Xipaya and Kuruaya ethnicities study at the Francisca Juruna School represents a summation of forces as they share similar processes of territorial expropriation, which generate prejudice, especially since many live in the urban area of the city. The school ultimately reinforces the struggles fought by the indigenous peoples of the region to have their ethnic identities recognized, which is reflected in their claims for rights.

The Juruna Pedagogical Political Project (PPP) also emphasizes the importance of community planning for school actions. "Therefore, there should always be moments of planning with both Indigenous and non-Indigenous teachers, the school community, students, and leaders" (PPP, 2016). Such planning must "respect and work with our culture, valuing our traditional knowledge." As an expression of this collective planning, the PPP presents several actions that should be developed on a permanent basis, aiming to "value and strengthen the transmission of knowledge from generation to generation". The first of these is "storytelling and/or discussion circles". This would take place "at the warrior's house/shelter, at school, in the thatched house, at the home of a knowledgeable person, under a tree, etc." According to the document, those who would tell the stories would be "the elders, those who know more about the memory of the Juruna people, and all interested members of the school community." The second action "would be games and play: throwing games, tug of war, peteca, chicken catch, archery, soccer, *etc.*" (PPP, 2016).

Storytelling or discussion circles were the means found by the school to involve the older members of the community in the education of children. This activity was carried out for a short time at the school, having been limited to about two or three occasions since the PPP was established, according to some community members. The distancing of older members due to disagreements regarding school management hindered the continuity of the action.

The lack of a larger effort to incorporate the memories of the Juruna people into the regular school curriculum is the main complaint of the parents. For them, the school is perceived as a non-differentiated institution, similar to those in Altamira according to their accounts, precisely due to the low integration of the people's history into the school routine. Participant observation led us to realize that the school engages in sporadic efforts regarding

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the inclusion of the Juruna people's history in its practices. The absence of older members in the school's daily life hinders the historical recovery as their memories are not shared by those who hold them, which has resulted in a certain temporal cut in the memories of the Juruna ethnicity in the middle Xingu.

It is common to recount the formation of the village starting from the migration of Dona Francisca from the Iriri region, where she married a Northeasterner and worked in rubber tapping, to the land they currently occupy. The memory they cultivate is thus marked by the establishment of the family in the area of Km 17. They take pride in the matriarch for having adopted so many children, for being the only midwife in the vicinity for decades, and for being a reference when it came to treating someone with medicinal plants.

Beltrão *et al.* (2009), when analyzing the logic of identity ins/constitution and perceptions of affirmative actions among 19 self-declared indigenous university students linked to UFPA, found a discursive regularity that allowed for the establishment of constitutive patterns of their identity. Among these patterns is the recovery of distant genealogical ties, often linked to grandmothers and great-grandmothers. Although direct contact has not been possible (as is the case with Dona Francisca Juruna's great-grandchildren), the presence of those who legitimize indigenous blood origin comes to light through family memories and the recognition of physical traits. For the authors,

> The simple aspect of perceiving oneself as indigenous seems, in general, to be sufficient to know one's identity, or rather, to construct the logic of the institution of being indigenous as an identity marker in articulation with decisive socio-familial memories and narratives for the production of the imagetic fixation of genealogical belonging, much more than ethnic [...] (Beltrão *et al.*, 2009, p. 17-18).

Parente (2016), in a thesis aimed at understanding the process of identity formation of indigenous individuals living in the municipal seat of Altamira, based on graduates of the Ethnodevelopment Course created by the Faculty of Ethnodiversity at the Federal University of Pará (UFPA), Altamira Campus, through an affirmation policy, states that blood is one of the main identifiers invoked to affirm their indigenous identity. Furthermore, according to the author, "it is the stories lived by the peoples, narrated by the elders and inherited by the young, that socialize them and mark the ethnic belonging" (Parente, 2016, p. 33).

It is in consideration of this – the fact that family memory is the means used to legitimize indigenous blood lineage and mark ethnic belonging, and that the stories lived by the elders are tasked with making such identity marking—that the Juruna of Km 17 are concerned with the transmission of Dona Francisca's history alongside the school activities

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and are attempting to ensure it in the PPP. Thus, orality is the primary means of transmitting these memories between generations. Many times when I spoke with the children and grandchildren of Dona Francisca, they recalled her stories referring to escapes from the rubber plantation, and the cultural impositions she suffered from her non-indigenous husband.

Non-Indigenous teachers strive to cultivate memories that are not their own. During school festive events, the creativity in telling the story of Dona Francisca's family is notable. On Indigenous Peoples' Day, the children showed much enthusiasm in reenacting the story of the matriarch, as depicted in Figure 3.

Figure 3 – Students reenacting the story of Dona Francisca - her arrival at the rubber plantation, now the area corresponding to the Boa Vista village.

Source: The authors.

Among the games and activities mentioned as a strategy for cultural strengthening, including throwing, archery, and bow and arrow, only football seems to be a consistent practice among the children in the community. The others appear disconnected from the daily reality of the school. Evidently, the children also have other means of entertainment. Television, mobile phones, and the internet compete for the space intended to strengthen friendship bonds among them.

Although the Juruna are in the process of building a school that strengthens their struggles for identity affirmation, they also share the difficulties faced by many Indigenous peoples in the Xingu region: the lack of accreditation of the school as Indigenous school education. The community has achieved a significant milestone by proposing a Political-Pedagogical Project (PPP) that encompasses cultural appreciation, their demands for rights, and the expectations of linking education to the existing territorial dynamics in the

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space they occupy. However, the implementation of the policy envisioned by Indigenous peoples and present in Brazilian legislation requires the counterpart of the State. The lack of accreditation implies, among other things, the non-exclusive hiring of Indigenous teachers and the imposition of the academic calendar aligned with the civil year. Other challenges, such as the absence of linguistic policy and greater autonomy in the organization of the school, also hinder the existence of the intercultural, bilingual, differentiated, and specific school demanded by Indigenous peoples in an attempt to address a relationship that has historically been one of erasing differences.

Final considerations

The ongoing process of ethnic affirmation of the Juruna from Km 17 is based on the choice of the E.M.E.I.F. Indigenous Francisca de Oliveira Lemos Juruna as the main social structure responsible for strengthening identity boundaries. The current struggle is for Indigenous School Education to contribute to improving the quality of life and defending Indigenous rights, respecting the future projects envisioned by the community, as indicated in the preparation of the Political-Pedagogical Project.

The school, however, reflects the reality of many other (indigenous) schools existing in Brazil. Although there is legal support for an intercultural, bilingual, specific, and differentiated school, what is observed in practice are educational systems that do not officially recognize the peculiarities of the curricula and pedagogical projects constructed by indigenous communities. In the present study, it was found that the Francisca Juruna school ends up reproducing the model of education uniformly designed by the Municipal Department of Education of Vitória do Xingu, as seen in the academic calendar that gives little consideration to the relationships between the school and the community and its territorial contexts. Despite efforts to differentiate it, it has not yet been possible for the SEMED to observe and enable the execution of the school project conceived by the ethnicity and expressed in its PPP.

Thus, it is understood that the intercultural education characteristic of indigenous school education has not yet found an equitable relationship in the interaction between indigenous and non-indigenous cultures. The model of education implemented since the colonial period remains strongly present in the reality of schools that aspire to be indigenous; however, there is a significant effort to ensure that the school also manages to encompass the appreciation of what is inherent to the culture of indigenous peoples, signifying it beyond the transmission of so-called universal knowledge, as a means of strengthening indigenous identity and a pathway to access public policies.

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It is from the Francisca Juruna school that the group articulates the network of relations within the community, configuring itself as an important political structure, with the challenge of balancing the interactions of children and young people who did not experience the beginning of the ethnic recognition movement, but who now must cultivate the contrasts raised by the group for the purpose of differentiation. There is thus a symbolic struggle for the school, as an emblem of the State, to also belong to Indigenous peoples, a space of frontier (Tassinari, 2001), where there is a transition to a school education that not only fulfills the public authority's duty to provide education but also reflects the education they want for themselves, for the well-being of their collectives, and for the affirmation of their identities.

The Francisca Juruna School is an extremely political space, of internal and external articulation, but it is also a place that fosters collective practices, where children coexist, experience their realities, grow surrounded by relatives, help to project the future of the group, and think about actions in the present. Thus, the educational logic promoted by national society, as commented on by Meliá (1999), which encourages individual competitions based on the ideal of increased production and accumulation of wealth, is inverted. The Indigenous school is, above all, a community school, articulated to the territory and a model of well-being chosen by that collective.

It is evident, therefore, that the choice of the Francisca Juruna School as a structure for ethnic strengthening has played a significant role in affirming the Indigenous identity of the group as it seeks, through the actions of the subjects who construct and reinterpret it, to safeguard the maintenance of identity boundaries, contribute to the updating of diacritical signs, foster the feeling of ethnic belonging, linking education to the struggle for rights, in order to make children participants in what they believe to be the best for their lives and for the Boa Vista community.

On the other hand, the fulfillment of the legal requirements that characterize indigenous school education is still not fully addressed. With the exception of being located on lands inhabited by indigenous communities, there is no exclusive provision for indigenous students, and instruction is not conducted in the mother tongue. The establishment of a specific school organization remains a distant reality, largely due to the bureaucratic limitations within the state structure that hinder the realization of what is guaranteed by law. There are also other challenges, such as the lack of indigenous teachers, the absence of specific language policies, and limitations regarding the desirable connection between school and territory, in addition to the conflicts arising from the actions of external agents to the community that ultimately affect some of the public policies for local support.

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The lack of official accreditation of the school as indigenous by the Ministry of Education (MEC) is identified by leaders and teachers as the greatest bottleneck for the implementation of indigenous school education. How can the Political-Pedagogical Project, with the proposal for a new, differentiated educational model, be executed without state recognition? As Silva (2001) emphasizes, the indigenous school is today both an endogenous and exogenous institution, making it impossible to consider it internally without acknowledging the role that the education system must play.

Meanwhile, if interculturality stems from the appreciation of what is unique to it, the Juruna people of Km 17 have wisely chosen the school as a tool for identity affirmation. Within it are reflected the struggles of the group to resist the context that pushed them towards the dissolution of their differences, so that the school represents not only a formal educational institution but also the way in which they perceive themselves and are perceived as Indigenous people, reigniting their distinctiveness in the constant pursuit of official recognition from the State. This struggle is marked by the life of Dona Francisca de Oliveira Lemos Juruna, whom they honor with the name of the school, representing the entire fight waged by the people.

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