

## INDIGENOUS SCHOOL EDUCATION AND THE KRAHÔ SCHOOLS

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**ABSTRACT:** The text to be published refers to the investigation on school education between the ethnic Krahô group of Tocantins State. Specifically, it was investigated the situation of two villages with secondary schools, located in the biggest villages of that people called Pedra Branca and Manoel Alves. The aim is to understand the influence of the school

modifying the krahô identity, the day to day life of the villages and the original krahô culture. It was clear throughout the field research the existing relation between the school education and the political status achieved by the youngsters graduated in secondary schools.

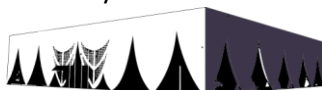
**Keywords:** Indigenous education; krahô schools; identity.

## EDUCAÇÃO ESCOLAR INDÍGENA E AS ESCOLAS KRAHÔ

**RESUMO:** O texto a ser publicado refere-se a investigação da educação escolar entre o grupo étnico Krahô do Estado do Tocantins. Especificamente foi investigado a situação escolar de duas aldeias com escola de ensino médio, localizadas nas maiores aldeias chamadas Pedra Branca e Manoel Alves. O escopo é entender a influência da escola

modificando a identidade krahô, o cotidiano das aldeias e a cultura original. Ficou claro através do trabalho de campo a existência da relação entre a educação escolar e o status político alcançado pelos jovens graduados nas escolas secundárias.

**Palavras-chave:** Educação indígena; escolas krahô; identidade.



## 1 INTRODUCTION

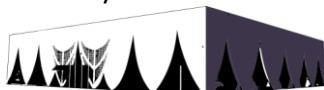
The article comprises an analysis of two schools of the Krahô ethnic group compared with other four indigenous schools from different Brazilian regions. It seeks to understand the influence of these institutions in the transformation which occurred in the Krahô social structure of the investigated villages.

The originality of the research was based in present the referential indigenous schools, those that adapted to Paulo Freire method and were able to create an institution connected with the designs of the community and they brought welfare to their villages, empowered groups where were implanted, besides identity and cultural reinforcement. The approach of the indigenous referential schools using the Paulo Freire method can be considered the originality of this work, once that do not exist previous research under this perspective.

Other innovation of this research it was the link of Paulo Freire method (1987) with Pierre Clastres politics conception (2013), something unusual and not used by any other study on indigenous school education.

The Brazilian indigenous population is estimated at 817.913 people, belonging to 235 ethnic groups, according to the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE) which reported in the census of 2010. Despite five centuries of colonization, genocide, massacres, slavery and dissemination of epidemic diseases, the Brazilian indigenous population is still increasing, mainly after the 1988 Federal Constitution which recognized the indigenous groups as traditional societies and conferred rights and incentivized their ethnic identities which had previously been either denied or easily erased.

For more than five hundred years the Brazilian indigenous peoples were compelled to integrate into the purposes and "civilized" molds imposed firstly by the Portuguese Crown and latterly by the Brazilian State. This was based on a belief that the indigenous peoples would be acculturated, assimilated, and integrated into the Brazilian national society or would become extinct. It is quite



evident from the resistance of the Brazilian indigenous peoples throughout the historic process.

Since the colonial period, school education for indigenous peoples constitutes an efficient way to frame the different ethnic groups into the Portuguese model of exploration. Native populations were forbidden to speak their original languages or participate in traditional beliefs and religions. The indigenous schools were structured according to the Jesuit models in which the companionship of Jesus as the strongest partner provides the educational basis to transform the free indigenous societies in servos.

For more than four centuries (from 1549 to 1988) the Brazilian indigenous schools were overwhelming cultural institutions, with the clear purpose of colonization at the forefront of thought. With the advent of the 1988 Constitution, gaps emerged for the indigenous schools to be "independent", in the sense of possessing the ability to formulate policies and develop content geared to their cultures, languages and traditions, in addition to allowing adaptations to their necessities and realities. This separation provided by the legislative gaps granted by Federal law at the end of last century allowed the indigenous societies freedom to make their own choices.

This article proposes to make an analysis of the Krahô schools, where substantial changes have occurred in both positioning and school content allowing them to adapt these to the present conditions of some indigenous villages.

Within the schools at the villages studied, subjects were created which provided greater correlation with the local needs and context. These schools were called "Referential Schools". From the presentation of these schools, were related innovative aspects of these schools with two Krahô schools, to see if these schools took advantage of the opening gaps from the 1988 Constitution, introducing new contents more adapted to the local situation.

However, just a few indigenous schools enjoyed the Constitutional changes and became differentiated schools. These achieved several advances when



creating their curricula in accordance with their realities and local necessities. They now administer their schools and choose their teachers and indigenous staff from within their communities. These schools, in addition to reaching satisfactory levels of traditional knowledge streaming and transmission of the universal one. Such schools are considered referential and can be used as an example for the other indigenous institutions. It is in this context that this article proposes to evaluate the school education of the Krahô and evaluate their advances through their results compared with the so-called referential schools.

Those schools which followed this course of action created their own curricula according to the reality of their situations. They also choose their own teachers and school workers from within their own communities. These schools are termed “referential schools”. It was my intention compare the Krahô schools with these referential schools and assess any advances in the well-being of the communities.

The term referential school was used for those schools with efficiency in the Portuguese and mother languages, which provides the ability to read and write in both. Also, the fact that the school and its teaching practices are linked according to the necessities of their communities, and thus adjusted to the purposes and determinations of the community members. They are considered institutions that have the potential to bring well-being, better conditions of life and hope to his members. Beyond this they achieve a balance between the traditional way of life and western knowledge.

Examples of referential indigenous schools can be found in the academic studies developed by Abbonizio (2013), Bendazolli (2011), Gorete Neto (2009), Messeder and Ferreira (2010) and Monte (1994) were consulted. Abbonizio presents a discussion and analysis of the indigenous schools of the Alto Rio Negro (ARN/Amazonas/AM). Bendazolli went more deeply in the study of Tikuna schools of Alto Solimões (AM). Gorete Neto worked on the Tapirapé schools (Mato Grosso/MT). Messeder and Ferreira studied the Tupinambá (Bahia/BA) schools and Monte researched the indigenous author experiences in the state of Acre



(AC). The different schools deal with vastly different realities of the three Brazilian regions: North, Central Western and Northeastern. Without exception, the four studied schools for the above research all used the method of Paulo Freire (PF).

The referential schools used the Freirian method, aiming to equip peoples with the ability to interfere in the group reality and with conditions to modify it. This gives significant advances for the communities and does not merely create persons adjusted to the society. According to Paulo Freire, (1967) education can transform social actions. Referential schools used the Freirian method, aiming to equip peoples with the ability to interfere in the group reality and with conditions to modify it. This gives significant advances for the communities and does not merely create persons adjusted to the society.

Paulo Freire's concept of education was used concerning to the education seen as an action of liberty for the human being. The education can provide a critical consciousness then can make the individual an agent of transformation. All the indigenous school called referential adopted the Paulo Freire method of literacy. These referential schools brought beyond personal capacity, collective wellbeing, providing for the society better conditions of the material life, doing more participation of the students in the transformation of their reality.

Briefly it is important to stand out the political character of the education in Paulo Freire theory because the student must participate of the educational process, being active, becoming critic and his action can result in changes. From the reflect of his situation, the student gets consciousness, take decisions in the sense of been political and socially responsible for his acts.

In considering the needs of Brazilian indigenous schools it is vitally important not to simply attempt to copy an existing model and try to impose a readymade solution upon an ethnic group. Any proposal must reflect the context and cultural reality of that group. In this way the PF method allows each individual group to have their own unique needs addressed even though they differ from group to group.



The anthropologist Pierre Clastres (2013) focused his studies in developing his theory in Political Anthropology. He concentrates his ethnological studies on American indigenous groups and their political organizations. He developed a theory which criticized the traditional anthropological view that frames indigenous societies as primitive. This view is based on a belief that a lack of written language and presence of subsistence economy with no excess production is representative of a less developed society.

He proves his theory by suggesting the concept of indigenous societies as those that are “against the state”, where there is not the oppressing power of the chiefs on the village members. These differ from “societies with state” in which case the power is associated with oppressive, coercive or violent methods.

A classic example of “society without the state” is found in the Krahô people of the Tocantins river region. This group has a chief that exerts his authority without the threat of retribution. This is a perfect illustration of Clastres theory. The Krahô chief has responsibility to keep the peace in the group. He is a great orator who seeks to rule by power of persuasion rather than force (Melatti, 1978, p.75). His suggestions though, are not compulsory and do not have to be obeyed. Tribal members are all free to make their own decisions.

The Krahô, an indigenous group of the north of Brazil, has three thousand peoples and it is part of the Timbira cultural-linguistic group. They are located within Maranhão, Tocantins and Para States. The Krahô live in a territory of 320.000 hectares (ISA, 1991-95, p.638), placed in the northeastern area of Tocantins State, between the towns of Itacajã and Goiatins. The border of the Krahô territory is bounded by the rivers Manoel Alves Pequeno in the south and Vermelho in the north. Despite the Krahô being in contact with Brazilian society for more than two hundred years, the first school for them was not established until the 1940s. This took place after a massacre organized by local farmers from that region whose aim was the extermination of the whole group. From that point on, according to Melatti [www.juliomelatti.pro.br/craodados/craomassacre.pdf](http://www.juliomelatti.pro.br/craodados/craomassacre.pdf), the federal government created a post in the indigenous Krahô territory, to



protect them and avoid new attacks. During this first trial of government assistance to the Krahô people, a school for literacy in the Portuguese language was created for young Krahô males employed to work at the post.

In the Krahô territory there are four secondary schools, but it was only possible to research two of them: Manoel Alves and Pedra Branca. Both are very representative because they are the two most populated villages.

The research on Krahô school education helped as an object of analysis of the school situation of that ethnic group, beyond to contribute as a theoretical reflection about the secondary school of both investigated villages. The results of the research were presented personally to both villages, showing by this way the practical and extensive character of this investigation. Both libraries of the Krahô schools got a copy of the thesis so all the community has access to the results.

Find out up to where the Krahô schools, in which extent have been transformed by the action of the schools, their social political and economic structure. Even though if the school can reinforce the traditional aspect of their culture, such as ritual, language and it helps them to recover their History, the self-esteem or help them in the aspect of feeding security and production.

The research proposes to contribute for the indigenous school education, mainly for the Krahô schools, looking for the balance between tradition and nowadays necessities of the Krahô. The young members are wishing technologies such as mobiles, computers, and vehicles. By this way one of the questions is how come the school can help them to get these items? Other points should be in which way the school education can provide ideas, reflections to increase the self-esteem, to provide them with nutrition security, to recover the original culture, etc.

The focus of this research was to study how the school has impacted the traditional and the social structures within each village, especially in relation to the identity and culture of the Krahô people. I particularly wanted to determine which aspects of the Krahô had been transformed and whether it was possible to



affirm that significant changes had occurred in the day to day life of the two researched villages.

The concept of culture adopted in the research was tied to the idea of a structure of social meanings established in communion with the view of Clifford Geertz and with the conception of Levi-Strauss that place it as a symbolic system. By the way culture is something public, although received individually as a genetic program. Related to Krahô culture it is also used the concept of Betty Meggers that sees it as an element conducive the adaptation of the man, as an animal, in the environment (LARAIA, 2001).

After explaining a bit about the conceptions of education and culture it is important to show what was used concerning identity. The identities are social constructed, and they draw political choices of the human groups. The identity is always unfinished, hybrid and precarious. For Maria Cristina Costa Leite (2017) identity is multiethnic, polyglot, migrant, constituted of cross elements from several cultures. A great challenge is to think the identity with the hybrid breaks, maintenance of the traditional systems and the modern ones. The modern state builds a national identity and silenced identities, imported a national model of identity (Barbosa, N.C.S. in [www.cult.ufba.br](http://www.cult.ufba.br)). The globalization through the compression of distances and time scales has contributed for the connotation of the centrality of the national identities. However, there is a movement to reinforce the national identities and the local identities as well.

## 2 METHODOLOGY

To achieve the listed objectives, this research used methodology with qualitative and inductive approaches. From a procedural point of view, was used historical, participant, and comparative methods of research. The historical method was used to gain a comprehension of the indigenous school education, from the past to its present context, to understand how some aspects of previous indigenous school education persist to the present day. The participant method of





research was used to elicit information about the Krahô schools, based on the views that members of the Krahô communities hold about the school education. This helped to understand the educational process of the researched schools. Finally, the comparative method was used with the purpose of identifying similarities and differences between Krahô schools and those from the Alto Rio Negro, in Amazon State.

A literature search was conducted of existing scientific literature on indigenous school education followed by field work with interviews of the members of two Krahô villages. In addition, was included opinions of specialists in the matter. In total 41 interviews were conducted with Krahô individuals of the researched communities. These took place locally, and face to face.

Interviews were also conducted with specialists in Indigenous School Education including anthropologists (Dr. Odair Giraldin), the national coordinator of Indigenous School Education in Brasilia at National Education Agency (Susana Grillo Guimaraes), and an indigenist with 25 years of experience working with Krahô (Fernando Schiavini). Also, an intellectual indigenous writer (Dr. Daniel Munduruku), who has authored more than 40 books on indigenous matters. The interview with the National Coordinator of Indigenous School Education was face to face on August 10<sup>th</sup> of 2015. The indigenist Fernando Schiavini and Daniel Munduruku were interviewed via internet. A questionnaire was sent to them and they answered by e-mail and sent back to me. Odair Giraldin were interviewed online by skype.

In comprising a bibliography, initially the Brazilian Federal Constitution was consulted as it referred to the indigenous rights relative to education. Then looked for scientific texts about different perspectives and frameworks of the indigenous groups throughout the “civilization process” focusing on the initial meetings between Europeans and Brazilian indigenous peoples. Jesuit thoughts were also examined on how to deal with the inhabitants of the Brazilian lands.

After analyzing the initial material (Legislation and Jesuit letters), postgraduate dissertations and theses were researched at Brazilian universities:



USP, UNICAMP, UFRJ, UnB, UFG, UFGO, UFTO, searching for academic material in Anthropology, Education, Linguistics, History and Public Policies related to indigenous school education.

It should be noted that a limiting factor in the postgraduate research was the lack of academic texts about Krahô school education.

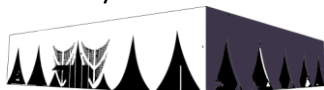
The information gained about the school experiences with other indigenous groups made it possible to compare these with the Krahô situation. It was in this way that the methods of historical analysis when compared with textual sources, questionnaires, interviews, and those frameworks associated with anthropological techniques of field work with participant observation were able to deliver the required results.

All the interviews with different members of the Krahô villages (students, students' parents, teachers, head teachers, coordinators, leaders, and other school staff) were recorded and later transcribed and analyzed.

A field diary was also completed to analyze the Krahô schools, in which printed forms were registered on aspects of Krahô daily life. Important comments were also recorded from people that felt more able to speak informally to give their opinions on political and ideological differences that were not mentioned during the recorded interviews. The observations of the field diary were extremely important in understanding the positions of different segments of the villages concerning their views about the school and their expectations after the implementation of the school. These comments also addressed some of the interferences caused by the school on Krahô culture and socio-political aspects in both researched villages.

The field research was made possible due to previous contact and knowledge of both villages in the years of 1985 and from 1995 to 2000.

The results of the field research helped to understand, analyze, and compare both Krahô schools with the referential indigenous schools which serve as a model to other indigenous school institutions.



## 3 RESULTS

The education programme has been the responsibility of the Indigenous Protection Service (SPI) from 1940 to 1967. Following this period school education was taken over by the Indian National Bureau (FUNAI) until 1991. During this time, there were just primary schools in the Krahô villages. However, the lack of preparation of the teachers, insufficient material, and language issues resulted in an unsuccessful attempt and the Krahô did not learn how to read and write. However, this failure of the proposed education system allowed the Krahô to maintain their original culture.

However, the schools within the researched Krahô villages have evolved very differently based to a large extent on the numbers of indigenous people involved as teachers. Although there is a belief that one of the Krahô schools is “referential”. Many times, during the interviews made with leaders of Manoel Alves village, such as Jahhe that use to affirm that the school of his village is referential one for the indigenous schools of Tocantins State, my research would suggest that neither are. There is a belief within the villages that the schools are not bringing what the community needs or expects. Leaders in both villages are extremely critical of the role of the school. There is clear conflict between tradition and innovation, and this is magnified by the generation gap.

School leavers are ill equipped to live in a traditional way as they are not taught hunting, fishing and agricultural skills and are not able to provide for themselves or the villages. On the other hand, the technological skills imparted have not been sufficient for them to obtain employment and within a few years of graduation no school leavers have found a job. This begs the question: “What value has the school conferred in the community?”

As an agent of change, it has impacted culture materially but with no apparent benefit to the community. As an agent of resistance to change it has also failed because the young people are keen to embrace new technologies and as a result culture again suffers.



School education of the ethnic groups from Tocantins State are the responsibility of the Culture and Education Bureau (SEDUC). During the 90's the changes became more effective, when secondary schools began to be implanted. However, the construction of the buildings was not compatible with the traditional Krahô way. According to Giraldin (2010), the young leaders made a claim for the introduction of secondary schools for all Krahô villages but in 2006 the State had only implanted schools in the four most populated villages. This brought about a change in the economy with the introduction of salaries for school workers and increased a desire for material goods such as motorcycles and mobile phones.

The study of school education for the indigenous people is extremely important as it brings about an increasing understanding of the basic problem facing these groups. There is a long-standing tension between the expansion of the State and the rights of the indigenous peoples. The interests of the State are clearly represented by the large companies encroaching on traditional indigenous lands and leaving a trail of pollution and irreparable damage in their wake. Problems are caused by the timber, hydroelectric and mining industries but the biggest impact is observed in the agro-business sphere where vast tracts of indigenous lands are being taken resulting in inevitable conflict.

This is further impacted by the devastation occurring in adjacent neighborhoods. Deforestation and pollution have a dramatic effect on the indigenous populations. The destruction of large and small trees reduces the habitat of many species of animals and plants impacting greatly upon the traditional hunter-gatherer lifestyle of the native population. Pollution caused by mercury used by gold prospectors and the toxic chemicals used in large agricultural concerns poison both the land and the water system.

The introduction of the so called “monoculture system” to grow sugar cane, soya and eucalyptus has exhausted the soil making it unusable and so the need for more land becomes inevitable further reducing the indigenous territories.



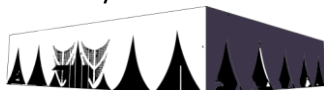
The indigenous view is completely overlooked because unlike the large companies they have no representation at a government level. Native losses are much greater than just destruction of territory but also impact indigenous cultures, values and in the most extreme cases, extinction of traditional peoples.

The indigenous school education system provides an important role in the development of young people. This gives them a potential to understand the mechanism of the state and the organization of Brazilian society. They contribute to the relationship between their communities and the national society allowing greater balance.

Specifically looking at schools in the two researched Krahô villages, it is apparent that young graduates from the schools have now become chiefs. This is a direct result of knowledge of Portuguese and a comprehension of the working of the State.

Probably the greatest benefit of the schools has been the teaching of the Portuguese language. An ability to read and write Portuguese provides the basis of understanding legislation; being able to comprehend their rights and provides the potential to become more organized politically. As a result, the pressures exerted by the large economic groups can now be challenged. This is particularly important when considering land rights, where ownership and occupancy do not mean the same thing. Under the Constitution (Cap.VIII, art.231) the State owns the land but allows its occupancy by indigenous groups until such time as that land is required by the State for other purposes.

What the referential schools have done is they have provided an understanding of the importance of territory in the ongoing fight for survival. One such example is found in the Tapirape, indigenous group from Mato Grosso State. There it was especially important the action of the school to change many practices helping the Tapirape to sort many of their problems, such demarcation of the territory and depose corrupted leaders. The Tapirape school got good results teaching the mother language and Portuguese as well (Gorete Neto, 2009).



The schools have a role in educating on health, preservation of the environment and protection against invasion of their territories.

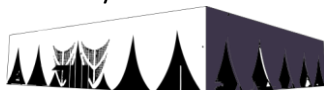
The second great benefit of the referential schools was the teaching of mathematics. Up until this time many of the indigenous groups were economically dominated because they had no knowledge of capitalist transactions. They were always in the position of being exploited. An example of this was the demand of the Kulina and Katukina peoples from Acre State. They asked to be taught the Portuguese language before learning how to read and write in their own languages.

Here in Acre, it was the knowledge of Portuguese and Mathematics which formed the basis of a challenge to the rubber industry. An inability to count and to communicate freely meant that any records of production and payments were the sole responsibility of the buyers. This resulted in gross underpayment for the rubber produced. However, the skills and knowledge provided by the schools has enabled these groups to stop the exploitation.

The schools also provide a mechanism to share information and practices that have occurred in other regions raising awareness of the successes obtained. These examples of good practice are talked about by the teachers or the village leaders particularly in school meetings. This has the dual advantages of allowing leaders to reinforce tradition at the same time.

The introduction of schools, in the form of a physical building is a concept that is alien to traditional culture. Previously, education was very much an interactive affair with “on the job” learning, based on practice and imitation with input from elders within the group.

The building of the school inevitably brings conflict. It is viewed almost as a “symbolic invasion” in that its whole ethos is brought as a “ready-made” concept. There is no dialogue or exchange of views about what is needed, and the school arrives as a finished product. Schools implanted in this way are destined to fail. The schools are also implanted in a very disorganized way and often abandoned.



Many villages have empty former school building now used occasionally for other purpose.

Some of the fundamental reasons behind the failure of the schools are cultural. The curricula do not meet the perceived needs of the village, and the teachers were almost all non-indigenous.

In direct contrast to this concept, in 1998 a school was established at Pedra Branca village using a consensus-based process. The whole community was engaged in the physical building and in deciding the curriculum, with no outside interference. Decisions including the location of the school, the name of the school (Kajré) in their own language, and the choice of materials used in the building. Also, indigenous teachers were selected, and community elders also taught within the school. This ensured that a link between old and new was established. The tribal history and geography were written in this own language and the whole program created a thirst for knowledge.

However, this success brought about its own unique problems. Everyone in the village wanted to attend the school, irrespective of age or sex. With no external support, daily life of the village suffered. It became such a challenge to feed everyone involved that the school was forced to close. However, in 2015, all the leaders in this village who had participated in the creation of that school expressed a desire to re-introduce a school based on the same principles.

Across the whole of Brazil, schools have operated in a variety of different ways. The State schools have followed a very linear approach and have developed consistently in all regions of the country. Interestingly the schools that had the greatest success were those in the most remote locations and therefore furthest from interventions by the State.

With the end of the military dictatorship in 1985, the political climate in Brazil changed dramatically. In 1988 a new constitution was established involving the direct participation of indigenous leaders and teachers. Pressure from this group brought about new rights for indigenous peoples, so that for the first time in almost five hundred years the identity of all the various culture



groups was embedded in the new constitution. This new constitution conferred the right of citizenship to all individuals, but also allowed the indigenous identity to be recognized.

During this same period a project called “Pro Memoria” involving a joint venture of indigenous peoples together with rubber workers, field workers and those living on the outskirts of Rio Branco in Acre State, created novel school materials that preserved cultures and kept alive traditional practices. The indigenous schools established in those villages were bilingual, preserved cultures and practices. The indigenous schools established in those villages were bilingual, preserved cultures and traditions and could truly be called “alternative schools”.

The Acre experience spread throughout the Amazon region. In 1988 the number of indigenous teacher organizations exploded from ten in number to 180 in just a few years. This movement received independent financial support with no input from the State (WARREN, 2001).

As a result of these ventures, the indigenous school has become the hub on which the wheels of the community turn. It has reawakened a keen sense of identity among the native population that differentiates the indigenous peoples from those they interact with, such as evangelical workers, members of the scientific community, farmers, etc.

The schools have also managed to create an appetite to plan rather than living day by day. The teachers were instrumental in formulating these changes. Many projects were created in the 90’s that revolutionized agricultural methods and restored many traditional features that were in danger of being lost. This model serves as a mirror to many communities across Brazil.

The Collor government in 1991 changed the responsibility for indigenous education from FUNAI to the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sports (MEC). It is important to note that in April 1993 according to the Brazilian Anthropology Association (ABA), there was a meeting with FUNAI, MEC, Non-Government Organizations (NGOs), ABA and Brazilian Linguistic Association (ABL) which





established new links with local universities to reinforce the Indigenous School Education programme. This ensured that local culture and tradition formed an integral part of the school curriculum. This was particularly in evidence about traditional food production techniques which were in danger of becoming lost.

In this way the school must teach what the community needs. It must produce skilled individuals that can contribute to an improvement in quality of life within their communities and contribute to sustainable projects. The Khumuno school of Alto Rio Negro/AM produces pupils who can sing, dance, plant fields, fish, hunt and engage in traditional handicrafts in addition to being able to read and write both Portuguese and their own language (ABBONIZIO, 2013).

This loss of tradition had existed long before the border demarcation of indigenous territories, but the State had not introduced public policies to address this issue. However, recent input from the universities has done much to address this. The creation of intercultural degrees and graduation courses can probably be the greatest achievement of the Indigenous School Education in many groups.

There was now a clear distinction between the new alternative schools and what had existed previously. There was no longer a disconnect between the indigenous school education and the reality of daily life within the communities.

This change of dynamic was also observed by (ABBONIZIO, 2013) who researched the school in ARN. There, local traditional knowledge is taught through the practice and research of fish farming. This resulted in the production of textbooks about reproduction, different kinds of fish, and the mythologies related to these and other topics.

The referential schools already discussed are institutions which are committed to the lives of the individual's learners. All these schools used the PF method and had a socially transforming action which was totally opposite to the previous integrationist schools. There the apparent aim was to merely produce people adapted to fit in to the Brazilian way of life and forget their indigenous identity.



This is particularly significant in respect of land issues. The ethnicity and history of all indigenous peoples is intrinsically bound to the territories they inhabit.

Although there remain several contrary views on the development of Indigenous School Education, the 80's and 90's saw an explosion in innovative techniques with extremely positive results for the communities. This stands in opposition to the apparent stagnation observed in Brazilian public education. These innovations followed the work of the Indigenous and Indigenist Movements working together in the 60's and 70's to recognize the rights of the native populations. Daniel Munduruku (2010) observed that the issues facing the indigenous peoples mirrored the problems seen in Brazilian society and suggested pro-democracy meetings to address the common issues.

There remains a fundamental challenge to the founding of any new school. That is how to adapt an outside institution into an indigenous context. The Indigenous School Education represents a synthesis of non-indigenous elements into the values and beliefs on the local community. The balancing act between native and western cultures has not been easy to achieve but has been best observed in the referential schools.

Initially indigenous schools were implanted as a mean of dominating the native population, but this vision is now superseded in the referential school where they are instruments of benefit.

The secretary of the Manoel Alves school in the Krahô region suggests that after 2000 the school kept its pupils enclosed within four walls and diminished the amount of time available for contact with other community members. Prior to this the schools were in a contrary position. Formal education was poor but there were still strong links within the community.

Before 2006 there were a few of negative aspects to the school structure. Poorly qualified teachers and inadequate teaching material meant that the school did little in modifying the Krahô social organization. Classes were often infrequent



and allowed more time for the young people to be in touch with tradition and culture.

There is however a new threat to the indigenous cultures. The Brazilian government is considering establishing infant education without previous consultation with the indigenous communities. Under this proposal young children, still in their formative years, would engage in formal education and be removed from the traditional values associated with family life. This may well have the effect of depriving the child of an ability to establish their own traditional identity.

There remains within the Krahô, deep concerns about the impact that child education is bringing. The older generation is very worried that the new generations are vacillating over which path they should take. Should they follow tradition or become innovative and choose a different course?

According to the literature revision of the indigenous school education, it was found the expression referential school, word given for the first time to highlight the educational institutions that can serve as an example for other schools. The schools called of the villages referential were those that have got beyond literacy in mother language, teach Portuguese language and Math, they were also efficient in contribute to the improvement of the life conditions of their communities, they got the participation of their members at school, they got administrative autonomy electing their staff, organize their calendar and disciplines to be taught. The schools called referential were turned to the reality and necessity of the village and they try to find solutions to their own problems.

When establishing the concept of referential school, it was arrived to point out several indigenous schools, in different Brazilian regions, such as some of the Tikuna (Bendazolli, 2011) and schools of the Alto Rio Negro (Abbonizio, 2013) in the Amazon State, extension of Tapirape at Mato Grosso State (GORETE NETO, 2009) and the Tupinamba in Bahia State ( Messeder, M.L.L.; Ferreira, S.M.M., 2010) that got particular results in involvement with the community and the school and they brought particular solutions bringing improvements, welfare and



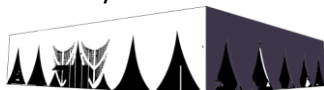
they were approved by substantial part of the community. All those schools considered referential used Paulo Freire method.

Taking the indigenous schools mentioned in the previous paragraph and compare them with the Krahô ones, it can be conclude that the participation question of the community in the school, approved by their members over the performance and evolving of the school with the villages, it is noticed that although the Manoel Alves school has more approval of the interviewed members, still lies far from bringing benefits, welfare and connections with the necessities , mainly from the youngsters that wish technology and material goods.

According to field work results, the approval of significant part of the individuals interviewed from Manoel Alves village it was 10 peoples accepting the school such doing good job and 5 criticizing the role of the school. At Pedra Branca village the proportion was 8 to 4. Therefore, even with the statement of the Head teacher of the Manoel Alves school, when saying that his school is an example for the other indigenous school of the State of Tocantins, still not in the approval standards according to the members of that village. Getúlio an old leader of that village says: “.....this business of History, Geography, Portuguese language nobody is understanding. The Indians have to learn the oral school, that is more right, to learn handcraft, work with the old ones, respect what the old....” (interviewed in July,2015). That school not even transmit traditional knowledge balancing it with the universal one.

When comparing both schools, Manoel Alves and Pedra Branca, it can be said that the Manoel Alves is closer to be called referential than the Pedra Branca one, according to the testimonies collected at both villages.

The research field with the Krahô also presented the dichotomy between the tradition and the innovation. The older Krahô defend tradition and they know the necessities of the youngsters must innovate, looking for technology even a way to preserve. This was observed during the field research, in the field diary about the Pedra Branca institution called Guardians of the Krahô Culture where they are using modern technology to keep the rituals (video camera, Facebook, etc.).



Although the design of Luciano, Professor and doctor in Anthropology of UFMA (Federal University of Amazon/Manaus), from Baniwa indigenous group from Alto do Rio Negro in the Amazon State, the indigenous school role is to stick only to universal knowledge and let proper culture at the expense of the families and the community. At the Krahô community, according to the interviewed members, both the elders and the younger ones defend the proposal that the school education must balance both knowledges, traditional and universal, teach mother language and Portuguese one, western science and traditional learning. The aspect innovation and cultural preservation it cannot be put as a conflict for the Krahô, they question both, but they can deal with this dichotomy.

As the result of the research it can be said that the Krahô necessity looking for the knowledge, understanding with the local and national society and they also have wish of take their culture, life experience outside of the limits of their territory.

Concerning the analysis of the influence of the school education at the Krahô communities transforming or keeping their identity, it was said that the old schools of the SPI (Indigenous Protection Service) and FUNAI (Indigenous National Bureau) they did not have potential to modify the original culture because they were not regular and they were implanted at the Brazilian State to avoid massacre and genocide after 1940. With the secondary at the Krahô villages, started the great changes in the daily life and in the Krahô identity. The Krahô school after the 90's was more present, more regular, had more changes in the mode of being Krahô.

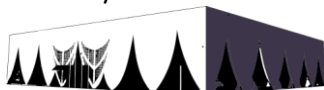
One can consider the efficiency of the current school, its potential to cause damage and loss of identity, as it was stated by Schiavini (2018) as a paradox, because the Krahô by claiming national Brazilian citizenship end up being affected in their ethnic citizenship, they are transformed by the State action through schooling that reinforce other values, overvalues the Portuguese language and bring them other historic version of the contact process with the national society.



The contribution of the research to the indigenous school education was to point out the possible fails in the Krahô institutions. It also presents the Krahô schools and showed the Brazilian indigenous schools taken as referential for the indigenous school education. It was also showed the interference the school in the Krahô community with the presence of secondary teaching and the presence of the State and the educational religious institutions that were responsible for the culture identity loss. The research can also contribute for the Krahô schools to present them the Paulo Freire method and examples of other referential indigenous school such as Tapirape, Tikuna, among others.

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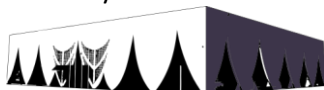
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