

14 - BLACK CARIOCA CULTURAL MANIFESTATION: THE SERRINHA JONGO AND ITS HISTORY

CRISTINA DA CONCEIÇÃO SILVA
UNIGRANRIO/ DUQUE DE CAXIAS/RJ/ BR
cristinavento24@yahoo.com.br

JOSÉ GERALDO DA ROCHA
UNIGRANRIO/ DUQUE DE CAXIAS/RJ/ BR
rochageraldo@hotmail.com

PATRICIA LUISA NOGUEIRA RANGEL
UNIGRANRIO/ DUQUE DE CAXIAS/RJ/ BR
patricia1234luisa@gmail.com

FÁBIA DE CASTRO LEMOS
UNIGRANRIO/ DUQUE DE CAXIAS/RJ/ BR
fabiaclemos@gmail.com

DILERMANDO MORAES COSTA
UNIGRANRIO/ CTUR/ DUQUE DE CAXIAS/RJ/ BR
diler_costa@yahoo.com.br

doi:10.16887/88.a1.14

Introduction

When it comes to black culture, we cannot ignore how the arrival of this ethnic group to Rio de Janeiro took place, mainly its cultural history and contributions, which crossed centuries, to the Brazilian territory. In this context, the Rio de Janeiro city was the stage of cultural initiatives, with a view to the arrival of Bantu people who displayed a festive spirit. This group, even living oppressed by the white supremacist system, did not lose its joyfulness and did not moved away from their cultural background, but added cultural aspects of other groups that came from other areas of the African continent, as well as of the European continent.

Black people resisted the persecution of whites and never denied their cultural identities, reinforcing them with the drummings, dances and beliefs. Such resistance was very important, especially for the carioca culture, which considers the samba, through the samba schools, as the city's cultural symbol, acknowledged in several countries.

In the city of Rio de Janeiro, we highlight the low-income Madureira neighborhood, which exudes black cultural manifestations, ranging from African religious trade to the musical and dance representations. These aspects take place on the streets, under viaducts and in samba schools. Portela and Império Serrano are the oldest samba schools, located in this neighborhood. As it is not possible to deal with all the existing representations of black cultures in this place, we have decided to concentrate on the cultural history of the jongo dance, which is not common in the vicinity of the city centre, but which is part of the cultural representations of Morro da Serrinha, situated in the aforementioned neighborhood.

In this sense, we will deal with this culture, the jongo dance, in order to highlight its practices through the family interaction, neighborly relations and friendships of a group, which moved to the periphery during the urban reform, by which the city of Rio de Janeiro went through in the end of the 19th and in the beginning of 20th centuries, known as the Belle Époque. It was in Madureira neighborhood where the blacks found space to practice their religious and entertainment cultures, far from the elite looks of certain groups of the city of Rio de Janeiro. And in this context, the jongo dance with its religious and cultural symbols gained respect over the decades by the cultural policies of the city of Rio de Janeiro.

Furthermore, although the city has a wealth of black cultural representations, yet educational environments spread very little the histories that involve black culture. And when it comes to this paper, we highlight what recommends the order of the Minister, the Secretary of Racial Equality, published in the Official Gazette on May 19, 2004, Resolution n.1, July 17, 2004, which emphasizes that:

Brazil, as a multi-ethnic and pluri-cultural country, needs school organizations in which everybody feels included, having the right to learn and to expand knowledge guaranteed, without being forced to deny themselves, their racial/ethnic group to which they belong and to adopt customs, ideas and behaviors adverse to them (BRASIL, 2006, p. 80).

Therefore, we believe that the dissemination and appreciation of the culture of African peoples and their African descendants are intended to contribute positively with aspects about the history of black Africans and African descendants in the carioca context. And the educational environment, in our view, needs to be committed to disseminating such cultures, considering what recommended the National Curricular Parameters Cultural plurality and what is still defended by the Law n. 10639/03, which deals with the Afro-Brazilian culture.

Black culture and its historical legacies

In the first half of the 16th and early 17th centuries, the first Bantu people were brought to Brazil to be forced labor in sugarcane mills in northeastern Brazil. With the growing commercial production of cotton and tobacco, especially with the discovery of gold and the cultivation of coffee, black migrations within the country and also the coming of new African slaves increased to the south of the country from the late 17th and early 18th centuries. Even with the import of Sudanese slaves, the Bantu people still came in large numbers to Brazil, because most of them were used in urban services, especially in the Brazilian coast, according to Sousa (2015).

According to the aforementioned author, in Rio de Janeiro, the demographic dominance of Bantu slaves remained the same, due to the particularities of slave trade agreements and treaties, which, for example, consented to the Portuguese smugglers of recent times to trade, exceptionally with Rio de Janeiro, the blacks of southern African coast. However, Rangel (2015) states that regardless of the nations where the blacks were from, there was a need to maintain their cultural identity, as their religious drumming, dancing and singing in a different universe from theirs, at times demanding adjustments in order to

survive.

In the accounts of foreign travellers that passed by the Court and rural surrounding areas in the 19th century, there were many references to dances and "black" parties, which possibly would be jongsos and caxambus, but that they were not interested in the names given by the practitioners of these dances. The term drumming was used as reference to these manifestations (SOUSA, 2015, p. 22).

According to Sousa, the "drumming" was a specific term that most travelers used for any meeting of "blacks". Without a doubt, it was not the name used only by "outsiders", but also in the repression and control codes, as in the postures of several cities in Brazil throughout the 19th century, and in carioca court newspapers, which were used to complain of inconveniences that such practice caused to the neighborhood and to work activities.

Silva (2013) and Rangel (2015) state that during the colonial period, the black needed to assert their cultural identity and one of the spaces for the development of their cultures were the quilombos. Even with the abolition of slavery, their cultures, yet continued to be persecuted and the alternative to protect them were the areas of collective dwellings, in the hills and in the backyards, especially, in low-income areas of Rio de Janeiro. According to the authors, these spaces were fruitful to cultural revivals and cultural hybridization; in other words, political and social structures of cultural traditions were recreated. These spaces have contributed to the development of cultural resistance tactics, which became the basis for the maintenance of cultural expressions, prevalent, currently, in low-income class context in Rio de Janeiro.

According to Silva (2013), these areas, although with private characteristics, suffered many police raids, mostly in Rio de Janeiro city center with the advent of urban reform promoted by Mayor Pereira Passos, between the end of the 19th and early 20th centuries. The reform also led the overthrow of many existing collective dwellings in the city center, causing many of the blacks, who arrived in the city after the abolition of slavery, from Bahia, Paraíba Valley (countryside of the State of Rio de Janeiro), Minas Gerais among other Brazilian territories, moved in mass to the periphery through the rail or remained around the city, setting homes in the hills surrounding.

The Serrinha jongo in Madureira neighborhood

Once the coffee plantation was over, the slaves who, even after the abolition remained in the Paraíba Valley, came to Rio de Janeiro. It is important to point out that the Paraíba Valley was an important coffee growing region and where we can find accounts of the presence, even today, of the manifestation of the jongo. Many of these former slaves and their descendants settled in the Morro da Serrinha in Madureira, a low-income neighborhood of central region, as Silva (2013) comments.

The jongo is a cultural manifestation, originating in the drumming and dances circles, which survived the sociocultural imposition of the colonies. It is also known as tambu, batuque, drumming and caxambu. The jongo is the result of the cultural traffic of collective and individual process of Bantu tradition, which remains being reinvented as a diacritic sign, resulting from urbanization, the growth of favelas and State action regarding the population and the space. The transmission of culture occurred through the ancestors' orality, who remained on passing culture from generation to generation (RANGEL, 2015, p. 25).

According to Boy (2006), the old barn and farm of one owner, which provided milk for the city of Rio de Janeiro, in Madureira neighborhood, situated in the north zone of Rio de Janeiro, was one of the areas that served as a shelter for low-income families since the first decades of the 20th century. The first occupants "put down their tents" and began to allot the land and build their stucco, thatched and zinc homes. The move of these black families brought the jongo dance to the neighborhood, specifically, to Morro da Serrinha, which facilitated the development of this culture among these people and in these locations. Boy (2006) says that it is some kind of cultural manifestation quite diverse of urban centers ("the city"), some kind of cultural manifestation far more related to the true origins of the Brazilian people.

[...] Carnival blocks, the pagodes, pastorinha groups, ladainha and the jongo were the main entertainment of the residents of Serrinha. Away from the city center, only reachable after a long journey by broad gauge track of animal traction, and after that, also having to ride a steam locomotive, the residents of the Morro da Serrinha promoted their leisure within the community itself (BOY, 2006, p. 55).

In the Morro da Serrinha, family, friendship and comradeship ties among jongo adherents of that era were very noticeable and, in this ambience, jongo dancers were present. Sousa (2015) states that there were not many jongo dancers, and only the oldest people or those who had their permission could dance along. At times, even those whose parents were jongo dancers could not join the dance; they would only be allowed to clap along and sing for a while, but they could not dance or participate in jongo dances all night long.

According to Sousa (2015), the jongo featured/ features religious aspects and, in Serrinha, this "religious attitude" consisted of faith manifestations and magic, which took place before and during jongo celebrations. The jongo adherents used to "make preparations" before the jongo celebrations, what included: herbal baths, smoking the place of the party and the use of candles, talismans and rosaries hanging from the neck. Therefore, the jongo is the dance of the ancestors, of the old black slaves, of the people kept in captivity and, therefore, the jongo belongs to the line of souls.

The festive spirit of the residents and the awareness of the importance of preserving black culture were fundamental to the formation of these kernels of families-artists who annually had a calendar of parties on their own initiative, preserving different traditions of Community (BOY, 2006, p. 57).

On the old-black-slaves day, celebrated on the same day of the abolition of slavery, on May 13, for being a respectable date for the black community, the jongo adherents used to gather at a resident's house to a jongo dance in honor of the ancestors. At the time, they made a feijoada, the old-black-slaves dish, according to the umbanda religion, and before starting the dances, they would sing three songs to the souls.

As time goes by, the jongo dance performed in the family started to develop to other forms, because this group of Serrinha began to assimilate percussionists and took the jongo to the theaters and to the streets of the city of Rio de Janeiro, giving visibility to this form of culture. Currently, in this community there is a space known as the House of the Jongo, which is located at Composer Silas de Oliveira Street, at the bottom of Morro da Serrinha. In this context, the community of Serrinha is the reference of the jongo culture in the city of Rio de Janeiro and new members are welcomed to the jongo circles. Through this visibility, the Serrinha Jongo together with the Jongo in São José, Rio de Janeiro, among others, managed to turn the jongo into a Brazil's Cultural Heritage, as stated by Boy (2006), Rangel (2015) and Sousa (2015).

Final considerations

The relation between the jongo and africaness and its preservation through resistance became one of the basis for the formation of the Brazilian people. This fact confirms how much resistance practices of afro-cariocas were and still are important for preserving the identity of a group excluded by the elites of the city.

In this context, the Serrinha Jongo was of extreme significance for keeping the culture of the slaves, considering that its protection was made possible because of neighborhood and family ties. Furthermore, these jongsos adherents spreaded their

culture to other members outside the nuclear family and the neighborhood, in order to maintain the culture of the jongo alive in the city of Rio de Janeiro. Such consent shows us the importance of sharing, what can be identified in almost all black cultures in the city Rio de Janeiro, especially in low-income areas.

As well as the jongo, the samba also opened the doors to those who admire and respect it and, in this sense, Madureira neighborhood, in low-income areas of Rio de Janeiro, shows numerous cultural events, and is acknowledged as a neighborhood of black cultures in the carioca context.

Referências bibliográficas

- BOY, Dyonne Chaves. A Construção do Centro de Memória da Serrinha. RJ, FVG, 2006.
 BRASIL. Ministério de Educação e Cultura. Plano Nacional de Implementação das Diretrizes Curriculares Nacionais para Educação das Relações Étnico-Raciais para o Ensino de História e Cultura Afro-brasileira e Africana. Brasília: MEC, 2006.
 RANGEL, Patricia Luisa Nogueira. O funk na baixada fluminense como culturas identitárias. Duque de Caxias, UNIGRANRIO, 2015.
 SILVA, Cristina da Conceição. O Samba no Rio de Janeiro: elementos socializadores dos grupos étnicos nos quintais de Madureira e Oswaldo Cruz. Duque de Caxias, UNIGRANRIO, 2013.
 SOUSA, Aline Oliveira de. Tia Maria do Jongo: memórias que ressignificam identidades das atuais lideranças jongueiras do grupo Jongo da Serrinha. SP: USP, 2015.

Cristina da Conceição Silva

Endereço: Rua dos Diamantes, nº 422 apto 101 fundos - Rocha Miranda - Rio de Janeiro.

Cep.: 21.510-003

Telefones: (21) 992404445 – (21) 33721614

Email: cristinavento24@yahoo.com.br

BLACK CARIOCA CULTURAL MANIFESTATION: THE SERRINHA JONGO AND ITS HISTORY

Abstract

This paper reflects upon the black carioca culture based on Bantu people's history, which, in the period between the 17th and 18th centuries, were brought to Brazil as workforce under slavery. In addition to being exploited in the planting and mineral systems, which were Brazil's economic foci, these people were also destined to the urban working system, particularly, in Rio de Janeiro, where many of them served the whites during the colonial period. Therefore, this group began to show their religious culture of songs and dances, which were disregarded by whites, especially, by Europeans. Even after the abolition of slavery, in 1888, these blacks, who practiced their culture in their collective and private dwellings, suffered police persecution for their cultural activities. The city of Rio de Janeiro went through an urban reform, in the late 80s and early 90s, that led these people, the black people, to occupy low-income areas, especially Morro da Serrinha in Madureira neighborhood, located in the city of Rio de Janeiro. A great number of these blacks, who once worked in the city as well as in coffee farms which had gone bankrupt in the Paraíba Valley, settled in this new place, and in a family context, among friends and neighbors, started the jongo dance in the community where they were inserted. And thus, the Serrinha Jongo was created, also based on the closeness among the community, the religion and the families living nearby. As time went by, in this historical process, the organizers of jongo dance circles have given the opportunity for musicians and percussionists as well as people from other communities to take part in their cultural practices, which made the jongo dance burst upon the scene to the point of becoming a cultural heritage of Brazil.

Key words: Blacks. Rio de Janeiro. Jongo dance.

MANIFESTATION CULTURELLE BLACK CARIOCA: LA DANSE JONGO DA SERRINHA ET SON HISTOIRE

Résumé

Cet article traite de la culture des carioca noirs de l'histoire des Bantous noirs qui, entre le milieu du XVIIe et XVIIIe siècle, ont été amenés au Brésil en tant que force de travail sous esclavage. En plus d'être exploitées dans le système de plantation et de minéral, qui était le centre économique du Brésil, ces bantous noirs étaient également destinés en masse au système de travail urbain, en particulier à Rio de Janeiro, où beaucoup servaient les blancs pendant cette période coloniale. Ainsi, ce groupe a continué à montrer leurs cultures religieuses de chansons et de danses, un fait qui a été nié par les Blancs, en particulier les Européens. Même après l'abolition de l'esclavage en 1888, ces Noirs, qui pratiquaient leurs cultures dans leurs habitations collectives et privées, subissaient la persécution policière pour leurs activités culturelles. À la fin du XIXe et au début des années 1990, la ville de Rio de Janeiro a subi une réforme urbaine qui a conduit ces Noirs à occuper les espaces suburbains, en particulier la colline de Serrinha à Madureira, de Rio de Janeiro. Beaucoup de ces nègres qui travaillaient autrefois dans la ville ainsi que dans les plantations de café en faillite de la vallée de Paraíba se sont installés dans ce nouveau lieu et dans un contexte familial d'amis et de voisins ils ont mis en place la danse jongo dans la communauté où ils étaient insérés. Ainsi, le Jongo da Serrinha est né de la proximité entre la communauté, la religiosité et les familles vivant sur la colline. Au fil du temps, les organisateurs des jongo dance wheels ont ouvert des possibilités d'entrées de musiciens percussionnistes et de personnes d'autres communautés dans leurs pratiques culturelles, ce qui a donné une visibilité au jongo, au point de le faire entrer dans la catégorie du patrimoine culturel du Brésil.

Mots clés: Noirs. Rio de Janeiro. Jongo

MANIFESTACIÓN CULTURAL NEGRA CARIOCA: LA DANZA DEL JONGO DE LA SERRINHA Y SU HISTORIA

Resumen

El presente artículo versa sobre la cultura negra carioca a partir de la historia de los negros bantos, que, en el período entre la mitad del siglo XVII y XVIII, fueron traídos a Brasil como fuerza de trabajo en régimen de esclavitud. Además de ser explotados en el sistema de plantación y mineral, que era el foco económico de Brasil, esos negros bantos también fueron destinados en masa para el sistema de trabajo urbano, en especial, en Río de Janeiro, donde muchos sirvieron a los blancos durante el período colonial. Así, ese grupo pasó a evidenciar sus culturas religiosas de cantos y danzas, hecho que era renegado por los blancos, especialmente, los europeos. Incluso después de la abolición de la esclavitud, en 1888, esos negros, que practicaban sus cultivos en sus viviendas colectivas y particulares, sufrían la persecución policial por sus actividades culturales. La ciudad de Río de Janeiro, al final de los años ochenta y principios de los años novecientos, pasó por una reforma urbanística que llevó a esas personas, los negros, a ocupar para los espacios suburbanos, especialmente, al morro de la Serrinha en Madureira, barrio de la ciudad de Río de Janeiro. Buena parte de esos negros, que otrora trabajaban en la ciudad, así como en

las fracasadas granjas de café del Valle del Paraíba, fijaron residencia en ese nuevo lugar y, en un contexto familiar, de amigos y vecinos, implantaron la danza del jongo en la comunidad en que estaban insertos. Y así nació el Jongo de la Serrinha con base en las cercanías entre comunidad, religiosidad y familias moradoras del cerro. Con el paso del tiempo, en ese proceso histórico, los organizadores de las ruedas de la danza del jongo abrieron posibilidades de entradas de músicos percusionistas y personas de otras comunidades en sus prácticas culturales, lo que dio visibilidad al jongo, hasta el punto de llevarlo a la categoría de Patrimonio Cultural de Brasil.

Palabras clave: Negros. Rio de Janeiro. Jongo

MANIFESTAÇÃO CULTURAL NEGRA CARIOCA: A DANÇA DO JONGO DA SERRINHA E SUA HISTÓRIA

Resumo

O presente artigo versa sobre a cultura negra carioca a partir da história dos negros bantos, que, no período entre a metade do século XVII e XVIII, foram trazidos para o Brasil como força de trabalho em regime de escravidão. Além de serem explorados no sistema de plantio e mineral, que era o foco econômico do Brasil, esses negros bantos também foram destinados em massa para o sistema de trabalho urbano, em especial, no Rio de Janeiro, onde muitos serviram aos brancos durante o período colonial. Assim sendo, esse grupo passou evidenciar suas culturas religiosas de cantos e danças, fato que era renegado pelos brancos, especialmente, os europeus. Mesmo após a abolição da escravidão, em 1888, esses negros, que praticavam suas culturas em suas moradias coletivas e particulares, sofriam a perseguição policial por suas atividades culturais. A cidade do Rio de Janeiro, no final dos anos oitocentistas e início dos anos novecentistas, passou por uma reforma urbanística que levou essas pessoas, os negros, a ocuparem para os espaços suburbanos, especialmente, ao morro da Serrinha em Madureira, bairro da cidade do Rio de Janeiro. Boa parte desses negros, que outrora trabalhavam na cidade, bem como nas falidas fazendas de café do Vale do Paraíba, fixaram residência nesse novo local e, num contexto familiar, de amigos e vizinhos, implantaram a dança do jongo na comunidade em que estavam inseridos. E assim nasceu o Jongo da Serrinha, com base nas proximidades entre comunidade, religiosidade e famílias moradoras do morro. Com o passar do tempo, nesse processo histórico, os organizadores das rodas da dança do jongo abriram possibilidades de entradas de músicos percusionistas e pessoas de outras comunidades em suas práticas culturais, o que deu visibilidade ao jongo, a ponto de levá-lo a categoria de Patrimônio Cultural do Brasil.

Palavras chave: Negros. Rio de Janeiro. Jongo.