

**THE ROLE OF THE SCHOOL IN THE PRODUCTION OF CULTURALLY
DISPLACED BODIES: AN ANGOLAN EXPERIENCE OF THE FIRST
AUTHOR IN DIALOGUE WITH HIS GRANDMOTHER¹**

***O papel da escola na produção de corpos culturalmente refugiados: uma experiência
angolana do autor em um diálogo com a sua avó***

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Abstract

This study examines the role of Angolan schools as agents in producing "culturally displaced bodies," individuals compelled to abandon their cultural identities in favor of school norms shaped by Western hegemony to achieve social and academic acceptance. Drawing from the first author's personal experience within the Vangangela sociocultural context, the article uses a dialogue with his grandmother to illustrate how school hegemony erodes local cultural identities. Grounded in Michel Foucault's theories, the analysis argues that schools operate as instruments of power promoting the adoption of Eurocentric values. Methodologically, the study employs the concept of Ndzili—a term from the Ngangela language representing the "inner energy" essential for nurturing and preserving culture, respecting the inward-to-outward movement. The interplay between internal discourse (grandmother's reflections) and external ideas (such as those of Foucault and other thinkers) fosters an intercultural dialogue that values alternative knowledge systems and plural identities.

Resumo

Este estudo analisa o papel das escolas angolanas como agentes na produção de “corpos culturalmente refugiados”, indivíduos compelidos a abandonar suas identidades culturais em favor de normas escolares moldadas pela hegemonia ocidental, visando à aceitação social e acadêmica. Partindo da experiência pessoal do autor no contexto sociocultural Vangangela, o artigo utiliza um diálogo com sua avó para evidenciar como a hegemonia escolar dilui identidades culturais locais. A análise fundamenta-se em Michel Foucault, argumentando que as escolas funcionam como instrumentos de poder que promovem a adoção de valores eurocêntricos. Metodologicamente, adota-se a lógica do Ndzili, conceito da língua Ngangela que representa a “energia interna” essencial para nutrir e preservar a cultura, respeitando o movimento de dentro para fora. A articulação entre o discurso de dentro (falas da avó) e ideias de fora (como as de Foucault e outros pensadores) sustenta um diálogo intercultural que valoriza saberes alternativos e identidades plurais.

Key-words: *Angolan schools, Ndzili, Training teachers, Culturally refugee bodies, Power relations.*

Palavras-chave: *Escolas angolanas; Ndzili; Formação de professores; Corpo culturalmente refugiado; Relações de poder.*

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STARTING FROM WITHIN: THE AUTHOR IN DIALOGUE WITH HIS GRANDMOTHER

The dialogue presented here, between the author (At) and his grandmother (A), is reflective in nature and is situated within the analytical context of this article. The interaction took place in a setting marked by an emotional reunion, the significance of which stems from the author's temporary distancing from the traditional sociocultural environment shared with his grandmother. This figure represents not only the core of cultural value transmission but also a guardian of ancestral knowledge. The aforementioned distancing was triggered by the author's academic journey, which began in secondary, high school, and higher education, initially in the city of Cuito, Bié province, Angola, and later in Portugal. This transition process involved profound renunciations and ontological adjustments, requiring a re-evaluation of inherited cultural values and an effort to adapt to new social and educational demands. This experience was accompanied by significant challenges, among which linguistic and cultural prejudice stand out. This prejudice manifested itself, above all, in interactions with Angolan colleagues, who frequently depreciated the local language and cultural practices in favor of assimilation to Portuguese cultural standards, as evidenced in Cassela (2025, p. 26).

“[...] I don't like the way you speak Portuguese, your speech is full of ugly diction! It even sounds like you're singing. You have a heavy pronunciation, mixed with Ngangela. Try imitating Mário, who speaks so well that he seems to have been born in Portugal. He's the one! He'll be a real doctor! [...]”, an Angolan colleague and friend who shared the same university residence with us once told me, helping me solidify the idea that perhaps the greatest dream of the colonized Angolan is to be like the Portuguese colonizer. The repetition of this contempt began to make my continued presence in my “cultural self” hostile. Thus, seeking acceptance and appreciation, I found myself forced to no longer look at my language, my practices, and my customs, becoming a reproducer of behavioral patterns based on the way of being and existing of the white Portuguese.

These experiences progressively intensified the author's identity conflict. The Portuguese language, already overvalued in Angola as a criterion for social and educational advancement, became a symbol of alienation from his origins, carrying with it the entire civilizational weight of the hegemonic culture legitimized by the school. As a student, he was occasionally encouraged to “correct” his pronunciation and adopt behaviors that were seen as civilized, reproducing Eurocentric patterns. This process generated a distancing from his culture of origin, leading him to perceive himself as an “I,” alienated from his legitimate identity.

Portugal's return to Angola in 2019 brought a moment of confrontation with his cultural reality. Despite being socially valued for his academic experience and his "Europeanization," the reunion with his grandmother revealed the depth of the cultural distance he had experienced. This situation is evident in the following dialogue:

At: *Avó, cheguei!!!!*

A: *Heee! Mutekulu uangue na hete; ndjolela ika!! Ndjili na sanga um kukumona!!³*

At: *hooo! Minha amada avó, eu entendo perfeitamente o que falas, mas vamos falar português porque eu já não consigo pronunciar algumas palavras.*

A: *Nani!!! Num pode esquecer o seu língua, esse língua que você fala é alheio, o que é nosso é nosso e você num pode despreza⁴r. Eu ficar muito triste hoje em dia, porque as crianças já não querem aprender o que é da nossa cultura, porque pensam que isso é hábito dos bur(r)os.*

At: *Tem razão avó, todo mundo hoje tem vergonha de falar a sua língua materna, por causa do receio de ser desprezado pelas pessoas na sociedade.*

Following this brief exchange, his grandmother's gaze expressed sadness, and fixing her eyes on him, she spoke the following words in the Ngangela national language:

Laja omo kukuakele kuli longessa chaseho tua kele naku yoya, vuno kukuija tea matangua tuli na kutsa muvuyoye vuetu muomu lia kuli longasa, naku kuyouela ku ndzimba, vana vetu vatu tala ngue tuvaka kusalela na vaka kuhunoua kuli longasa.

Translation: Once, without formal education, we lived, but with the arrival of formal education, we died as a culture and lived in ignorance, because schools teach our children to see us as illiterate and ignorant beings.

(Conversation with my grandmother Julinda Kassela, July 16, 2019)

³ Oh! My grandson is here, what joy!!!! I'm so happy to see you!

⁴ Despise

Comments: - What to say in the face of At's grandmother's profound statement? Perhaps, at that moment, her silence was the virtue that prevailed, but the truth is that the revolt, the powerlessness, and the resistance trapped in her words were notorious, manifesting total indignation towards society and an educational system that kills their way of life. The grandmother's brief words revealed the reality of education in Angola, where students are confronted by a teaching system that makes them foreigners in their own lands, as they daily face the drama of seeing the sovereignty of their cultures conditioned by the authority of a colonizing school education that delegitimizes their customs, their languages, their expectations, their beliefs, and their traditions.

Faced with this curricular structure, the subjects of culture do not feel "alive," as they are forced to reject the values taught in their cultures in order to submit to conventional academic formats that eliminate their otherness and imprison them in their ways of producing knowledge. The author's grandmother's statement led him to a field of reflections that were not simply directed at how she viewed the school, but also at how she viewed him. Perhaps, in her understanding, the author was a subject who, under the influence of dominant forces, had lost the network of immanences grounded in his legitimate culture. By creating further developments for the issues raised by his grandmother, he began to see himself as a "culturally refugee body," admitting that Angolan schools can be understood as producers of "culturally refugee bodies." What evidence underpins this thinking? To answer this question, let us return to the dialogue:

At: Grandma lamented how formal education replaces traditional values and knowledge with Western logic, fostering a disinterest in local cultural practices. When did this begin to happen?

A: "[...] my grandson, if even today people still call those who are educated in the culture 'donkeys' it's because of the kolono [hummm!] because we weren't as comfortable as we are today, where you do what is yours... back then, whoever didn't obey what the kolono said, whoever didn't dress as he taught, whoever didn't treat the people as he wanted, they received the coso...the identity card and then they told you to go back to your kimbo, from today you are an indigenous person and not an Angolan citizen. Back then, if you spoke your language, they would tie a small picture on your back or chest and then write there that "I am a donkey"."

Figure 1 ⁵- Census of the uncivilized population of the year 1950

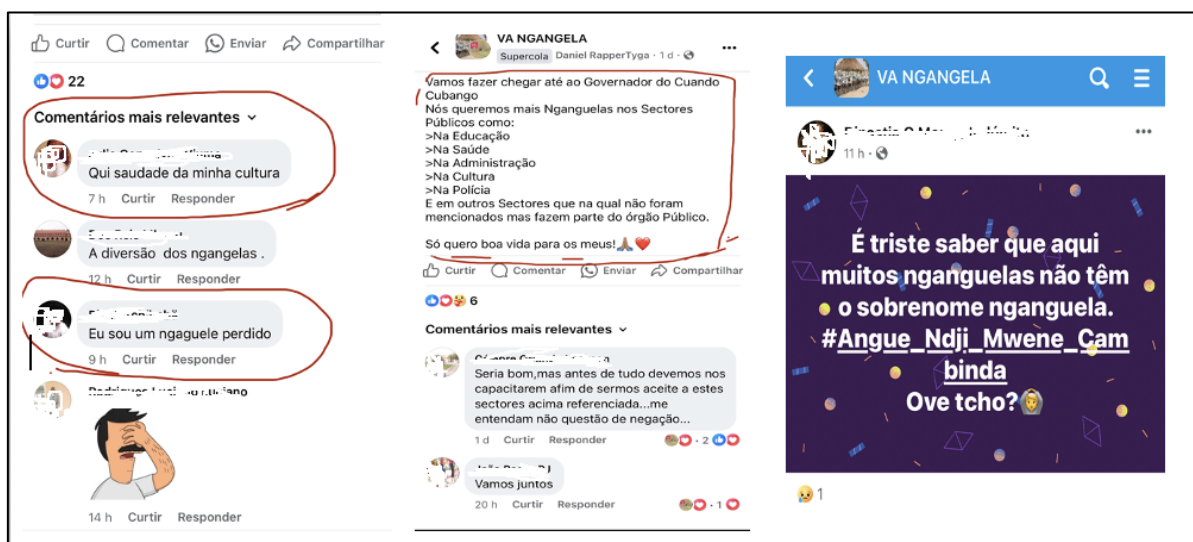
Source: Private.

Comments: - From the author's grandmother's response, we learn that citizenship in Angola was something that could be revoked and granted as a reward to the assimilated individual or as a benevolent act by the colonizer. Along these lines, anyone who did not renounce their way of being and existing in the world, or who did not stop speaking their mother tongue, had their citizenship revoked by a court judge based on a justification issued by the competent administrative authority, under the aegis of the Public Prosecutor's Office. In these circumstances, in case of appeal, if the individual was definitively judged, their citizenship was revoked and they automatically reverted to being indigenous, but they were still obligated to fulfill their assumed obligations. On the other hand, parents who wanted to safeguard a position of acceptance in society for their children forced them to stop speaking the national languages and adopt a Portuguese accent similar to that of the colonizer. This largely explains how these processes influence the determination of an educational system that delegitimizes Angolan cultures in favor of the hegemonic culture, promoting an education that disconnects students from their histories and worldviews.

⁵ This image illustrates the form used in the 1950 population census in Angola, during the colonial period, to register people considered uncivilized. The word "indigenous" is highlighted in the image to show that Angolans who could not assimilate to the colonizer's way of life remained in the condition of "indigenous." It was obtained via tiktok-zidanenhume [End of description].

Given that the assertion based on the formal objective of Angolan schools, according to which the teaching and learning process is oriented not only towards the appropriation of knowledge by the learner, but also towards the construction of the personality inherent to their "being," seems to be founded on a pre-defined, ready-made, and finished form of what constitutes the "true being" legitimized by the school. Thinking in this way, what becomes of the "being" of a student situated in an intersection between their native culture and that legitimized by the school? What is the role of the school in the context of their formation as a sociocultural subject? Because, in our understanding, the being for this student is determined based on the intentional plan of the context that holds power, in economic, political, legal, and other dimensions. Therefore, if the civilizing culture accepted and socialized by the school imposes recognition on the way of life of those who crystallize and reproduce the way of being and existing defended by it, then, as Fanon (2008) says, "for the member of the culture, the 'true being' is the one who approximates their oppressor, the white man." From this perspective, the school projects itself in Angolan culture as a socializer of dominant patterns based on Western culture. Figure 2 illustrates some cries of resistance manifested on social media.

Figure 2⁶- Cries of Resistance



Source: Private.

⁶ This image illustrates the various forms of resistance manifested by different members of the Vangangela culture on social media. The highlighted messages show the diverse expressions of discontent among these members. [End of description]

Given the above, we ask: what do the legal regulations defined within the scope of the application of current Angolan educational policies tell us?

The Angolan education system is guided by the Basic Law of the Angolan Education and Teaching System, initially presented as Law 13/01 of December 31, replaced by Law 17/16 of October 7, approved in 2016 by the National Assembly of the Republic and, in turn, amended and republished by Law No. 32/20 of August 12. The reason for this last amendment is justified by the gaps identified in some provisions which, among other situations, did not account for the knowledge that contributes to the conservation of national cultural heritage and national identity. With the aim of overcoming these gaps and better clarifying the central role of the teacher and reinforcing rigor and experience for access to the classroom, as well as the terminal nature of secondary education and the binary nature of the higher education subsystem, which includes higher education and polytechnic education, among other situations, the National Assembly of the Republic defined Law 32/20. (Cassela; Manrique, 2023)

Thus, considering the line of thought of this article, we reproduce here some provisions of articles 15, 16, and 105, which are presented as new in relation to the provisions contained in the first and second laws:

Article 15

[...] 1. The Education and Teaching system promotes respect for national symbols and the appreciation of history, national culture, national identity, territorial unity, the preservation of sovereignty, peace and the democratic rule of law, as well as moral values, good customs and citizenship.

[...] 3. Without prejudice to the provisions of paragraph 1, other languages of Angola may be used in the different subsystems of Education, under the terms to be regulated in a separate decree.

[...] 4. The Angolan State promotes public policies for the inclusion and widespread teaching of the main languages of international communication in all education subsystems, with priority given to **the teaching of English and French.**

Article 105

[...] 1. The curricula for Early Childhood Education, Elementary Education, and Secondary Education are national in scope and are mandatory, and must promote effective dialogue between local and universal knowledge, in accordance with terms to be approved by the Head of the Executive Branch.

2. For the implementation of what is stated in the previous paragraph, 20% of the curricular content for Pre-School Education, Primary Education and Secondary Education is the responsibility of the local authorities, under the terms to be regulated in a separate decree. (National Assembly of the Republic of Angola, 2020, emphasis added)

It is worth noting that despite updates to the aforementioned laws, there are still traces of Western influences in the provisions governing the Angolan education system, fundamentally in the definition of the teacher training curriculum, which undermines the autonomy and way of life of students, as can be seen in points 1 and 2 of Article 105. In light of these provisions, it is possible to observe, on the one hand, a manifestation of interest in promoting a curriculum that establishes effective dialogues with local knowledge. However, on the other hand, this interest is limited by the rule that delegitimizes parallel dialogue between forms of knowledge, forcing the subordination of internal knowledge to external knowledge, in a disproportionate relationship that grants 80% curricular integration to external knowledge, legitimized according to the interests of the state, and only 20% to internal knowledge.

Furthermore, paragraphs 1 and 2 of article 15 advocate the promotion of education that prioritizes the preservation of the cultural heritage of peoples, with particular emphasis on national languages; however, in our view, this intention is merely rhetorical, since it is presented only as a possibility, that is, as an optional proposal, without a dedicated effort to define a structure that could govern such functioning, which denotes a lack of interest in this purpose. In contrast, the 4th point of the same article presents mandatory guidelines for learning European languages, with emphasis on English, French, and Portuguese, knowing that the latter is considered an official language. From this perspective, we understand that, given these considerations, it is common to admit that the normative documents that regulate the functioning of the education system in Angola present cognitive dissonances regarding the inclusion of local cultures in school curricula, since the programs are structured from an exclusionary perspective that inferiorizes and discriminates against internal knowledge. In light of these comments, motivated by the dialogue between PA and his grandmother, we ask: what ideas can be produced in an interlocution between the inside and the outside? To answer this question, we will make a movement within the Ndzili spiral, aiming to promote dialogues with authors external to the Vangangela culture, but first, it is necessary to present a brief overview of the Vangangela people and the Ndzili methodology.

ABOUT THE VANGANGELA PEOPLE

The Vangangela people, whose name reflects the plural, while the singular is "Kangangela," referring to a person who is fluent in the Ngangela language, constitute one of the largest ethno-linguistic and cultural groups in Angola. These people originated in North and Central Africa, in regions such as Chad, Niger, Sudan, and the Upper Nile, where they lived as a homogeneous group. Due to the harsh conditions of the Sahara Desert, such as natural disasters and the rising cost of living, the Vangangela were forced to migrate in search of better conditions. During their migration, they settled near the great African lakes, where they developed skills in arts, agriculture, and metallurgy, promoting economic advancements and strengthening their sense of community.

This vast, cumulative process that gives rise to the knowledge and experiences of the Vangangela people, in their contact with Nature over time, solidifies the etymological origin of the word "Ngangela," deriving from the root "Nganga," which means "knower of the secrets of Nature." Originally, the term had a positive connotation, associated with individuals with special knowledge, capable of curing diseases, preventing natural disasters, protecting in battles, and resisting persecution. However, over time it acquired a negative connotation, influenced by the malevolent intentions of certain members of the community.

The Vangangela people initially presented themselves as a fairly homogeneous group; however, from the 13th and 14th centuries onwards, the group disintegrated into different subgroups. Some of them migrated to Angola, occupying various regions, including the Upper Zambezi, Kwandu-Kuvangu, Moxico, Bié, and Huila. Each subgroup settled in specific areas with diverse climatic conditions and organized themselves into groups that varied according to the region. The aforementioned subgroups include Ngangela Mpengo, Cisokola, Maxaka, Katoko, Nyemba, Nkangala, Mbwela, Luchaze, Lwimby, and Ngondyelo, distributed across various provinces and municipalities of Angola, such as Cuando-Cubango, Moxico, Bié, Huambo, Cunene, and Huila. Each subgroup developed its own cultural and economic characteristics, while maintaining the essence of its ancestry.

In light of the above, the resilience and adaptability of the Vangangela people stand out, as they managed to preserve their cultural identity while integrating into new territories, even in the face of historical and natural adversities.

NDZILI METHODOLOGY

Ndzili or Vongo, as a representation of the world and the organization of life of the Vangangela people, takes the form of a spiral. It is a methodology that teaches being and existing in the world in movement, amidst energies that regenerate from within. As a philosophical and cultural expression, it carries a relevant meaning, translating the basic knowledge of the culture for the organization of life, which is strengthened in diversity, that is, in interaction with peoples of other cultures. The logic of Ndzili, central to the methodology of this article, derives from the Ngangela term meaning "internal energy." This energy is seen as an essential movement that nourishes the strength and vigor of the Vangangela culture. This energy proposes the movement of cultural forces from an "inside" to an "outside," respecting differences and promoting intercultural dialogue. In this sense, this work uses this spiral to intertwine parts of narrative dialogues between the author and his grandmother with ideas from external authors such as Michel Foucault, Ubiratan D'Ambrosio, Agostinho Neto, and Dom José Manuel Imbamba.

Given that the concept of Ndzili is deeply rooted in the culture, reflecting the potential of its practices to establish connections both internally and externally within the community. Its main aspects include:

1. **Spiral Movement:** The methodology develops from the spiral movement of Ndzili, which connects two fundamental dimensions: the "inside" (represented by the dialogue between the author and his grandmother) and the "outside" (represented by external ideas such as those of Michel Foucault and Dr. Antônio Agostinho Neto).
2. *Relationship with Culture:* Ndzili emphasizes that the energy and vigor of culture should originate from the inner core to engage with the external world, without one dimension being a referential identity for the other. This approach respects otherness and seeks to promote coexistence between different ways of being and thinking.
3. **Vital Hybridity:** Ndzili emphasizes the position of "vital hybridity," as a place that allows for movement between academic space and culture. This intermediary space enables the articulation of cultural practices with academia, valuing both scientific knowledge and ancestral wisdom.

4. **Narrative and Dialogical Format:** Ndzili is explored through narratives that incorporate the cultural practices of the Vangangela people, using a "narrative format" to recreate the speech and ideas of the research participants. This method seeks to bring local knowledge to life.
5. **Dialogue Between Inside and Outside:** The concept of Ndzili is used to mediate the dialogue between cultural knowledge and formal academic knowledge. This encounter makes it possible to think about a school and an educational system more aligned with the cultural and historical specificities of the Vangangela people.
6. **Epistemological and Ontological Resistance:** The logic of Ndzili promotes a process of resistance to Western forms of epistemological domination, encouraging teachers and students to value their local knowledge and to position themselves as protagonists in the educational process.

Figure 3- Ndzili Spiral in Dialogical Movement



Source: Private.

CONNECTING THE INSIDE WITH THE OUTSIDE: ANGOLAN SCHOOLS AS PRODUCERS OF CULTURALLY REFUGEE BODIES

Culturally Refugee Bodies? How and Why? Perhaps questions like these may, at some point, cross the mind of one of the readers of this text, if we do not present a detailed explanation on the subject in question. Therefore, we will dedicate some time to presenting, in the following paragraphs, a reflection on Angolan schools as producers of refugee bodies from subjugated cultures to the hegemonic culture legitimized and acclaimed by the schools. In this sense, we begin with a succinct approach to the idea of the body, according to the philosopher Michel Foucault, as a backdrop for the discussion carried out in this section, fundamentally on the role of the school, traversed by power relations, in repressing the differences inherent in the most varied cultures that sustain the Angolan ethno-linguistic mosaic. Following this, we present some ideas from Ubiratan D'Ambrosio, Agostinho Neto, and Dom José Imbamba. The ideas of Agostinho Neto, considered the founder of the Angolan nation, relate to the political sense of resistance to colonialism, present in one of the passages of his poetic work "Farewell to the Hour of Departure".

As mentioned earlier, the meaning related to the concept of body, as assumed in this study, finds support in the thought of the aforementioned philosopher, who understands it as that which is prone to a process of subjectivation inherent in a field of meanings that includes: "conversion to oneself, a return to the same place, residing in oneself, where the idea of a whole movement of existence by which one turns back upon oneself is at stake" (Foucault, 1997, p. 123).

Within the scope of the various approaches to the body and its relationships, which have been the subject of studies led by this philosopher, this article pays particular attention not only to the idea of the body as an element subject to certain transformations in obedience to a structure or regime of power, but also to the conception related to the "gaze" at a body, subject to marks sustained by cultural vision, beliefs, traditions, and customs. It is worth noting that the meaning of the "gaze" referred to here transcends the limits of its semantic field, running parallel to the thought of Rodrigues (2003) who, inspired by the writings of Foucault, stated the following: "every gaze is an 'interpretation', a position, a place of glimpse, a place of power" (p. 112).

Following this line of thought, Foucault's studies lead us to understand that the body is an "interpretation" that is not independent of a certain perspective; it has no end or value in itself, as it depends, to a large extent, on the place in which it is situated (Foucault, 1981).

According to Rodrigues (2003), the body does not have interpretative autonomy over itself, thus depending on the interpretation of the "other." In line with Foucault's ideas, this translates into a certain power relationship between the "body" and interpretation, with a clear advantage for the interpretation of the "other." The term power mentioned here is grounded in Foucault's understanding (1981), when he defines its exercise as "the capacity that the subject has to direct the actions of the 'other' according to his own interest" (p. 113).

In general terms, according to studies developed by the aforementioned author, conflicting perspectives in the formation of discourse about the body imply power relations. Subsequently, he emphasizes that such discourses, constitutive of meaning, generate "knowledge" which, in turn, forms "disciplines" that exert control over the body.

Thus, in line with the thinking attached to this article related to Angolan schools as producers of culturally refugee bodies, this discussion becomes relevant insofar as it helps us to articulate knowledge, power, and the body in school spaces, and to understand how the systems of differentiation that operate in this environment allow some to act upon others. It is not only about looking at how power is exercised in Angolan school institutions, with particular emphasis on those within the Vangangela sociocultural context, but also about questioning and understanding how, why, and from where these purposes emerge and how they are constructed to guide this exercise of power; what rationalities constitute the basis for the validation of knowledge and what process of transformation arises from there. This concern finds support in the understanding of the Ethnomathematics Program, as an epistemology, grounded in D'Ambrosio's (2001) vision of the knowledge cycle, which highlights the manifestations of how the knowledge, lifestyles, practices, and customs of certain cultural groups are captured by power structures for a filtering process on an intentional level and then returned to these cultures as a mechanism of social control and domination.

Thus, we take advantage of this discussion to analyze the educational character under the aegis of a sovereignty anchored in school curricula, which dictates rules and principles to which various bodies are subject, within the scope of so-called "disciplinary processes." Looking at it this way, it brings us back to Foucault's concept of the docile body.

[...] a body that can be subjected, that can be used, that can be transformed and perfected. The famous automata, on the other hand, were not only a way of illustrating the organism; they were also political puppets, reduced models of power: an obsession of Frederick II, a meticulous king of small machines, well-trained regiments, and long exercises. (Foucault, 1999, p. 118)

Thus, the body – when inserted into certain school spaces – becomes docile, which, under the influence of disciplinary processes, changes its registers, renouncing those from which it is conceived and which are seen "not only by the subject," but also by those who are part of its external environment, who analyze it and subject it to certain punishments. This docile body is frequently watched, analyzed, and controlled in a very subtle way in school spaces. This means that these bodies are prepared to follow certain rules and behavioral patterns defined by the school and disseminated through different instruments, such as, for example, the so-called "internal school regulations."

The aforementioned regulation encourages a series of training exercises for the body, aiming to lead it to undergo considerable transformations. This means that the body needs to exchange its original records, based on its cultural patterns, to adopt those accepted by the school institution. In this sense, it is emphasized that the body that goes through this process of renouncing its "natural self" for the "acquired self," in order to meet the demands established by the school, in a power relationship, is what we consider "culturally refugee," a product of the exercise of disciplinary powers through an education that seeks its subservience.

The term "refugee," as considered here, is not limited to the idea of forced population displacements due to economic, political, and sociocultural reasons. However, a reinterpretation of the term is offered, reflecting an idea anchored in the perspective of a docile body, where the subject is subjected to a forced decision that leads to the displacement of their way of being and existing in the world – the "natural self" – to the "acquired self," inherent in the hegemonic culture proclaimed by the school and constructed by power. This is a situation in which the school interferes with the subject's

cultural freedom, forcing them to stop being who they are and take refuge in who they are not, for fear of being inferiorized, punished, and rejected.

Taking a break from this approach, we present here an example that illustrates the previous description: In the Mumbué commune, a village belonging to the municipality of Chitembo, located in the province of Bié, Angola, people communicate using the Ngangela language, the main expressive indicator of the Ngangela culture. In this region, the people consider cultural education their greatest asset, which determines the quality of their knowledge production and philosophies of life, shared through the Ngangela language. In this sense, everything a child learns in the family, in friendship circles, and in the community is articulated through this language. But when the child goes to school, they are forced to learn their lessons using Portuguese. Therefore, during class, due to the difficulty of mastering Portuguese, it is common for the child to mix Portuguese with their mother tongue. As a result of this action, it is common for the teacher to shout at the child, forbidding them from speaking their mother tongue again in the classroom. This action, in addition to destroying the greatest institutional reserve of the culture, reveals marks of violence.

Thus, the child returns home sad and completely inferior. Their relationship with their parents begins to be affected, as they start to look down on everything their father teaches them, because such teachings are not accepted in the school environment. To avoid experiencing the shame of inferiority and rejection again, they "give up" everything from their own culture to learn the ways of life transmitted by the school. Therefore, they take refuge from their silenced "natural self" in the acclaimed world of the school. Based on this example, we ask: what ideas did the school transmit to this child, taking into account the customs, beliefs, ways of life, and traditional patterns of their families and culture?

Returning to the previous approach, it is important to state that this system, linked to the functioning of school institutions and permeated by power relations, motivated Foucault to establish certain parallels between the functioning of prisons in the modern age and that of schools and the armed forces.

Because of these characteristics of micropowers, Foucault looks to the organization of prisons in the modern age for a model of the functioning of contemporary society. This is the "carceral" model, which establishes a series of disciplinary devices aimed at "re-educating" the unpredictable and deviant body of the delinquent, so that it becomes a productive body for society. The objective of the prison is no longer simply to punish, but mainly to educate and shape the prisoner's body through a series of disciplinary norms. Now, these same disciplinary norms are present in schools, the armed forces, and hospitals. These are the most evident examples, because in reality, disciplinary normative power is diffused throughout society (Rodrigues, 2003, p. 116).

It is worth noting that, shifting Foucault's comparison between school and prison to the reality of Angolan schools in the Vangangela context, it is possible to understand that these schools offer conditions for surveillance and punishment. This surveillance and punishment are left to the care of the "so-called on-duty coordinators." On the other hand, if prisons re-educate bodies with certain indecent behaviors regarding socially established norms, schools re-educate in the sense that bodies are molded according to the interests of the dominant class. This implies transformations embodied in renunciations and the adoption of new ethical values.

The school is presented as a factory or machine for producing a standard type of subject, as if everyone who enters is different from each other, but those who manage to leave are as if they were all the same. Those who do not fit the mold leave through another gate that is not the path to university professionalization, well-being, culture, and power (Osorio, 2017, p. 17).

In light of these ideas, it becomes recurrent to deepen reflections based on the works of D'Ambrosio (2001), with the aim of highlighting that most educational systems implemented in colonized countries tend to perpetuate the operational patterns established by the colonizers. A possible justification for this phenomenon lies in the systematic nature of the colonial method, which strategically seeks to suppress the manifestations of the conquered group regarding the claim to its autonomy. In this context, the colonial logic is operationalized through the subalternization, marginalization, and devaluation of the culture of the dominated peoples, resulting in the weakening of their cultural roots, as well as the disconnection from their historical ties and their own historicity.

According to the aforementioned author, the suppression of the history of cultures considered subaltern results in the annulment of traditional patterns, as well as the ways and forms of life of these societies, notably the devaluation of mother tongues. In this context of cultural domination, subjugated cultures become vulnerable to hegemonic cultures, leading to the extinction or replacement of survival and transcendence strategies inherent to non-dominant cultures. With the independence processes of these countries, the governmental structures responsible for social, economic, political, and cultural management adopt models inspired by the practices of the colonizer. In this scenario, autochthonous cultural roots are frequently rejected or neglected, configuring a situation in which the absence of deep identity connections weakens the capacity for resistance of subaltern societies in the face of external pressures. By rejecting their own cultural elements, dominated groups begin to perceive the ways of life and values of the colonizer as ideal standards. This process culminates in the internalization of such models and the consolidation of a relationship of dependence and subordination to the dominant power. (D'Ambrosio, 2001)

According to the aforementioned author, this dependence and domination takes shape in school systems from the moment processes begin to be conducted through a curriculum organized as a reflection of national priorities and the interests of power structures. Thus, schools are configured as institutions that promote a fulfilled, promising, and prosperous life for members of society and, therefore, welcome children, young people, and adults from various cultures, on the condition that they meet the requirements established in the selection criteria for school access. In this context, one of the fundamental criteria becomes mastery of the language legitimized by power and acclaimed by the school. Students who speak other native languages begin to speak less in the school context for fear of being labeled or categorized as those who deviate from the official language.

Faced with this process of epistemological and ontological domination, conducted by Angolan schools, a sense of revolt emerges, albeit in a tenuous field, and reflects part of the dialogue established with PA's grandmother, which is recalled here: "You can't forget your language, the language you speak is foreign, what is ours is ours and you can't despise it. I get very sad nowadays because children no longer want to learn what is part of our culture, because they think that's a habit of fools." In this sense, the force of resistance and struggle takes shape within us, aware that combating epistemological and

ontological domination from the knowledge of Western scientific reference is to use the weapons of the dominator to fight against their process of domination. Therefore, how can we free ourselves from the "complex arsenal that sprouted from the colonial bosom?" (Fanon, 2008, p. 45).

EXISTENCE

The perspective of resistance assigns extreme political responsibility to the application of ideas linked to the intentions of this research, not only by focusing on lines of force leading to the recovery of intercultural education in the context in question, especially in teacher training, but also by examining curricula, problematizing them, and generating new questions. This vision leads us to assume a commitment anchored in the vision of political resistance of Agostinho Neto, considered the first Angolan president, against the colonizer, reflected in his poetic work, as we read in one of the passages of his poem entitled "Farewell to the Hour of Departure".

[...] My mother... you taught me to wait, just as you waited during difficult times.

But life killed that mystical hope within me.

I no longer expect anything; I am the one who is expected.

It's me, Mother.

We, your children, are your hope.

parties for a faith that nourishes life. (Neto, 1979, pp. 9-10, author's emphasis).

Looking at the aforementioned poem, with particular emphasis on the phrase "I no longer wait, I am the one for whom one waits," the author's emphatic stance is evident, amidst his wordplay. Such wordplay reflects a desire to urge the Angolan nation to renounce its dependence on being led by the thinking, knowledge, and actions of "the other," aiming to assume autonomy and leadership in articulating knowledge that engages with the local context, regarding economic, social, cultural, and political practices that contribute to the development of Mother Angola.

The same reinterpretation can be framed within the phrase "hope is us, your children," in which the author expresses his feeling of belonging to the homeland, awakening in each Angolan the idea that the responsibility lies with changing processes at all levels and social sectors, especially education, as well as establishing a prosperous society that embraces innovation, shares visions, but preserves its ethos, which allows not only for maintenance but also for cultural enhancement. This measure depends solely on Angolans in their combined efforts with external actions that emerge from those who love Angola and fight for its dignity.

According to Imbamba (2010), the significant and challenging cultural crisis permeating Angolan society, with its profound impact, emerges as a consequence of social, economic, and political transformations that especially affect institutions recognized as legitimate and responsible for the formation of Angolan citizens. Among these institutions, schools stand out as privileged spaces for the dissemination of ideas and patterns that reflect hegemonic forces, often detached from the authentic values and customs of the Angolan people. This formative process, while responding to the dynamics of globalization, compromises cultural identity by weakening the spiritual and social foundations of society, elements indispensable to the preservation of its essence and uniqueness.

In this context, for the aforementioned author, resistance involves the essential reflection on the intrinsic relationship between culture and humanity. The absence of culture in an individual characterizes them as a being devoid of authenticity, given that culture constitutes a specific way of being and existing. Human beings, being the only ontological subject of culture, also become its object and purpose. Thus, culture is an essential element for the manifestation of the unity and diversity inherent in human existence, consolidating its intersubjectivity and social character.

According to Imbamba (2010), historicity and human nature find their expression in culture, and it is through culture that human beings achieve the full realization of their condition as persons. However, when formative actions are subordinated to the uniformizing and universalizing demands of globalization, a cultural erasure occurs that compromises the humanity of peoples, transforming them into entities devoid of vitality and singularity. For the Angolan people, culture transcends the mere practical dimension; it represents the essence of collective life, giving form, cohesion, and identity to a society.

A society without culture becomes an aggregate of disconnected individuals, held together only by circumstantial needs.

In short, Angolan culture, as an expression of a spiritual way of being, humanizes society and defines its historical uniqueness. When a society submits to the disruptive effects of globalization and loses its cultural identity, it becomes artificial and alienated from its own humanity. In this sense, the scientific commitment to rethinking the Angolan people in the 21st century must prioritize the valorization of ideas and principles that foster unity in diversity, promoting the historical and cultural protagonism of the nation. We cannot remain inert or conform to the patterns imposed by hegemonic civilizational dynamics, which aim to mold citizens according to external interests. On the contrary, we must reclaim our role in building a future rooted in our traditions, values, and history. (Imbamba, 2010)

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

This article critically examines the role of Angolan schools in the production of “culturally refugee bodies,” highlighting the underlying power relations that condition students' subjectivity from a colonizing perspective. Based on a dialogue between the author and his grandmother, as well as a theoretical approach supported by authors such as Michel Foucault, Agostinho Neto, and Ubiratan D'Ambrosio, this analysis revealed that the Angolan educational system, while formally oriented towards valuing national culture, is profoundly marked by Eurocentric cultural hegemony.

By adopting the logic of Ndzili as a methodological foundation, it was possible to establish an interdimensional dialogue between the "inside," represented by local cultural experiences, and the "outside," symbolized by external ideas and the prevailing educational apparatus. This approach allowed us to understand how the mechanisms of epistemological domination are reproduced in schools through curricula that prioritize standardization and cultural uniformity, marginalizing local knowledge and practices. Ndzili, as an expression of cultural resistance, emerges as an alternative for the revitalization of local cultures and the promotion of an educational space that values plurality.

The data presented, corroborated by dialogue with the author's grandmother, indicate that schools in Angola not only act as spaces for the reproduction of hegemonic knowledge, but also as instruments of social regulation that, through disciplinary relations, transform the subject's body into an element subservient to the dominant cultural paradigm. This dynamic reinforces the silencing of subaltern cultural voices and the delegitimization of local traditions, promoting a form of education that alienates the subject from their ancestral identity. These findings align with Foucault's reflections on the body as a field of meanings and an object of power, reiterating that the school acts as a disciplinary space that normalizes and hierarchizes subjects based on hegemonic interests.

Despite the legal advancements promoted through regulations such as the Law of Guidelines and Bases of the Education and Teaching System, it was found that these measures still present significant gaps regarding the effective inclusion of local knowledge in the school curriculum. The apparent intention to promote respect for cultural diversity is overshadowed by the predominance of Eurocentric content, as demonstrated by the curricular structure that grants only 20% of space to local contributions, while 80% of the content reflects external interests.

Epistemological and ontological resistance therefore emerges as an imperative for transforming this scenario. Such resistance is not limited to a movement of cultural recovery, but must also articulate strategies that allow for the protagonism of local subjects in the construction of a more equitable and representative educational system. The recovery of mother tongues, ancestral knowledge, and traditional cultural practices must be incorporated as an integral part of a curriculum that engages with the history and diversity of the Angolan peoples.

As expressed in the poetry of Agostinho Neto, "hope is us"; overcoming the colonial dynamics in Angola depends on a collective mobilization that values local cultures as a living and essential heritage for building a truly intercultural and emancipatory education. It is necessary to rethink educational policies from a perspective of resistance, affirming local identities not as remnants of the past, but as fundamental bases for the future of Angola.

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