

Identity, Representativeness and Ancestry in Emicida's work *Amoras*

ARTICLE

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Abstract

This article is an excerpt from the course completion work for the Specialization in "Ethnic-Racial Relations: Public Policies, Diversity and Society" at the State University of Mato Grosso (UNEMAT). Through decolonial studies, the research presents a literary analysis of the book *Amoras* by rapper and writer Emicida. Using a qualitative approach, the research presents a bibliographical study based on the perspective of critical literary analysis proposed by Wellek and Warren (2003). The research makes use of a theoretical-methodological discussion around the construction of decolonial theory and opens up an invitation to discuss what anti-racist literature is. The work *Amoras* is analyzed according to three main categories: 1) identity, 2) representativeness and 3) ancestry. The research showed that anti-racist literature is one of the ways of promoting a dialog that deconstructs racism and prejudice within the school environment.

Keywords: Decoloniality. Afro-Brazilian literature. Emicida. *Amoras*.

Identidade, Representatividade e Ancestralidade na obra *Amoras* de Emicida

Resumo

Este artigo é um recorte do trabalho de conclusão de curso da Especialização em "Relações Étnico-raciais: políticas públicas, diversidade e sociedade", realizada pela Universidade do Estado de Mato Grosso (UNEMAT). A pesquisa apresenta, por meio dos estudos decoloniais, uma análise literária do livro *Amoras*, de autoria do rapper e escritor Emicida. A partir da abordagem qualitativa, a pesquisa apresenta um estudo bibliográfico baseado na perspectiva de análise literária crítica proposta por Wellek e Warren (2003). A pesquisa vale-se de uma discussão teórico-metodológica em torno da construção da teoria decolonial e abre um convite para discussão sobre o que é a literatura antirracista. Diante disso, a obra *Amoras* é analisada a partir de três principais categorias: 1) identidade, 2) representatividade e 3) ancestralidade. Por meio da pesquisa, observou-se que a literatura antirracista é uma das formas de propiciar um diálogo que desconstrói o racismo e preconceito dentro do âmbito escolar.

Palavras-chave: Decolonialidade. Literatura Afro-brasileira. Emicida. *Amoras*.

1 Introduction

Afro-Brazilian literature has been gaining ground on the Brazilian scene with the growing discussion about how to implement Law 10.639/03 in the curricula of Brazilian schools. Literature has emerged as a way of approaching racial issues through the lens of historicity and culture, breaking with the colonial view (Brasil, 2003).

According to the authors Teixeira (2023) and Costa *et al.* (2022), Afro-Brazilian literature brings a different look to contemporary children's productions, portraying black characters as protagonists. In this sense, Afro-Brazilian literature is a possibility to tell and narrate stories with black characters in different contexts, portraying stories about the reality experienced by children, through different literary genres.

In light of this, this research aims to critically analyze the book *Amoras* by Emicida, in the light of decolonial studies in literature. This study is an excerpt from the course completion work for the Specialization in “Ethnic-Racial Relations: Public Policies, Diversity and Society”, carried out by the State University of Mato Grosso (UNEMAT) and supervised by Professor Gilmara Oliveira Gomes.

Decoloniality is a perspective that breaks with the standards imposed by coloniality and becomes a path towards deconstruction, resistance and criticism of modernity. Carvalho (2021, p. 31) evokes the proposition that decoloniality breaks with the view that there are hierarchically superior and inferior races, and that they must live under a structure of domination. In this sense, this study provokes an analysis that presents the black racial agenda as the protagonist and points to the relevance of studying literature through an Afrodiasporic lens.

2 Grounding anti-racist literature from the perspective of decoloniality

2.1 A brief contextualization of decoloniality

Among the main theorists of decolonial theory, we can cite authors such as Maldonado-Torres (2023), Mignolo (2014) and Quijano (2005), who reaffirm the need for

modern society to break with colonial power thinking and reaffirm the role of the subject and social groups. In their view, decoloniality refers to the need for a new political, economic, social and cultural project.

However, in order to understand decoloniality and decolonial thinking, it is first necessary to discuss the concept of “coloniality”. According to the studies of Mignolo (2014, p. 13), coloniality [...] is equivalent to a “colonial matrix or pattern of power”, which is a complex of relations that hides behind the rhetoric of modernity, which justifies the violence of coloniality.

Corroborating this thought, Quijano (2010, p. 74), in his study *Coloniality of Power and Social Classification*, defines coloniality as:

It strictly refers to a structure of domination/exploitation where the control of political authority, production resources and labor of a given population dominates another of different identity and whose headquarters are also located in another territorial jurisdiction. But it does not always or necessarily imply racist power relations.

Brazilian society, for example, expresses the false view that there is no racism, that Brazil is a plural country, characterized by a diversity of bodies, races and religions. However, what is preached in everyday life are racist relationships that are reproduced and manifested in the workplace, in schools and in other spaces. In other words, Brazil is a racist country, as Nunes (2010) points out in his article *Racism in Brazil: attempts to disguise explicit violence*, in which he analyzes the origins of Brazilian racism through reflections on race relations after the end of slavery.

Today, a colonial view persists that points to a false racial democracy. However, based on decolonial studies, we can understand that this is a false reality, in contrast to what actually happens to black men and women in society on a daily basis. There are many crimes of racism and prejudice that occur daily on the Brazilian scene, highlighting the harsh reality experienced by black bodies.

To make sense of this, Schwarcz (1996, p. 55), in his book *Racial theories, a historical construction from the end of the 19th century: the Brazilian context*, uses a phrase

that summarizes this directly: “[...] every Brazilian feels like they are on an island of racial democracy, surrounded by racists on all sides”.

Corroborating this perspective, Quijano (2005, p. 117) states that there is a construction of power posed by a racial division of society, in which one of the fundamental axes of this pattern is:

[...] the social classification of the world's population according to the idea of race, a mental construction that expresses the basic experience of colonial domination and that has since permeated the most important dimensions of world power, including its specific rationality, Eurocentrism.

Coloniality puts black people in a place of subservience and subalternity, where they need to prove themselves on a daily basis, and this is something that is rooted in Brazilian culture and thought. For Café (2020a, p. 02) coloniality “is perceived in the persistent hierarchization between human beings, as well as in the classifications and stratifications that are imposed on their cultural and material productions”.

This thinking, as Café (2020a) points out, is also linked to the disqualification of the knowledge and intellectual and cultural production of the peoples who were enslaved. In other words, this idea is still being (re)produced today, which shows us that there is an “abyss that separates the cultural productions and knowledge of the colonizers from the knowledge of the colonized [...]” (Café, 2020a, p. 03).

In the light of what Café (2020), Mignolo (2014), Nunes (2010), Quijano (2005; 2010) and Schwarcz (1996) have said above, we can understand that colonialism has left deep marks on Brazil's formation process, which still persist today, something that is questioned in all areas (health, education, economics, politics, among others).

In addition, it should be noted that colonialism denied the knowledge of the colonized peoples in order to dominate their imaginary, and this was an essential process for the success of colonial domination of power. This process was able to gain strength due to the hierarchization and classification of races, ideologically determining who was superior and who was inferior (Café, 2020b).

The concept of colonialism, already presented in this text, is essential for us to understand the need for the critique brought about by decolonial studies and the decolonial turn. Decoloniality is characterized as an overcoming of everything that was imposed by Eurocentric epistemology and begins to take a look that distances the colonial character of racialized peoples. According to Carvalho (2021, p. 48), decoloniality:

[...] it does not consist of a new universal that presents itself as the true one, surpassing all previously existing ones; rather, it is another option. By presenting itself as an option, the decolonial opens up a new way of thinking that is disconnected from the chronologies constructed by the new epistemes or paradigms [...].

The critique brought by decoloniality helps us to analyze racism and prejudice in Brazil from the perspective that this is not a construction that is restricted to the national level, but is a global problem. At the same time, decoloniality takes into account the multiple knowledges linked to the pluralism of ideas and epistemological diversity. In this sense, the leading role is played by ancestral knowledge, African and indigenous culture, as well as social movements, drawing attention to the diversity that exists among the population (Café, 2020a; Maldonado-Torres, 2023).

For Café (2020b), one of the main challenges of decoloniality is to strengthen this idea of overcoming and breaking away from colonialism in a racist world that has subordinated the population, something that is defended by the anti-racist and Afro-diasporic movement, something that will be discussed in the next section.

2.2 Anti-racism: dialogues between anti-racist education and anti-racist literature

Basic education schools, in general, base their curricula on the guidelines of educational seeding instruments and take as a reference the identity and context of the community in which the institution is located. In this sense, the Common National Curriculum Base (BNCC), implemented in 2018, is a milestone for strengthening Brazilian educational principles, rights and conceptions. It is the fruit of dialogues that has been

established as a “national reference for the formulation of the curricula of the school systems and networks of the States, the Federal District and the Municipalities and the pedagogical proposals of the institutions” (Brasil, 2018).

Among the various guiding curricular principles is the valorization of the history of Africa and Afro-Brazilian and indigenous cultures, as described in Laws 10.639/03 and 11.645/08. According to the BNCC, this proposal should be implemented throughout the school year in actions involving identity, culture and ancestry.

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The appreciation of the history of Africa and Afro-Brazilian and indigenous cultures is highlighted not only because of the issue of slavery, but especially because it takes into account the history and knowledge produced by these populations throughout its duration. At the same time, the processes of inclusion/exclusion of these populations in the newly formed nations of Brazil and America throughout the 19th and 20th centuries are objects of knowledge (Brasil, 2018, p. 417).

However, the reality of schools is often far removed from what is set out in institutional proposals. In some cases, what is described in the documents is not reflected in the pedagogical practice of the school environment. Research by Silva (2019), Sales (2016) and Araújo (2021) reinforces the fact that the school is sometimes a place that (re)produces racism and prejudice.

Through a case study carried out by Silva (2019), entitled *Racism in the school environment: experiences of young high school students in the countryside in Belo Campo*, the author finds that, through the narratives/reports of young people from the periphery, most experience “acts of racism up close, witnessing such scenes, being spectators, victims or even aggressors, as stated in the interviews”. In the same way, the racial prejudice presented in the research is perceived both at school and in the social environment by the students.

In Sales's (2016, p. 44) course conclusion work, entitled *The challenges of effectively implementing Law 10.639/2003 in schools*, the author points out that there is no application of Law. 10.639/03, and that there needs to be “a dialog with all the actors

involved in the process”, because just pointing out the ethnic-racial theme in the pedagogical proposal does not guarantee effectiveness.

Araújo's (2021) research, *Literature and structural racism: a proposal for working in schools with the book My life as a girl*, points to the fact that racism being present within schools is a factor of exclusion and silencing among students. However, the study presents a proposal on how to “alleviate the damage of racism in the lives of black people, and that literature is a way to foster such discussions”, presenting significant results.

In view of this, we understand that, based on the analysis of the contexts presented by these empirical studies (Silva, 2019; Sales, 2016; Araújo, 2021), it is necessary to understand that education “is essential to establish the necessary changes in this system, with anti-racist pedagogical practices, inclusion and respect for differences, public policies that promote citizenship” (Silva, 2020, p. 14).

It should be noted here that the studies do not represent the reality of all Brazilian schools, but they are real data from real black people who have their bodies marked by racism and prejudice within basic education schools. Proposing pedagogical actions that break with these racist stereotypes is necessary in order to create a welcoming space for students in schools, whether through the arts, culture, sport, among others (Sales, 2005).

To do this, the school curriculum needs to be decolonized, so that an educational model can be devised that addresses a decolonial, anti-racist vision. One of the ways of proposing a dialog on racial issues starts from an anti-racist perspective in basic education schools, extending to all areas. Anti-racist education is defined by Gomes (2017) as “an education that includes a curriculum based on the historical memory of the struggles of the black population and attitudes and postures to combat prejudice, discrimination and racist practices”. In the same vein, Cruz (2022, p. 24) points out that:

To discuss anti-racist education is essentially to discuss the historical process and the school's silence on the dynamics of perpetuating or overcoming racism. Implementing an anti-racist education precedes an anti-racist practice at school. And this practice will only come about if we listen to what the students say.

Anti-racist education represents an approach that advocates cultural knowledge and gives multiple meanings to pedagogical practices at school. With this, the school understands that anti-racism is a movement that reinforces the struggle and fight against violence against black people, promoting dialog between educational actors (management, teachers, students and the school community).

Given the above about anti-racism in the educational context, we took as a point of reflection what would be the ways of proposing actions in everyday school life aimed at reducing racism and prejudice. Based on the decolonial perspective, this article uses anti-racist literature as a form of intervention in the school environment and as a tool for promoting ethnic-racial knowledge, through the studies and research of Bassete, Santana and Batista (2023), Silva and Alcaraz (2021) and Teixeira (2023).

Literature, then, takes pride of place and adopts a fundamental role in the teaching-learning process as a “pedagogical tool for an anti-racist education, as it allows students to explore different literary genres, i.e. short stories, chronicles, novels and narratives about racial themes”. In addition, anti-racist literature can be explored in a variety of pedagogical ways at school, including the reading of books, the production of books by students, storytelling and the reading, analysis and recitation of various literary works and genres (Bassete; Santana; Batista, 2023, p. 207).

2.3 The author and his work: *Amoras* by Emicida

After presenting some works with an anti-racist theme, we open up the space for anti-racist teachings here, to present the work that is the protagonist of this research, *Amoras*, and its author, Emicida. The stories below were taken from excerpts of interviews and articles about the singer for the communication portals Meteoro Brasil in 2020, Extra in 2019, the interview program Programa do Jô in 2010 and an advertising article in the newspaper Folha de São Paulo in 2020.

Figure 1 – Emicida



Source: Dicionário Cravo Albin, 2021.

Emicida is one of Brazil's greatest rappers and one of the most powerful voices in the appreciation of black culture. Leandro Roque de Oliveira was born in Jardim Fontales, in the North Zone of São Paulo, on August 17, 1985, the third of four siblings. His father, Miguel, was a DJ at black dances and tried to make a career out of it, but over time he couldn't find any more places to play, so he started working as a metalworker and then collecting scrap metal in the streets. His father was killed in a bar fight when Leandro was just 6 years old. During this period, his mother worked as a maid and had to raise the children alone, cleaning and surviving on a minimal budget, as presented in the video “Who is Emicida”, produced by the communication portal Meteoro Brasil on November 21, 2020.

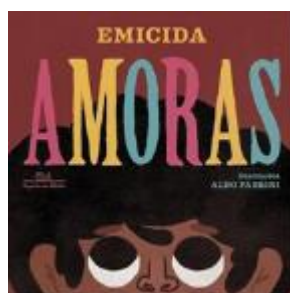
According to Folha de São Paulo (2020), Leandro was already known on the hip hop scene, as he took part in various MC battles (master of ceremonies), performing rhymes and improvisations. It was in this context that his stage name “Emicida” was born, a combination of the words “MC+Homicida”, as he won all the rhyme battles at the time. It was the recording of the song *Triunfo* that brought him to national prominence in 2009.

In 2015, the rapper released the album *Sobre Crianças, Quadris, Pesadelos e Lições de Casa*, on the Laboratório Fantasma label, under license from Sony Music, aimed at children. In 2016, he was nominated for a Latin Grammy for Best Urban Music Album. Among the 14 tracks on the album was the song *Amoras*, which, with just 56 seconds, narrated, through an engaging melody, his relationship with his eldest daughter, also

bringing some discussions about Afro-Brazilian culture, religion and ancestry, according to information published in an article published by the Extra portal on November 14, 2019.

In 2018, at the invitation of publisher Companhia das Letrinhas, she transformed the song released in 2015, *Amoras*, into her first children's book, which was given the same name (Silva, 2020).

Figure 2 – Book *Amoras*



Source: Emicida. São Paulo: Companhia das Letrinhas, 2018.

The book *Amoras* delves into issues that were already presented in its namesake song, such as: black identity, representativeness, ancestry, historicity and Afro-Brazilian culture, which will be presented and analyzed in more detail in the next section on the methodological paths of this research.

3 Methodology

This article is qualitative in nature, focusing on the presentation of a bibliographical study based on a critical analysis of the work *Amoras*, by Emicida. The choice of the qualitative approach was due to the fact that it corroborates the in-depth interpretation of the cultural and symbolic representations found in the literary work.

According to Minayo (1994, p. 21), the qualitative approach is based on the principle of a contextualized analysis, which presents a more direct contact with the field of study, motivated by “aspirations, beliefs, values and attitudes, which corresponds to a deeper space of relationships, processes and phenomena”. As Gil (2002, p. 17) points out,

research can be defined as a “[...] rational and systematic procedure that aims to provide answers to the problems that are proposed”.

In this way, exploratory scientific searches were made in information sources, databases on specialized scientific sites and platforms, as well as in banks of lato sensu and stricto sensu postgraduate programs, in addition to Brazilian and international journals, to form the body of the article. We then selected the main theoretical and empirical research documents dealing with the book *Amoras* and anti-racist literature to support the analysis of the research.

According to Fonseca (2002, p. 32), bibliographical research is carried out:

[...] based on a survey of theoretical references that have already been analyzed and published in written and electronic media, such as books, scientific articles and websites. Any scientific work begins with a bibliographical survey, which allows the researcher to find out what has already been studied on the subject. However, there are scientific studies that are based solely on bibliographical research, looking for published theoretical references with the aim of gathering information or prior knowledge about the problem to which the answer is being sought.

The search for study materials will be relevant for analyzing the object of study in the research, since we will be using the theoretical contribution produced by other authors who have addressed perspectives that are close to or of the same nature as anti-racist and cultural analysis. Therefore, “we know that bibliographical research is of fundamental importance for the researcher to be able to base their object of study” (Teixeira, 2023, p. 14).

The second stage involves literary analysis, in which the work *Amoras* was analyzed from the literary critical perspective of Wellek and Warren (2003), based on two main axes: anti-racist and cultural studies. The work *Amoras* was divided into three categories of analysis, in which narrative elements (written and visual) were critically analyzed through five categories:

1) Identity - analyzed through the research of Silva (2018), Stuart Hall (2006; 2016) and Thomaz Tadeu da Silva (2014), aiming to understand what identity is in a general

context, and what black identity represents in today's society, intertwining with the identity discourse proposed by the book.

2) Representativeness and 3) Ancestry - were analyzed based on the research of Anderson Ribeiro Oliva (2003), Castro (2001), Prandi (2022), Santos (2009), São Bernardo (2018), so that we can understand the construction of these two concepts within the work *Amoras*, as they discuss from the theoretical basis of decolonial studies.

In light of the above, the analysis consisted of presenting excerpts and clippings from the book, discussing the central ideas presented by the author Emicida. The excerpts were organized into three categories (identity, representativeness and ancestry) and, for the purposes of final considerations, a relationship was made between all the categories, weaving together the theoretical and empirical studies that were the basis for understanding this research (Wellek; Warren, 2003).

4 Results and discussion

In this section, we present the analysis carried out on Emicida's book *Amoras*, from the methodological perspective of critical literary analysis. This article uses the approach of studies and research by Wellek and Warren (2003). The analyses were carried out separately within the three categories of analysis, taking up the scientific productions that make up the theoretical and methodological foundation of this research.

4.1 Identity

The discussion of identity is presented in the book with direct reference to the relationship between the identity of the book's main character (Emicida's daughter) as a child and her identity as a black child. Right from the opening pages of the book, the author makes the following statement: “there is no better stage for a thought that dances than the inside of a child's head”, as shown in Figure 3:

Figure 3 - The Child



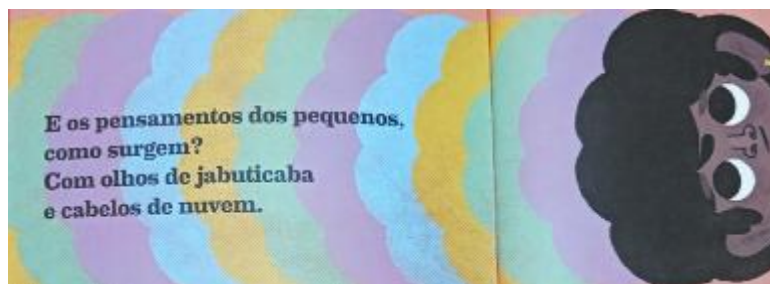
Source: Emicida. São Paulo: Companhia das Letrinha, 2018.

The excerpt reinforces the fact that children have an identity that reflects their childhood imagination, which presents a different vision of reality, which differs from that of adults. At the same time, this identity is a social construction that cannot be separated from their identity as a black child. In the excerpt in question, Emicida (2018) takes on a positive discourse about the identity of black children, and this is an essential factor “for black children to positively construct their identity, taking pride in their racial belonging” (Silva, 2018, p. 64).

When discussing black identity in childhood, we need to take into account notions that go beyond phenotypical characteristics, focusing on identities that “are constructed by culture and are contested in particular forms in the contemporary world - in a world that can be called post-colonial”, as Tadeu da Silva (2014, p. 25) points out.

We can therefore understand that this notion of identity overcomes prejudiced standards and opens up space for valuing the children's ethnic belonging, as presented in the excerpt: “with jabuticaba eyes and cloud hair”.

Figure 4 – Cloud hair



Source: Emicida. São Paulo: Companhia das Letrinhas, 2018.

The importance and “decolonized sensibility” of the author's treatment of the black character's hair is evident, comparing it to a cloud, an element of nature that, in the popular imagination, is considered soft, which goes against the narrative of curly hair as “hard” or “bad” (Hall, 2006, p. 318).

For Hall (2016), there are standards that are imposed on black people in terms of their identity, stereotypes that are reaffirmed on a daily basis by a racist society that inferiorizes them. In this context, the relevance of Emicida's (2018) production stands out, which presents a black child who is experiencing experiences in a scenario that places her in a place of beauty, which does not reproduce racism and prejudice.

Emicida (2018), in addressing the characteristics of the character, reaffirms Afrodiasporic thinking, which understands the black body as plural, full of meanings and history, which goes beyond the slavery of the African diaspora period.

A highlight of *Amoras* is the ending of the story, in which the character, when talking to her father and receiving his teachings, is compared to blackberries, fruits that are “black and sweet”. The girl, then, in a process of recognizing her identity, understands that she is also black like the fruit, and that this is a good thing (Emicida, 2018).

Figure 5 – I'm black too!



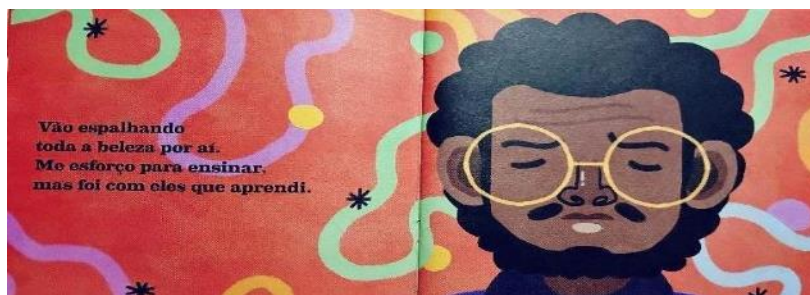
Source: Emicida. São Paulo: Companhia das Letrinha, 2018.

In Figure 5, you can see the look of joy on the girl's face, and her saying “Daddy, that's good, because I'm black too” reinforces the sense that she recognizes herself as a black child, giving this a positive look through a narrative that is part of the little girl's imagination (Silva, 1999). This identification as “black” comes from an ancestral identification, which has been produced by her father by showing the beauty of her skin, hair and features (Silva, 2018).

4.2 Representativeness

Representativeness is portrayed in the work through the presence and protagonism of black characters, including Emicida himself, who appears as a conscious narrator, and his little daughter, as well as other black personalities. In Figure 6, the author Emicida is portrayed, and he says “I make an effort to teach, but it was from them that I learned”. In this excerpt, he refers to himself as a positive representation for his daughter, highlighting the exchange of knowledge between them.

Figure 6 – Teaching



Source: Emicida. São Paulo: Companhia das Letrinha, 2018.

Representativeness in children's books is a key point for black children to feel visible and protagonists, as this is a situation that is not always shown in the children's books and textbooks they find in schools. In this sense, Silva (2018, p. 63) points out that “not all black children feel represented” in children's literature. In view of this, more books need to be produced that contain stories about black characters aimed at children.

Often, the stories that are produced in books bring a vision that distances us from the true meaning and importance of the black presence. Oliva (2020) stresses that books need to start from representations, and that these can be constructed in a positive and conscious way, because representing black people as miserable is far removed from the diversity that exists in society in general.

We can say that when black characters are portrayed in narratives, this is based on a vision of suffering, of a person living in misery on their continent, while white European people are portrayed as saviors of other nations. This view is also commonly associated with the view of the African continent as a place of misery and scarcity.

Oliva (2020, p. 23), in his work *Lições sobre a África: colonialismo e racismo nas representações sobre a África nos manuais escolares de história em Portugal (1990-2005)*, poses some pertinent questions: “Which stories are told? Which societies are the protagonists of their stories? Which perspectives should be employed in these representations of human experiences over time? Who are the producers of these narratives?”.

4.3 Ancestry

To close the categorical analysis, in this topic, “Ancestry” takes shape from the scientific productions of Castro (2001), Prandi (2022), Santos (2009), São Bernardo (2018) and Vadala (2020).

In Emicida's work (2018), ancestry is presented in two different ways, but both refer to the construction of knowledge and lived experiences that are part of the historical-social construction of subjects, and which is related to identity, as Santos (2009) points out. Ancestry is defined as:

[...] a category that allows us to understand deterritorialized territories that, by reconstructing themselves (like the black experience in Brazil), build other territories capable of suspending the temporality and linearity of a progressive and univocal history; or, like indigenous history, whose very existence and resistance determine the place of erasure of a nation that pretends to be homogeneous (São Bernardo, 2018, p. 231).

First, ancestry is addressed as an invitation to the children reading the book to learn about religious diversity and respect for cultures, and brings visibility to African and Afro-Brazilian myths and religiosity, based on the Orixás, as shown in Figure 7:

Figure 7 – The Orixá



Source: Emicida. São Paulo: Companhia das Letrinha, 2018.

In this excerpt, the author presents an ancestral deity: “Obatalá, also called Orixanlá and Oxalá, the creator of humanity”, a deity that has the representation of a god (Prandi, 2022, p. 290). This deity is worshipped within the African matrix religions, which are so called because they are religions that worship the Orixás. In Brazil, the worldview brought by the enslaved during the African diaspora spread, and with it Afro-Brazilian religions were created, the best known of which are Candomblé and Umbanda (2001).

In *Amoras*, the author does not deal with the subject from an intolerant point of view, but rather talks about the relationship and importance of knowledge of religious ancestry (Emicida, 2018), considering ancestral knowledge to be an integral part of the culture and identity of black ethnic belonging.

Ancestry is also presented through the inclusion of symbols of resistance and struggle of the black Brazilian population, reinforcing the symbolism that we are formed by a history that needs to be told, as we can see in Figure 8.

Figure 8 – Zumbi dos Palmares



Source: Emicida. São Paulo: Companhia das Letrinha, 2018.

The picture above deals with one of the most influential black personalities in Brazilian culture: Zumbi dos Palmares, who “was the leader of the Quilombo dos Palmares, a free community formed by slaves who escaped from farms” (Vadala, 2020, p. 10). By addressing Zumbi in the book, the author brings children closer to knowledge about history and the process of struggle fought during the period of enslavement in Brazil, something that is sometimes silenced and treated erroneously by some authors.

5 Conclusions

Bringing this knowledge into children's books means giving visibility to knowledge that needs to be shared and narratives that need to be explored more in schools. Santos (2009, p. 144) states that “it is through these narratives that ancestry lives in us, even if you have never been to Africa, Africa lives and reaches each one of us in cultural fragments spread through music, books, films and all kinds of art”. Ancestry “is lived from the singularity of the experience of the body and myth from the culture of African matrix” (São Bernardo, 2018, p. 231).

From the analysis of Emicida's *Amoras*, through the categories of Identity, Representativeness and Ancestry, we can understand that the author is not just presenting a book with beautiful images and black protagonists, but a story that contributes to children's cultural enrichment. In his book, narratives are constructed that address Afro-Brazilian history and culture in a children's context, packed with rhyming verses that at the same time encourage reflection on black Brazilian identity, the role of black representation and the ancestry that makes up who we are and our stories as black men and women.

Through the words of Miranda and Assunção (2021, p. 13), we end this study by saying that Emicida's book *Amoras* has “a writing that constitutes and is constituted by the narrative that makes up the epistemic diversity in the field of decolonial thought, fostering new references, values, perspectives, subjectivities”.

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