

EDUCATION FOR CITIZENS OF THE WORLD WITH AFRICAN DESCENDANT IDENTITY: CASE EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION ANTONIA SANTOS, CARTAGENA DE INDIAS, COLOMBIA¹

Alejandrina Lago de Zota²
Colegio Mayor de Bolívar-Colombia
alejitzota@yahoo.com

Carmen Lago de Fernández³
Corporación Universitaria Rafael Núñez-Colombia
carmenlagodefernandez@yahoo.es

Diana Lago de Vergara⁴
Universidad de Cartagena. RUDECOLOMBIA-Colombia
dianalago20@yahoo.es

Reception: 15/04/2011
Evaluation: 09/07/2011
Acceptation: 29/05/2012
Reflectie Article
doi:10, 9757

SUMMARY

The ethnical education in Colombia is a space under construction in permanent challenges and bet to autonomy to equity and pertinence. The dimension of the intercultural education, in a country with roots in a mixture of races, constitutes a fundamental approach to build the dream of peace and civic coexistence.

From this thought, a group of academicians, members of the RUECA investigative group of the University of Cartagena, Colombia, is committed to the inquiry and alternative proposals for the curriculum, starting with the components and approaches that make possible an intercultural education.

¹ Análisis crítico de la implementación de las políticas de etnoeducación en las escuelas de Cartagena de Indias 2000-2008. Convocatoria de proyectos de Investigación de la vicerrectoría de Investigación de la Universidad de Cartagena con resolución No. 2547 DE 2008. Financia: Universidad de Cartagena.

² Magister in Education from the University of Cartagena SUE caribbean. Bachelor in Pre-School. Bachelor in Social Work. Specialist in Management of educational Centers. Specialist in Pedagogic Evaluation. Specialist in Personalized Education. Member of the RUECA Investigative group. Teacher of Colegio Mayor of Bolivar, Cartagena, Colombia.

³ Doctor in Initial and Ongoing formation of Professionals in Education and Educational Innovation. Magister in Philosophy and Educational Sciences. Specialist in Pedagogic Evaluation. Bachelor in Social Sciences. Teacher at the University Corporation Rafael Núñez, Cartagena, Colombia.

⁴ Doctor in Philosophy and Educational Sciences. Magister in Projects of Social Development. Specialist in Theories, Methods and Techniques of Social Investigation. Bachelor in Social Work. Director of RUECA Investigative Group (Red Universitaria Evaluación de la Calidad) Chapter Colombia. Director of Doctors Council (CADE) Universidad de Cartagena, Cartagena, Colombia.

Studies conducted by the Ministry of National Education of Colombia y and other investigative groups, agree to recognize Colombia as a multiethnic and multicultural country; however the contribution to the diaspora in the world is not a curricular benchmark for the school, because the impact of the culture, the folklore, the values, the beliefs, the practices, and pedagogical approaches are not recognized in the Institutional Educational Projects (PEI), which have gaps in their understanding from the point of view of the universal educational thought and the symbolism in the family and the community as interpretative and reproductive context of a culture.

This article is based on the context of the Afro-descendants in Colombia; its genesis, its focal point and socio-economic conditions of life in Cartagena de Indias, former market of black slaves. Everything, referenced in the stigma of the skin color, beliefs and practices that often differ from the contexts, approaches and curricular competencies.

INTRODUCTION

Colombia, as many other countries in the world, is involved in the quest for quality education, from its pillars and in accordance with the proposal of Paris 98, confirmed later in Dakar and subsequent world conferences and consolidated in the UNESCO conference in Paris (2009). These proposals are implemented and take different forms in the different countries according to the features of the objectives, and at the same time, of the subjects of education and the cultural environment they belong to, and tend to the apprenticeship of knowing, doing, being and coexistence through an inclusive education that impulse the human development.

Studies conducted by the Ministry of National Education (MEN) y and other investigative groups, agree to recognize Colombia as a multiethnic and multicultural with a varied geography that impacts the cultural sense in aspects such as beliefs, folklore, practices, and values. However, none of this has been significantly incorporated as curricular benchmarks for schools.

This multiculturalism is not unique to Colombia, nor is new. As expressed by Marin, R. (1992): “The multiplicity of cultures is as old as humanity itself. But today we have an acute sensitivity toward this fact that, from the point of view of education it becomes not only recognition, but the preparation to live in a world where the wealth of culture, is an awesome fact and a not insignificant risk”⁵.

The Colombian People is mostly conformed by a large miscegenation among indigenous, whites and Africans, but still exists some ethnic groups such as African-Colombian, that according to the 2005 census, are recognized as the 10,62% of the population. The 92 indigenous villages with a population of 3,435 people altogether and the gypsies (ROM) are the 0,01% of the population, they inhabit mainly the Andean region (Antioquia, Bogota, Santander and Boyacá). Toward these groups are mainly aimed ethnical education policies.

Pleaded no ethnic belonging 85.94% of the population. This however does not mean that some do not belong to the above groups.

⁵ Marín, R. “*Educación Multicultural e intercultural*” Ponencia publicada en las Memorias del Congreso de Educación Multicultural CEUTA, España, Granada, 1992.

The department of Bolivar where Cartagena is located, the poblational census from 2005, recorded the following figures:

Indigenous: 2,066 = 0,11%

ROM (gypsies): 911 = 0,05%

African-Colombians: 497.667 = 27,61%

No ethnic belonging: 1.301.650 = 72.22%

We will talk further about the African-Colombian population of Cartagena de Indias.

The recognition of this ethnic and cultural richness, which was only valued in the last decades of the 20th century, has oriented the new educational proposals. In this context, the ethnical education becomes a space that is built through permanent challenges and bets to autonomy, equity and pertinence.

The intercultural education in a country with roots in a mixture of races, constitutes a fundamental approach to build the dream of peace and civic coexistence.

From this thought, a group of academicians, members of the "University Net for Evaluation of Education Quality" (RUECA) investigative group of the University of Cartagena, Colombia, is committed to the inquiry and alternative proposals for the curriculum from different approaches, so they make possible an intercultural education, with African-descendant identity for Cartagena's population, and with features similar to those in the rest of the world. This need is detected in the observation, reflection and analysis of pedagogical practice en the different levels of the educational system, in the study of pedagogical approaches, in the Institutional Educational Projects (PEI) that are the navigation chart for the various educational institutions and will take them to the accomplishment of the projected Mission and Vision.

These components, nevertheless, have gaps in its proposals and comprehension, from the point of view of the universal pedagogic thought, added to a symbolic identity in the family and the community as interpretative and reproductive context of a culture, in this specific case, the African-descendants in Cartagena de Indias (Colombia).

The city of Cartagena de Indias was a former slave market and point of arrival and departure of the great fleet of galleons in the colonial years, whose importance nationally and internationally, has been fluctuating as it went from being the "Queen of the Sea" to an impoverished city in the first decades of the 20th century, such poor that one of the its most renowned poets, Luis Carlos Lopez, to express his love for the city wrote: "but already passed walled city your feuilleton age. The caravels are gone from your bay... but today full of stale sloppiness you can inspire the love that one feel for the old shoes".

However, in the last decades of the 20th century and beginning the 21st, the city has gotten back on track and once again has been recognized locally and abroad as the "Jewel" of Colombia. UNESCO has declared it as "World Heritage" because of its colonial and republican architecture within the old walled city (1.984).

But not only the physical environment has deserved recognition, but also the cultural environment, hence UNIESCO (2.005) has declared as *Intangible Heritage* the culture of the town San Basilio de Palenque, located nearby Cartagena City and closely related with this investigation and educational proposal, since most of the African-descendant living in Cartagena come from or have family ties in this runaway slave settlement.

1. Historical approach: genesis of the african-descendant in Cartagena de Indias

For better understanding the implications of the ethnical education in afro-descendant populations, whose contributions to the culture has been made invisible, it's necessary to build a historical context to make easier the interpretation of the real situation and the needs being suffered and guide the projection for the coming years, not only to Cartagena de Indias but also to similar environments in Colombia and America.

Cartagena de Indias, founded on June 1st 1533 (16th Century) is described by Vidal Antonio (2002) as: “A miserable village of huts made of palm trees and adobe built in the middle of an unhealthy mangrove - barely a deposit of bails – which became in a few years a multiracial and Babelian city where coexisted traffickers, adventurers, indigenous, travelers, Peruvians, slaves, artisans, mulattoes, pulpers, priests...coming from the nearest and at the same time more distant points of the world and where the transition from richness to poverty and viceversa, will occur depending on the avatars of a commerce carried out on different scales and in the middle and long distance. The cultural and racial mixture in that city became its characteristic feature from that moment forward”⁶. As shown, Cartagena de Indias has been and remains a great melting pot of the most diverse ethnicities and cultures.

Nevertheless, the city has a remarkable identity and some conceptions and convictions dating back to colonial times, although somewhat weakened in recent years, perhaps as a result of globalization and more openness to tourism, they are still present and the mulattoes as well as African-descendants are still stigmatized by their skin color, everyday practices and behaviors.

To better understand how the social net and the ethnic mixture was formed in Cartagena de Indias, it is necessary to look back to the 16th century, when Spanish conquerors –in order to enhance the economic development of the lands overseas and later the significant declination of the slaved indigenous population, fact known thanks to the memories of Fray Bartolome de las Casas and the college of Salamanca which the Spanish law set free – opted for the African population, stronger for physical work and better resistance to tropical diseases. This desire to strengthen and sustain the economic activities opened the gate to the so called slave trade, when many of the African inhabitants were apprehended and slaved; whereupon they took away the right to live in family, in their home land and to live free on their own, in order to build the workforce in different places of the emerging roke in America.

⁶ Antonino Vidal, *Cartagena de Indias y la Región histórica del Caribe 1580-1640* (Sevilla: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas. Universidad de Sevilla, 2002), 119.

So “the city of Cartagena de Indias , was linked, since its beginnings and until the abolition of slavery in Colombia, to the history of the slave trade in the new world. Due to its geographic location, and the development of its commerce, Cartagena became between 1.580 and 1.660 the main reservoir of slaves in the area adjacent to the Viceroyalty of Peru”⁷.

To the question on how this trade was done, it is recalled that Europe, with the Portuguese on the forefront, broke into Africa en the 15th century. “In 1.494 when because of the Tordesillas agreement between Spain and Portugal, shared the immense colonial world, the first of these nations made a significant mistake. By this agreement Spain ceded to Portugal all rights over the West African coast and with this concession, ceded any direct participation on the slaves’ trade. For decades they didn’t realized their mistake” (Bowser, (2003)⁸. For this reason, and given the proximity of the West African coast to South America, the Portuguese started this commercial route. To facilitate operations and with the permissions of the Africans, the Portuguese built a fortress on the Gold Coast and traded ivory, gold, leather, wood, and subsequently slaves, to whom they considered also as objects, to the point that the asentists, who were people with permission to traffick slaves, registered them as “pieces”.

In the middle of 16th century increases the need for “pieces” of black slaves in America. But Spain couldn’t access directly to the sources (Africa) and, therefore, they had to buy them from the Portuguese. In the 15th Century, the Portuguese described the archipelago of Green Cape, in front of the coasts of Senegal, which was soon colonized and became a center for slave trade. Those who arrived in Cartagena, came mostly from Guinea, Congo, Ghana, Senegal and belonged to different cultures, specially to the Yoruba.

The asentists generally lived in Sevilla or Lisbon, mandatory stopover for ships used for trafficking African slaves; they had their negotiators, who managed “pieces” in the African coasts, sometimes with Africans who captured people from different tribes. The pomberios were in charge of having ready the amount of slaves to be sent depending on the quota assigned to the asentist, which was not faithfully observed because there was smuggling. When they were moved to the Gorée Island, the families were separated depending on the route to follow (North, Center, South America). Then the ships headed to Lisbon or Sevilla, where they made some controls, and from there to the different routes, among them Cartagena de Indias. At this port, the asentists received them and paid the taxes, then the salves were selected, part of them for the local market, where buyer from different places gathered and another part were taken to be traded in Peru.

From the point of view of the ethnical education, regarding the African-descendants, is important to take into consideration some aspects made invisible by history until not long ago, related to the contributions of the African culture, and highlight how they contributed to make possible the enrichment and sustainability of the European economy and the permanence of Europeans in American soil.

⁷ Vidal, “*Cartagena de Indias y la Región histórica del Caribe 1580-1640*”, 119.

⁸ Bowser, et al., *América Latina en la época colonial. Economía y Sociedad 2* (Barcelona: Editorial Crítica, 2003) 141.

We also should remember that, in the transit to America, one of the places for ship supplies were the Cape Green Islands, with African species, guarded by Africans who later cultivated them in the new soil and constitutes the source of food until today. Among these crops are: millet, sorghum, rice, beans, plantain, coffee, pumpkin, watermelon and many more. They also established the cultivation of the castor oil (higuerilla) which oil was used as fuel for lamps, as a laxative, against lice, and skin diseases, with the advantage that the livestock don't like this plant for food. It's necessary to remark that some of the existing plants in America were very well known by Africans as they existed in their soil, or were very similar and were used for the same purpose. Therefore, the African slaves were guardians of medical traditions of the Amerindians, when the latter were exterminated.

Also, they brought from Africa some breeds of cattle, and a great cultural heritage in which we find interlaced beliefs, liturgical practices, oral history, languages, musical instruments, music, dance and so on, some of them in their original appearance and other wrapped in a cloak of religious syncretism in which perhaps intersect the religious elements of African ancestry and Judeo Christian beliefs and practices. This latter, maybe by being forced to adopt the catholic religion. As an example of this we have the Santeria, Voodoo, Palo Monte Mayombe, Candomble. The need of Africans to be free, the disrespect and the abuse, among other cases, since there were many prejudices due to the physical difference from Europeans and the existing ignorance, some even thought and expressed publicly that they were not human beings, other wrongly believed that they were descendants of Cam, son of Noah, for them "Cam" meant "Black" and this was the reason for their dark skin, and Noah had prophesied that "they will be servants of servants" in other words slaves, valid arguments to justify slavery, but not really accurate.

Spain not only sought economic power in its colonies, but also the spread of Christianity, and as the Africans had other beliefs and religious practices they were considered evil and were demonized. All these circumstances forced many slaves to escape, become maroons, to get gather freely, and to settle independent towns called "Palenques", so called due to the palisades that surrounded the village. This way they defend themselves from animals and military expeditions organized to retrieve runaway slaves during the 17th and 18th centuries in Colombia, Brazil, Suriname and Jamaica.

In Colombia there were many "Palenques" since 16th century. The places chosen were warm, jungles or near swamps. Some of them were located at La Guajira, Santa Marta, Cartagena and their proximities like: Matuna, San Miguel, Tolu, Malambo, San Basilio, Luruaco. Also at San Lucas highlands and the valleys of the rivers Magdalena and Cauca. Among these, the most known and with great influence today in Cartagena is San Basilio de Palenque, former San Miguel Archangel, whose best known leaders were Domingo Criollo, Pedro Mina, Benkos Biojó and Nicolás de Santa Rosa.

In 1713, the residents of the Palenque of San Basilio came to a peace agreement with the Spanish through the archbishop Cassiani, from whom many natives took the surname.

The abolition of slavery in Colombia occurred many years later, in 1851, valid from 1st January 1852. This process took a long way from the Constitution of Cartagena, in 1812, which did not materialize due to the Spanish re-conquest, during which Morillo offered freedom to those who joined the Spanish cause; the same was done by Bolívar in 1816 in order to block the path to the Spanish.

Thereafter, the Congress of Cucuta in 1821 addressed the issue of the abolition of slavery, they declared “freedom of wombs”, according to which the children of slaves born after 1821 would be free on the condition of working for 18 years for the masters of their mothers. This way the freedom was delayed until 1839, and only gained freedom those who met the conditions. This was inconsistent with the principles of independence. “Liberty, Equality and Fraternity”.

On 29 May 1842 the state passed a law which deferred freedom of slaves for five years and re-opened the people trafficking banned in 1821. As a result the marronage increased between 1840 and 1842, mainly.

In these years, the pressure from Britain for the abolition of slavery, the rise to power of liberalism and the Generation of 1848, influenced by the French Revolution, acted as pressure forces to fulfill the Constitution of 1821. They managed a few liberations in commemoration of 20 July (Revolution in Bogota) and November 11 (Independence of Cartagena).

When Jose Hilario Lopez took power in 1850, he defended the theory of “be generous with the slaves without stop being generous with their masters”, and chooses a long term process, but when pressed by the congress, the press, democrat societies and the very same slaves, he finally chooses absolute freedom.

The debate in parliament begins in March and ends in May 1851. Finally the “Law of Manumission” is approved the 21st July 1821, to become effective on 1st January 1822. The government guarantees compensation to masters for freed slaves. In that date, sixteen thousand slaves were freed under *Republican Manumission*, when the governor of the province was Juan Jose Nieto. Certificates of freedom were given to slaves and vouchers of compensation were given to masters. The Liberals celebrated this event with public acts and festivals.

Although this was the legal process that ended with the decree of slavery abolition, which existed for more than 300 years, it was not possible to erase so easily the imaginaries, social and power relations, beliefs, conceptions, self-images, habits, interwoven between masters and slaves for so many years. This is evident when, until recent years, rural employees and domestic servants called their employers “the white”, although the employers were a mullato.

Another determining factor were the freed, mostly illiterate. Their world was reduced to their workplace. They had established emotional ties with the families they served and didn't know what to do with the freedom they had gained, nor how to settle in the world without having experience, money, or a home of their own. As a result, they decided to remain serving their former masters either in the countryside or in the city.

As may be inferred with the arrival of Europeans, they became the dominant social group that gradually submitted the indigenous annihilating or displacing them from their lands, the subsequent arrival of Africans and the various types of relations established among them, give birth to a new society with hierarchical stages in which as stated by Arrazola r (1967) “the white intruder, of course, giving orders and the black slave, as foreign as the first obeying them, constitutes the so called society of the colony”⁹.

As well as dominant Europeans arrived in Cartagena had different origins: Portugal, Spain, Italy, France...the same happened with Africans who came from different ethnic groups that had their own languages, beliefs and habits - Gorumbas, Lucamies, Viafara, Mandingas, Carabalies – some of them are: Atlantico, Mande, Kru, Congo y Bantu... there were also black creoles who were children of Africans born in America and the so called black muzzles who were natural from Africa, they had low skills in Spanish as a second language so they barely spoke with their masters and white pawns, their communication were with blacks and free mullatoes.

In this regard MONTEJO E (Cuban Slave) interviewed by BAMET E. (1966) stated “They call them muzzles just to call them somehow, and because they spoke according to the language of their country. They spoke differently, that’s it! I didn’t refer to them as muzzles, on the contrary, I respected them...that word “muzzles” was inaccurate”¹⁰.

Not only the above mentioned were the only existing social groups, the scheme of mixture was very complex, and their social status was determined by the amount of white blood that this person had, in example:

MIXTURE SCHEME:

Spanish(Male) + Indigenous = Mestizo (Mixture)

Mestizo (Male) + Spanish (Female) = Castizo or Mestizo quarter

Castiza (Female) + Spanish (Male) = Spanish or Mestizo quarter

Spanish (Male) + Black (Female) = Mullato

Spanish (Male) + Mullato (Female) = Morisco or Mullato quarter

Spanish (Male) + Morisca (Female) = Albine or Mullato quarter

Spanish (Male) + Albine = Saltatras or White People

Saltatras (Male) + Indigenous (Female) = Wolf (Lobo)

Wolf (Male) + Indigenous (Female) = Cambujo

Mestizo (Male) + Indigenous (Female) = Chine (Chino)

Indigenous (Male) + Black (Female) = Zambo

Black (Male) + Mulatto (Female) = Zambo

Source: Prepared by the authors(2012)

⁹ Roberto Arrazola, *Secretos de la Historia de Cartagena*. (Cartagena: Ediciones Hernández, 1967), 156.

¹⁰ Bamet E., “*Identidad cultural y Lingüística en Colombia, Venezuela y el Caribe Hispánico*” en Actas Segundo Congreso Internacional del Centro de Estudios Latinoamericanos (CELA), Max Niemeyer Verlag, (Germersheim: Universidad de Maguncia, 23-27 de Junio, 1977), 158.

In the social pyramid the white was on top and the black or the indigenous on the bottom. This categorization has had such an impact that still underlies in the racism that some cores of the Cartagena society expresses in the daily life and has caused fines, like the one imposed to a night club for denying admittance to African-descendants.

However, since colonial times until today, the intellectual, political, economic superiority and the chances of participation and integration are determined by the degree of racial mixture; although the intellectual development and the financial capacity nuance the situation.

This so-called “blood purity” became the subject of discrimination and social injustice because only the above mentioned could have rights over the lands, university education, participate in public administration and be members of the Catholic Church as priests and religious, those who didn’t have this certification could only be lay brothers. The “blood purity”, this means, be considered “white had to be proven before the authorities by a certificate granted by the crown and which a high cost”¹¹.

This discrimination by the skin color is evident in the categories established in the colonial census, such as: white, free of all colors and slaves. These “free of all colors” was because they have bought their freedom.

Perhaps one on the most significant aspects of this situation, is that the imaginary of the majority of the African-descendants accepted the superiority of the white, in part because they were the only who knew how to read, and had access to studies, made by whites in which - today we know - it was false what they taught; furthermore, they said that in a hot weather was more difficult to learn than in a template or a cold one. Due to this blacks and their mixtures, mostly living in hot weathers, had no access to education, and being illiterates they were easy to be manipulated and to believe everything they heard.

This sort of thing - although slightly improved by the education received by many African-descendants and the leadership assumed to claim their place in history and their rights as citizens – have not been fully overcome; which justifies the offer of the ethnical education and the Afro-Caribbean cathedra, a bylaw not assumed by educational institutions, not only because it is essential that African-Colombian value themselves and continue to work for personal development, for their communities and for Colombia, but also because discriminators must understand their huge mistake, and recognize they must have the same rights, duties and respect, by eliminating that halo of superiority that a significant amount of Colombian still have.

2. Education: social context of the african-descendants in Cartagena de Indias

All this historical happening lived in the Caribbean region of Colombia, and especially in Cartagena de Indias, underlies in the social, political and cultural issues of the actual city. That is why, it is necessary to build bridges to achieve the ideal of “Only One Cartagena”: without racial

¹¹ Sandra Soler y Neyla Pardo, “*Discurso y Racismo en Colombia. Cinco Siglos de invisibilidad y Exclusión*” en *Racismo y Discurso en América Latina*, Ed. Tew Van Dijk, (Barcelona: Gedisa, 2007), 184.

discrimination or any other kind, with opportunities and prosperity for all its citizens under equal conditions.

The census of population and housing in Colombia of 2005, the investigation reports by J. Parada and A. Meisel published by the Republic Bank and presented in the Caribbean Meeting held in Barranquilla (2009), reveal a Caribbean region whose index of growth and development shows a disadvantage to those of the Andean region. The latter has consolidated its political and economic power, something that has failed in the two coasts and the former National Territories.

The Caribbean region has a territorial extension of 132.888 KM², which is the 11,6% of the national territory. Its population according to the 2005 census is 9.479.102 inhabitants, which is the 21,3% of the national population. The population density is 72h per Km², which is above of that of the whole country (39h per Km²). From this population, the 72,7% lives in the municipalities and the 27,3% in the rural zone. The region contributes with 14,7% to the gross domestic product (GDP).

The department of Bolivar whose capital is Cartagena de Indias, the 46,6% of the population has unsatisfied basic needs and the poverty line is 52,9%, higher than the national one, which is 49,7%.

According to the 2005 census, in Colombia the 10,6% of the population is African-descendants. In Cartagena de Indias with a population of 892.162 inhabitants, 321.459 (35,7%) are African-descendants, approximately 546.996 (61,9%) didn't classify themselves as African-descendants, which does not mean there were no African-descendant among them, but due to the stigmatization suffered by years is hard for them to recognize they belong to that group. Despite this circumstance, Cartagena de Indias got the highest index of African-descendants of the entire country.

african-descendant in Cartagena:

The DANE projection (2009) for 2011 in estimated population for Cartagena de Indias is 955.709 inhabitants, distributed among 496,968 (52%) women and 458.740 (48%) men. According to the 2005 census the 35,7% of the population is African-descendant: 160.518 women and 155.477 men.

The African-descendant population of Cartagena is concentrated, especially, in the zone of La Ciénaga de la Virgen, consisting of 61 districts occupying 1/5 of the urban area. They belong to the to the lowest socioeconomic strata (1,2,3) with an illiteracy rate of 8% and the lowest levels of education in the city. In the city, the amount of inhabitants with unsatisfied basic needs is 21,9%, most of them from the African-descendant group. The poverty line is 52%, and the indigence line 22%.

The census also showed that the percentages of labor occupancy are directly related to the education level. Unemployment rate is 14% and Underemployment is 35%. Those employed were classified as follows:

Higher Education.....	31,5%
Medium Education.....	25,8%
Secondary Education.....	20,4%
Elementary Education.....	18,8%
No School.....	3,5%

According to the Research Regional Center for Economic Studies (CEER) of the Republic Bank (2007) found that the largest population of Cartagena is poor and poverty in the extreme.

Poverty is most evident in areas such as slopes of La Popa, neighborhoods surrounding La Ciénaga de la Virgen, have lower educational levels, higher unemployment and a high proportion of African-descendants.

The study found there is a correlation between low-income and black neighborhoods in Cartagena: 72.4% and between low educational level: 71.7%. Some causes are few possibilities of study, inadequate schools, little recreation, are oriented to domestic services, workers, artisans, street vendors, activities that offer little chance of upward mobility.

In summary we can say: The African-descendant with lower educational levels are the poorest, they live in neighbourhoods less attractive from the point of view of the landscape, have inadequate transportation service, lack of some public services, high unemployment and unsatisfied basic needs, all these are facets of the same problem but as stated by Meisel (2009) “So far no development plan has recognized this ethnic and spatial dimension of social imbalances of the city”¹².

Given this reality, and considering that one of the decisive factors to achieve sustainable human development is education, is justified an investigation on ethnic education programs, the existing educational proposal, policies, evaluate compliance of educational institutions, their effectiveness and efficiency, and maybe make a proposal for improvements.

3. Legislation and educational policy: equity for ethnic groups

It is necessary to consider that only until the 1991 Political Constitution Colombia manifests its multi-ethnicity and multiculturalism and establishes the right to respect and to difference. In its article 7°, in example, it states “The state recognizes and protects the ethnic and cultural diversity of the Colombian nation”¹³.

In its article 13° the constitution of 1991 states: “Every person is born free an equal before the law, entitled to equal protection of the authorities and will be granted the same rights, freedoms and opportunities without discrimination on grounds of sex, race, origin, nationality, language, political or philosophical opinion”.

¹² Jairo Parada (Bogotá: Banco de la Republica, 2009) <http://www.banrep.gov.co/documentos/publicaciones/regional>

¹³ Constitución Política de Colombia. (Bogotá, 1991). Artículo 7°.

Thereafter, in Articles 67° and 68°, the Constitution addresses education by stating “Education will train Colombians in respect for human rights, peace and democracy”.

In Article 68°, paragraph 5, states that “Members of ethnic groups have the right to an education that respects and develops their ethnic and cultural identity”.

Convention 169 of the International Labour Organization (ILO) ratified by Law 21/91 in its Article 28° states “The programs and education services for the peoples concerned shall be developed and implemented in cooperation with them to respond to their particular needs and shall incorporate their history, their knowledge and technologies, their value systems and all other social, economic and cultural aspirations”¹⁴ and the same Law 70/93 in its Article 39° commands the implementation of the Afro-Colombian studies in black communities and this is confirmed in Decree 1122 of 1998.

Anchored in the same paradigm, the Colombian government approved Law 70/93 which in its Article 32° proclaims “the State recognizes and guarantees the right of black communities to an education that meets their needs and ethnic cultural aspirations. The concerned authority shall take the necessary measures so that at each level of education, curricula are adapted to this provision”¹⁵.

In order to comply the guidelines of the 1991 constitution and law 70/93 about Ethnic education, it was necessary to reform the existing educational legislation, which is done by law 115/94 or General Law of Education that in its purposes aims “study and critical understanding of the national culture and the ethnic and cultural diversity of the country as the foundations of national unity and identity”. And has as objective “to promote the interest and respect for the cultural identity of the ethnic groups”¹⁶.

Thereafter, the article 62° of Law 115/94 regulated by Decree 804 of 1995 states that “The African-Colombian communities and native islander, in its condition as ethnic group, is their duty to develop ethnic educational processes and select educators to serve in their communities”¹⁷.

Although Law 70/1993 and Decree 2249/1995 create the African-American Pedagogic Commission in the MEN to concretize with Territorial Entities and community leaders everything related to the education for African-Colombian, the Colombian government started the ethnic education opening in Cartagena de Indias, which has a large number of African-descendant inhabitants and a great core of population deeply excluding and racist only until August 2/2004. By the Agreement 015 of the District Council of Cartagena de Indias implements as permanent educational policy in order to strengthen and reinforce the ethnical and cultural identity, the Program of Ethnical education and Cultural Diversity of the African-Colombian

¹⁴Convenio N° 169 sobre pueblos indígenas y tribales en países independientes. Organización Internacional del Trabajo, (OIT) <http://www.ilo.org/ilolex/spanish/convdisp.2.htm>

¹⁵ Ley 70 de 1993, (Bogotá, 1993) Artículo 39.

¹⁶ Ley 115 de 1994, (Bogotá, 1994).

¹⁷ Decreto 804 de 1995 (Bogotá, 1995).

Studies Cathedra, in all educational institutions and private establishments of the district and all its localities. Nevertheless it is only incorporated into the Sectorial Education Plan 2006-2007, as a component of the citizens competencies and not for all educational institutions as the law commands, but only for twenty five educational institutions (19 located in counties and 6 in the urban area) from the 97 IED (District Educational Institutions), 258 locations, and 344 private schools that the Cartagena District has. Forgetting that minorities not only need to be recognized and respected themselves but others also recognize and respect them. So far, the District Education Secretary (SED Cartagena) has not issued a decree on ethnical education in the district.

The information about objectives and goals comes from a document issued by the person in charge of this matter within the SED Cartagena. The objectives of the ethnic education policy of the district of Cartagena are: To establish the curricula plans of the educational institutions that develops ethnic educational projects in the district of Cartagena and its localities and promote the transversal implementation on the African-Colombian Studies Cathedra in the levels of the educational system, in order to strengthen and reinforce the ethnic and cultural identity, which expresses the contributions of the African-Colombian Peoples to the construction, formation of the Colombian Nationality and Cartagena's identity.

Goals are oriented to the redefinition and redesign of the PEI's and curricula plans in 25 educational institutions identified as ethnic educational in the district and its localities, and the realization of 5 meetings on pedagogic practices and significant experiences on African-Colombian ethnic education with the design of a curricular guide for the transversal implementation of the African-Colombian Studies Cathedra in the District Educational Institutions.

If we compare the Objectives and Goals of the District with those of the Ethnic Education Policy of the country which is: To Position the Intercultural education in all public and private schools and colleges of the country so that children and families understand that African-Colombian, Indigenous and gypsy cultures are part of the roots of our nationality and aims to move towards multiculturalism, this mean, that schools do recognize and respect different cultures, to thereby recognize the diversity of our nation. The policy also seeks to develop an education that fulfills the characteristics, needs and aspirations of ethnic groups, developing cultural identity, multiculturalism and multilingualism.

We can say about the national proposal that this is an openness to diversity, to multiculturalism. It is true that the emphasis should be on the closest (African-Caribbean) but do not forget other ethnicities and cultures who are also Colombia.

In order to comply with current legislation, some universities like the UNAD offer bachelors and diplomats in ethnical education in the University of Cartagena and in the Agency of Spanish Cooperation and some courses organized by the Education Secretaries of the Departments and Districts. It is convenient to clarify that ethnical educational projects must be oriented to African-descendants, to the native islanders of San Andres y Providencia, to Rooms and to the diversity of indigenous population that enrich us.

CONCLUSIONS

It is imperative for the Superior Education Institutions of Cartagena de Indias and Colombia that has as mission to form human beings as teachers, professionals in education and other educational actors at the service of the country and the world to implement the Ethnic Education and Cultural Diversity Policy and the African-Colombian Studies Cathedra in order to be developed in education centers of different levels and fields, because it cannot be restricted to minorities as it detracts from its purpose, because although minorities need to recognize their values, potentials, to be educated, self-esteem and progress, it is essential that other members of the community recognize and respect them towards a harmonious relationship in which all individual potentials are exploited for collective progress.

An ethnical educational project can't be developed in an isolated cathedra but must impact all the curricula from the historic, ethnic, artistic, religious contexts, customs and approval by the communities.

The African-descendant population of Cartagena, Colombia and Latin America are not totally homogenous because as stated before they belong to different groups, however there remain symbols of ancestral identity and culture as a historical legacy from the times of the runaway slaves, among them spirituality, religiosity, body and artistic expressions, traditions and family values, traditional medicine and knowledge of African ancestral essence.

We can't continue ignoring that African culture has been the manager of the construction of the actual America and has left a deep mark that despite being obvious many people don't accept it, therefore it is a duty of the school to unveil the hidden history, exalt the contributions in all aspects and levels across the board in the curriculum.

Among the values so far detected in African-descendants we can highlight the persistence in their authenticity and identity despite all the negative circumstances faced.

The maintenance of the social net mainly cemented in blood ties. There is a great family union, and responsibility among family members. In the current dynamics the opportunities to study and sociocultural progress haven't been the same for all members but this heterogeneity is not able to break family ties and those who progress feel the obligation to support and pull those who come behind, and don't exist the indifference palpable in other groups. Elder people are respected, especially the mother and their authority never expires. In their culture exists the Griots groups made up of elder African considered the memory of the people. There exist also the Cuagros who are associations of both genres that begin since childhood games and remain in time. When the Constitution of 1991 declared Colombia as multiethnic and multicultural, plus the regulation of the interim article 55, led to policies that benefited the African-Colombian population from the point of the education and Ethnic education.

Even though this ethnic education policy has many weaknesses -since up to date there is no decree or resolution that regulate it in the district, only some documents elaborated by the person

in charge of this section and other- 25 ethnic educational institutions are operating today, among them Antonia Santos, an especially its branch San Luis Gonzaga, there has been some positive aspects like:

- Reaffirmation of identity and self-recognition as black.
- The interest of a significant number of children to study high school and university in Cartagena and Barranquilla.
- In recent years there is a notorious interest to study the bachelor in ethnical education, to study diplomats on this subject, participate in investigative groups and other groups like “Graciela Cha Ines” interested in investigating and safeguarding the cultural heritage of Palenque. Some of them work as teachers in different levels in Cartagena and were contacted for this investigation.
- Traditions such as preparing various fruit candies, marketing them, doing African roots hairstyles...have given them a national and international recognition.
- The investigative work and the effort of organizations comprised of African-Colombians to rescue and visibility of their language, habits and cultural heritage made possible that UNESCO in 2005 recognized San Basilio de Palenque as “Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity.”
- In Cartagena the ethnic educational process may not have had all the progress it deserves but has been benefited by work started in 1993 in the Institutions of San Basilio de Palenque. Some of the first involved in this process of cultural recovery like Teresa Cassiani, who now works at the institution that did the research, Dorina Hernandez, Rutselli Simancas and other that today teach in several institutions in Cartagena.

With regard to the negative aspects that need to work on and that may be consequences of slavery itself, it is observed that there is a significant number of African-Colombian with lack of life planning and projects that lead them to self-sufficiency, move them away from paternalism and allow them realize that not being self-sufficient leads to dependence which is a type of slavery.

It is convenient to work on the tension between the village and the world because while it is good to know and strengthen our things, you cannot forget that today is an imperative to socialize with the rest of the population and with the world.

In this face of the communication, we cannot disregard the necessity of doing it orally and written with the rest of the world, so while it is good to preserve ancestral languages known by a minority they must not disregard the correct learning of Spanish and other languages that will facilitate the establishments of different types of ties with a more heterogeneous community and take advantage, at the same time that contributes to coexistence as a universal process.

Another difficulty is the transition from the native language to Spanish, which generates tension and difficulties in the process of speaking, reading and writing in Spanish, especially in the first years of school, situation that might require a thorough investigation to facilitate the exploration of new methodologies to overcome it.

The research supporting this article ended and allow to explore new ways to approach the dream of an inclusive education, again confirmed by UNESCO conference in Paris 2009, with coverage and quality to foster human development permanently of a whole human family,

capable to close the open veins of our communities, to meet the Millennium Development Goals and building a harmonious world prosperous for all.

SOURCES

Asamblea Departamental de Bolívar, Cartagena de Indias – Colombia. *Ordenanza Departamental 019 de 2008. Por la cual se conceden facultades al gobernador de Bolívar para adoptar una Política Pública que reconozca y garantice los derechos de las comunidades negra o étnicas afrodescendientes del departamento de Bolívar y se citan otras disposiciones.*

Afrocolombia. República de Colombia Ministerio del Interior y de Justicia (Bogotá, 2009).

Antonino Vidal, *Cartagena de Indias y la Región histórica del Caribe 1580-1640* (Sevilla: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas. Universidad de Sevilla, 2002), 119.

Arrazola, Roberto. *Secretos de la Historia de Cartagena*. Cartagena: Ediciones Hernández Cartagena, 1967.

Bowser, Frederick, Charles Gibson, J. Lokhart, y Nicolás Sánchez-Albornoz. *América Latina en la época colonial. Economía y Sociedad 2*. Editorial Barcelona: Editorial Crítica, 2007.

Concejo Distrital de Cartagena de Indias, Cartagena de Indias – Colombia. *Acuerdo Distrital 015 de 2004. Por el cual se adopta como política educativa permanente para fortalecer y reafirmar la identidad étnica y cultural, el Programa de Etnoeducación y Diversidad Cultural de la Cátedra de Estudios Afrocolombianos en toda las Instituciones Educativas y Establecimientos privados del Distrito de Cartagena y todas sus localidades, y se dictan otras disposiciones.*

Constitución Política de Colombia. (Bogotá, 1991). Artículo 7°.

Convenio N° 169 sobre pueblos indígenas y tribales en países independientes. Organización Internacional del Trabajo, (OIT) <http://www.ilo.org/ilolex/spanish/convdisp2.htm>

Decreto 804 de 1995 *Por medio del cual se reglamenta la atención educativa para grupos étnicos*. (Bogotá, 1995).

Decreto 140 de 2006. *Por el cual se modifica parcialmente el Decreto 3323 de 2.005 y se reglamenta el proceso de selección mediante concurso especial para el ingreso de etnoeducadores colombianos y raizales a la carrera docente, se determinan criterios para su aplicación y se dictan otras disposiciones*. (Bogotá, 2006).

Departamento Nacional de Planeación (DNP), Bogotá – Colombia. *Documento CONPES 2909 Programa de apoyo para el desarrollo y reconocimiento étnico de las comunidades negras*.

Departamento Nacional de Planeación (DNP), Bogotá – Colombia. *Documento CONPES 3169 Política para la población afrocolombiana*.

Departamento Nacional de Planeación (DNP), Bogotá – Colombia. *Documento CONPES 3310 Política de Acción Afirmativa para la población negra o afrocolombiana*.

Departamento Nacional de Planeación (DNP), Bogotá – Colombia. *Plan Integral de largo plazo para la población negra afrocolombiana, palenquera y raizal: propuesta y proceso 2005-2007*. Equipo Plan Integral, Comisión de Estudios.

Ley 70 de 1993, *Por la cual se desarrolla el Artículo transitorio 55 de la Constitución política*. (Bogotá, 1993) Artículo 39.

Ley 115 de 1994, (Bogotá, 1994). Quince Duncan. “*Apuntes para una Teoría General del Racismo, Racismo, Iglesia y Teología*”. En Quince Duncan, *Cultura Negra y Teología*, editado por DEI. San José, 1986.

Marín, R. “*Educación Multicultural e intercultural*” Ponencia publicada en las Memorias del Congreso de Educación Multicultural CEUTA, España, Granada, 1992.

Rutas de Libertad, 500 años de travesía. República de Colombia Ministerio de Cultura. Pontificia Universidad Javeriana. (Bogotá, 2010).

Sandra Soler y Neyla Pardo, “*Discurso y Racismo en Colombia. Cinco Siglos de invisibilidad y Exclusión*” en *Racismo y Discurso en América Latina*, Ed. Tew Van Dijk, (Barcelona: Gedisa, 2007), 184.

REFERENCES

Delgado, Ramiro. “La educación y el patrimonio cultural, nodos de los procesos de reparación de las comunidades afrocolombianas”. En *Afroreparaciones: Memorias de la esclavitud y justicia reparativa para negros*,

afrocolombianos y raizales, editado por Claudia Mosquera Rosero-Labeé y Luiz Claudio Barcelos. Bogotá: Ed. Universidad Nacional de Colombia, 2007.

Enciso Patiño, Patricia. *Estado del Arte de la Etnoeducación con énfasis en Política Pública*. Ministerio de Educación Nacional. Dirección de Poblaciones y Proyectos intersectoriales. Bogotá – Colombia, 2004.

Enciso Patiño, Patricia. *Sistematización de Proyectos Educativos Institucionales sobresalientes en Etnoeducación Afrocolombiana. Estudio N° 1*. Ministerio de Educación Nacional. Imprenta Nacional. Bogotá – Colombia, 2004.

Grueso Castelblanco, Libia Rosario (2007). *Documento propuesta para la Formulación del Plan Integral de largo plazo Población Negra/afrocolombiana, palenquera y raizal 2007-2019 Versión Final*. Departamento Nacional de Planeación (DNP), Bogotá – Colombia.

Ministerio de Educación Nacional (MEN), Bogotá – Colombia. *Cátedra de Estudios Afrocolombianos. Lineamientos Curriculares*. Enlace Editores Ltda. 2001.

Mosquera Rosero-Labbé, Claudia y Luiz Claudio Barcelos. *Afro-Reparaciones: Memorias de la esclavitud y Justicia Reparativa para negros, Afrocolombianos y Raizales*. Bogotá: Universidad Nacional de Colombia, Facultad de Ciencias Humanas, Centro de Estudios Sociales, 2007.

Mosquera Rosero-Labbé, Claudia “Reparaciones para negros, Afrocolombianos y Raizales como rescatados de la trata negrera transatlántica y desterrados de la guerra en Colombia”. En *Afroreparaciones: Memorias de la esclavitud y justicia reparativa para negros, afrocolombianos y raizales*, editado por Claudia Mosquera Rosero-Labeé y Luiz Claudio Barcelos. Bogotá: Ed. Universidad Nacional de Colombia, 2007.

Mosquera Rosero-Labbé, Claudia, Ruby Ester León Díaz y Margarita María Rodríguez Morales. *Escenarios Pos-Durbán para pueblos y personas negras, afrocolombianas, raizales y palenqueras*. Bogotá: Documento de Trabajo N° 1, Universidad Nacional de Colombia, Facultad de Ciencias Humanas, 2009.

Munera, Alfonso. *El fracaso de la Nación. Región, Clase y Raza en el Caribe Colombiano (1717-1810)*. Bogotá: El Ancora Banco de la República, 1998.

Munera, Alfonso. *Fronteras Imaginadas. La construcción de las Razas y la Geografía en el Siglo XIX Colombiano*. Bogotá: Planeta, 2005.

Niemeyer Verlag, Max. *Identidad Cultural y Lingüística en Colombia, Venezuela y el Caribe Hispano*. Gernersheim: Actas II Congreso Internacional del Centro de Estudios Latinoamericano (CELA) de la Universidad de Maguncia, 1999.

Obeso Miranda, Miguel Ángel. Compilador. *Etnoeducación y Diversidad Cultural*. Alcaldía Distrital de Cartagena de Indias, Secretaria de Educación Distrital. Cartagena de Indias: Ediciones Pluma de Mompóx S.A., 2007.

Organización de las Naciones Unidas (ONU). *Informe de la Conferencia Mundial contra el Racismo, la Discriminación Racial, la Xenofobia y las Formas conexas de Intolerancia. Durbán, 31 de Agosto a 8 Septiembre de 2001. Ginebra, Suiza*. Oficina del Alto Comisionado para Derechos Humanos, 2001.

Palacios Hinestroza, Nicolás Odilio. *Etnoeducación en Colombia y las comunidades afrocolombianas*. Santafé de Bogotá: Docentes Editores, 1998.

Parada, Jairo. Bogotá, Banco de la República, 2009. <http://www.banrep.gov.co/documentos/publicaciones/regional>
Restrepo, Eduardo. (2005) *Políticas de la Teoría y Dilemas con los estudios de las Colombias Negras*. Editorial Universidad del Cauca, Editorial Universidad del Magdalena. Bogotá.

Restrepo, Eduardo, y Axel Rojas. *Conflicto e Invisibilidad. Retos en los estudios de la gente negra en Colombia*. 2° Coloquio Nacional de Estudios Afrocolombianos. Popayán: Editorial Universidad del Cauca, 2004.

Rojas, Axel. *Cátedra de Estudios Afrocolombianos: Aportes para maestros*. Popayán: Colección Educaciones y Culturas Taller Editorial Universidad del Cauca, 2008.

Sandra Soler y Neyla Pardo, “Discurso y Racismo en Colombia. Cinco Siglos de invisibilidad y Exclusión”. En *Racismo y Discurso en América Latina*, editado por Tew Van Dijk. Barcelona: Gedisa, 2007, 184.

Vidal, Antonino. *Cartagena de Indias y la Región Histórica del Cribé 1580-1640*. Consejo Superior de investigaciones Científicas. España: Universidad de Sevilla, 2002.

Yong Serrano, Samuel. *La aplicación del Convenio 169 de la OIT sobre pueblos indígenas y tribales y sus implicaciones en nuestra legislación interna*. Bogotá: Universidad Santo Tomás - Revista IUSTA N° 21, Agosto 2004. <http://co.vlex.com/vid/oit-pueblos-indigenas-tribales.implicaciones-42785069>.

Lago de Zota, Alejandrina, Lago de Fernández, Carmen y Lago de Vergara, Diana.
“Education for citizens of the world with African descendant identity: Case Educational Institution Antonia Santos, Cartagena de Indias, Colombia”. *Revista Historia de la Educación Latinoamericana* Vol. 14 No. 18, (2012): pp. 53 - 74.