

Indigenous women, games and ethno-sport in Latin America

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Introduction

This chapter presents the rich and diverse variety of cultures related to the indigenous women and ethnical groups in Latin America, focusing mainly Brazil, Venezuela and Argentina. The framework includes their culture, a brief history of indigenous peoples, and the situation of indigenous women's rights and lives in general in Latin American societies related to games and ethno-sports in school and society.

The indigenous peoples are those who 'derive much of their identity from histories of state-sponsored genocide, forced settlement, relocation, political marginalization, and various formal attempts at cultural destruction' (Niezen, 2003, p. 5).

Contact with European invaders brought about significant changes in native societies in Latin America, such as high death rates resulting from epidemics, famine, wars, displacements, confinements and slave labor. McNEILL (1976). Furthermore, pacification processes and, later on the introduction of indigenous peoples into national states was always tumultuous and failed to acknowledge cultural diversity.

Each country developed its own policies for the indigenous peoples. The Brazilian government developed actions to incorporate the indigenous peoples into national life, the idea of building 'one people, one nation'. These were mixed views, such as (i) the indigenous villagers should stay insulated, not become civilized, and brutally bear the burden of slavery, (ii) promote contact with whites through work and miscegenation, (iii) create the idea that the Indians were people who would no longer exist, (iv) people with no history and no future and therefore some people supported the idea of expulsion and even extermination of the Indians, (v) with the perspective of acculturation, the Indians could assimilate or integrate into the society (Monteiro, 2001). Unfortunately some of these ideas are still in the mind of many non-indigenous peoples.

The present state of cultural and linguistic preservation is the consequence of a socio-historical process within each ethnic group in Brazil, whose situation can be expanded to other Latin America countries. We pointed out that culture is a dynamic process. Therefore, aspects of traditional cultures as is the case in traditional games, should not be considered as something from the past that has been paralyzed, archived, and preserved simply for posterity. They are integrated in

the very processes of sociocultural changes. Gallois (2006, p. 20) emphasizes “The traditional in traditional knowledge is not its antiquity, but the manner in which it is acquired and used, continuously, in the production of knowledge.

Indigenous women

The indigenous women in Latin America have had different social representation since the pre-colonial period. Information to attest to this can be found in the discovery and analysis of artefacts, architecture, biofacts and cultural landscapes. Indigenous societies' architecture during the pre-colonial phase of Hispanic countries had remarkable emphasis, particularly with the Mayans and Aztecs in Mexico and Central America, and also with the Incas in the Andes when compared with other South American societies.

The pre-hispanic artefacts depict that the cosmos was divided into two large halves differentiated by their complementary opposites. Everything, including the gods, was a mixture of the male and female essences. Female essences were linked to the dark, the lowlands, death, humidity and sexuality, whilst male essences were linked to the light, the sky, highlands, life, drought and glory. Generalizations do not imply qualifying criteria and each culture differs remarkably from the other (Austin, 1998).

The women had different representations in agriculture, in the field of water, land, and vegetation, in ceremonial rituals and in the hierarchies of each indigenous society. These cosmoperspectives still provide influences today within their modern life.

Other information sources of wealth come from records in the sixteenth century by travellers and missionaries. However, the speeches portray the colonizer's view, a perception and interpretation of the facts that permeate from an Euro-centric perspective. However, there is almost a total absence of textual and iconographic sources produced by indigenous writers and artists. Moreover, in the twentieth century, the Indians were 'subjects' of research, but they were not co-participants in the process of research (Monteiro, 2001). There was also a grievance that most of the time the story was written from a masculine vision.

The voices of indigenous women were barely heard and their power was hardly noticed in public society. However, they did have many important roles in the transformation processes of indigenous societies. This took place through inter-ethnic contact, pacification processes, the formation of the state, the loss of land and urbanization, among others.

Indigenous women have become more visible through writing, storytelling, education, and political advocacy and more recently by participating in indigenous games in the city. Each appearance or visibility reflects important historical moments during social change processes. The

process of empowerment and even greater visibility of indigenous women began to unfold in the late twentieth century. (Rocha Ferreira, 2009).

Language and culture

The variety and diversity of indigenous societies and cultures in Latin America is enormous. However, as Niezen (2003) emphasizes we are under the phenomenon of global “shrinking”, associated with increasing mobility of people, and the relatively instantaneous spread of information, ideas and diseases. Large society-based organizations such as the United Nations, non-government organizations and other international agreements influence the political changes of indigenous peoples. Many of them are in the process of revival their culture, their languages, empowerment of their behaviour and the women are gaining more power in different societies.

Language is one of the strongest cultural traits to transmitted in the culture and organization of societies. Although the official languages of Hispanic countries are Spanish and Portuguese, there are a variety of other native languages still in use. Whilst some of them vanished in the colonization process, others are still alive and are in the process of revival.

The indigenous population of Venezuela count cultural traits to be the result of a fusion of Spanish and African influences with the autochthonous root that lives on currently. According to the National Institute of Statistics of Venezuela (INE, 2015) in 2011, the Venezuelan indigenous population reached 724592 people (representing 2.7% of the total population). This consists of 32 ethnic groups, with a variety of more than 30 autochthonous languages, located in 48 municipalities. Most of these ethnic groups have co-inhabited with non-indigenous people but also are able to maintain their ethnic identity, their language, their cultural values and their extensions of the original lands and are increasing in demography.

The language families are related through descendance from a common ancestor. In Venezuela the three main families are: Arawak, [Guajardo or Wayú, Paraujano or Añú, Baré or Balé, Curripaco or Kurrim, Baniva or Baniwa, Piapoco or Tsase, Warekena or Guarekena], Caribe [Pemón, Kariña or Kari’ña, Yukpa, Yekuana or Makiritare, Panare or E’ña, Akawaio and Yabarana, The Warao or Guaraúno] and Chibcha [Barí]. The independent languages are Yanoamama [Yanomami, Sanema, Guahibo or Hiwi] and those considered to be an independent linguistic family [Piaroa or Wótuha, Yaruro or Pumé]. Ethnic groups without a linguistic connection, whose languages are classified as being isolated [Waraos; Waikerí; Pumé; Uruak]. The indigenous people with the largest populations are the Wayuu, Warao, Kariña, Pemón, Piaroa, Jivi, Añu, Cumanagoto, Yukpa, Chaima, and the Yanomami people.

In Venezuela, the indigenous population have developed a set of cultural answers that have allowed them to create complex social systems with a degree of wellbeing. These social systems are not susceptible to being evaluated by quality of life indicators that are developed within industrial societies. Although there is diversity of indigenous ethnic groups and customs, there are similarities present, such as their diet based on cassava, pepper, tropical fruits, hunting and fishing, craftwork with wood and clay, crochet with moriche palm, cumare, mamurechiquichique (fibers stemming from trees and plants for clothes, craftworks and home tools). They make parties and ceremonies of different nature (births, deaths, puberty, marriages, harvest, promotions) and for each one they possess rites, and dances, depending on the situation. These dances are loaded with magical-religious, intimate and collective expressions that remind them of their cosmogony.

Social organization in Venezuela is diverse. During conquestswarrior leaders were identified as chiefs, for their abilities in battle, whilst in peaceful communities the chief was the one who dominated nature and best knew the local history. Nowadays authority resides with a captain, who founds a settlement and is automatically the chief. Traditionally this position resided with the witchdoctor. In some cases there are indigenous women that are captains and represent their communities within government entities (ministers, congresswomen, legislators and indigenous town councilwomen). The indigenous peoples have a harmonious relationship with the land and the water, with the sky, with the flora and the fauna. They have as a common element the construction of a culture and a world view that has been intertwining from a practice of community life. Similar situation we can find in the Brazilian indigenous peoples.

The total indigenous population in Brazil consists of 896917 individuals, approximately 0.47% of the country's population. The two major trunks and their family languages are the Tupi [Arikén, Aweti, Juruna, Mawê, Mondé, Mundurukú, Ramaráma, Tupari, Tupi-Guarani, Tupi without specification] and the Macro-Jê [Bororo, Guató, Jê, Karajá, Krenák, Maxakali, Ofayé, Ribkbaktsá, Yatê, Macro Jê without specification]. The following languages were not grouped into trunks, but they are classified in families: Arawá, Karib, Pano, Maku, Yanoamámi, Bóra, Múra, Tukano, Katukina, Samúko, Txapakura, Chiquito, Jaboti, Witóto, Nambikwara and Guaikuru. There are some indigenous languages that are not classified in trunks or families; others are subdivided into various dialects (IBGE, 2014).

For instance in the Central Brazilian State of Mato Grosso, in an area called Xingu, there are four large linguistic families of Arwak, Caribe, Tupi and Je in addition to another isolated languages spoken by the Trumai group. In spite of the diverse languages practiced and culture in that indigenous area, it can be noted that apparently there is an intense and very defined socio-cultural identification among these natives, such as: Kwarup, Puberty Seclusion, Amurikuma and other rituals in the native ceremonial calendar (Tavares, 1996).

In the Kamayura ethnical group, adolescence seclusion is different for men and women. One of the central points of seclusion is the construction of the person, of the individual by the elaboration of an ideal type, for men a great fighter and champion and for women marriage. This ideal type is forged during the puberty seclusion process with the administration of emetics, bodily scarring for both sexes, education and for boys fighting training known as Huka Huka (Tavares, 1996).

Despite differences in the social system of indigenous societies throughout Brazil, the basis of the societal organization is related. Ethnic groups are organized into communal houses, huts or individual homes, but are always linked to their extended family. These family lines can be either patrilineal or matrilineal. In the Ge linguistic family generally the village consists of several houses, arranged in a circle around a central courtyard. The indigenous are organized into a matrilineal lineage clan, who meet in two halves and are located in the opposite position in the village, one in east and the other in the west. The Tupi Guarani linguistic trunk has its own social organization and marriage rules. Their houses are not communal; but they follow the rules of extended families. Ethnographic research made important contributions on relations of kinship changes and the role of women, but little has been researched into indigenous games.

In Argentina, the number of officially recognized indigenous people is 955 000, or 2.4% of the total population (Cepal 2014). The family indigenous languages in Argentina are: Tupi Guarani [Guaraní subfamily], Guaycuruan [Qom group], Mataguayo [Wichí group ("mataco"), Wichí group ("mataco"), Chorote group] Quechua [Quechua II C], Araucanian, Isolated and unclassified. The differences in their cultures reflect also the construction of the body and person. (CEPAL, 2015).

Children and youth indigenous games

Studies from different countries on indigenous peoples show similar characteristics of indigenous games. The first publications on this topic were by Stuart Culin in 1907, who produced an impressive descriptive collection of indigenous games in North America (Culin, 1975). He pointed out that, "Behind both ceremonies and games there existed some widespread myth from which both derived their impulse." He also wrote "references to games are a common occurrence in the origin myths of various tribes. They usually consist of a description of a series of contests in which the demiurge, the first man, the culture hero, overcomes some opponent, a foe of the human race, by exercising superior cunning, skill, or magic" (p. 32). Culin emphasizes that, in general, games appear to be played "ceremonially, as pleasing to the gods, with the objective of securing fertility, causing rain, giving and prolonging life, expelling demons, or curing sickness" (p. 34).

Ferrarese (2014) emphasises that games are an activity that accompanies the human being from birth and throughout life, to death. Girls and boys of all societies played and play, however in

some societies women put priority in some social rules and discontinue playing after certain age and men are more activity in adulthood.

† Based on the literature and ethnographic studies, a group of researchers proposed a definition of traditional indigenous games which is published in the Atlas of Sports in Brazil: “Traditional indigenous games are physical activities with recreational or playful features permeated by myths cultural values. They therefore encompass the material and immaterial worlds of each ethnic group. The games require the learning of specific motor skills, strategies and/or luck. They are usually played ceremonially during rituals to please a supernatural being and/or to obtain fertility, rain, food, health, physical fitness, success in war or other needs and hopes. They also aim at preparing young members for adult life, including socialization, cooperation and the training of warriors. The games take place at determined times and places, according to rules freely accepted but absolutely binding, and there is usually no age limit for players. In addition, the games do not necessarily have winners or losers, and no awards except prestige are granted. Participation itself is full of meaning and affords experiences that are incorporated by the group and the individual” (Rocha Ferreira et al, 2005).

Since the old times, the indigenous games are mainly practiced by men with the meaning to regulate social relations and thus giving special meaning to the physical training of the players who were also responsible for ritual procedures, such as beheading and other human sacrifices such the case of the Olmec and Tlatilco cultures (Roman Piña Chan, 1969). In Chile, Vriessen's (2004) study of "Palin" or "Chueca," a game played by the Mapuche Indians, emphasizes that there is a close relationship between this game and different aspects of the group's culture, such as language, religion, war, magic, music, song, dance, feasting and education, even in present-day society.

Log Racing [runners carrying logs] are comomon in the western Brazil among the Gê-speaking communities. In some cultures man [carrying log of 100kg] and more recently women [carrying logs of 60-70 kgs] can practice this activity. Along the Tocantins River the Krahô Indians claim that their ancestors, the Sun and the Moon, invented that semi-religious game to play among themselves, and then passed it on to their human children (Nabokov, 1981, p. 92). In an interview with a Krahô leader during the Indigenous Peoples Games in Ceará, he declared that the log race has several meanings and one of them is that it is a form of gratitude for having had a successful hunt. (Rocha Ferreira,....

Wrestling-type physical fights also have an important social role in indigenous culture. For example, the "Huka-Huka", as the Kamayura call fighting, is a widely practiced sport in the Upper Xingu River Basin, in the Brazilian Amazon (Van Mele&Renson, 1992). It is a fight especially practiced during adolescent passage rituals, a time when young men are placed in seclusion. The great fight occurs at the end of the seclusion period, during the feast of Kuarup. In the last years the

women are also fighting. They even show these fighting in different occasions in the city festivals (Tavares, 1994)

Games and physical education for girls in Argentina reflects the cultural ethnic identities mesticized diversity, consequence of the colonization process, immigration and governmental policies, together with the cultural globalization. In this country the pre-colonial era documentation¹ does not provide much information about the games practiced by indigenous girls. Most information is from that time to the present topic can be observed difference between Western and those girls.

Games are vital part of everyday life for people and thus form people's worldview. In the case of indigenous peoples inhabiting what is now Argentina since pre-hispanic colonization, each group has developed its own play culture for children, which was oppressed and modified by cultural imposition (Bonfil, 1988).

Collas and Aymara indigenous women have also practiced games related to household chores. These "games present differences in relation to gender of the practitioner: there are games for men and women. Through them children internalize the roles and activities in their community held by men and women. In the Andean culture roles are very specific and are perceived as complementary (...) Play as a cultural practice is a means of socialization that allows the Andean child internalize gender roles and define the social roles of men and women. (...) This suggests that games have a character that represents family integration: are games that have complementarity of roles. There is also a 31% male games, related to gender identity: games with productive roles as planting and hunting. Female gender is identified with reproductive roles: load the wawa and cooking games or with more "feminine subtlety". (Ochoa, 1995).

Games can reproduce social roles in society, for instance Sara Victoria Sánchez Fuentes , an Andean woman recalling her childhood said: "... we imitate the carnival, making the water like wine and we fell stained ..."; "... we played the carnival, making rounds and singing songs ..."; "... played by bartering with roles as banknotes and coins stones like ...;" ... we played to make smugglers Bolivia to La Argentina ... "" ... did the designated drinking tea and wine, trod the sheep as did the parents, danced and played to that machaban ... ". (Ochoa, 1995).

This situation occurs throughout the Patagonian Andes extension, but is not exclusive to indigenous peoples. Ferrarese (2014) observed that this situation is repeated in other societies and cultures. Both girls and boys should help the family from an early age. Usually it ends the possibility of playing against having to assist with household chores from an early age is always the girl. The male has playful space after performing the tasks of help at home.

¹ que se desarrolló solamente en parte del territorio que la Patagonia, incluida la actual provincia de La Pampa, y la Región Chaqueña que estaban pobladas por pueblos originarios que resistían la invasión y dominación europea. Los cuales fueron oprimidos por el ejército nacional hacia fines del siglo XIX

Education

The ancestral indigenous education was handed down from the parents, extended family in their community. Each ethnical group has its own way to care for the children, youth and old people. The sacred rituals are important moments to transform a person. These days the indigenous education is not necessarily restricted to 'traditional' knowledge, but should also be understood as indigenous ways of transmitting 'new' knowledge. The challenge is to find new ways to transmit their knowledge to the next generation.

The formal school created in the indigenous lands didn't bring necessary good experiences. The children studied in the cities suffer prejudice and have to face difficult barriers.

In Venezuela, at the age of 12, youngsters dominate the chores according to their gender. Currently this teaching is disadvantaged, motivated by the fact that the educational system of the western culture has replaced indigenous education, allowing little time for this for this autochthonous education.

The fragmentation of the indigenous social systems in Venezuela, induced directly or indirectly by the permanent contact with the non-indigenous environment, disturbs the traditional system of childhood socialization, which negatively affects the transmission of cultural wisdom in each group, such as the construction of identities.

Physical education as part of the formal general education that reaches the child through school is in crisis, because education programs adapted to the indigenous does not recognise traditional knowledge.

Parents support and trust the school, nevertheless because when the child finishes, he or she is not well prepared for continuing studies. The education system is not well integrated with the community according to the culture.

Indigenous communities that are nearby towns have adapted themselves to their customs and life habits. This is especially the case for young teenage girls who don't want to fulfill the customs of their ethnic groups. However, for the ethnic groups that are kept far away from towns, which are deep in the jungle are still practising traditional habit.

In Argentina the school children do not play ethno-games during the lunch breaks and in physical education classes. They are more focused on world-known sports than ethno-oriented games and ethno-sports, which the first ones usually exclude girls, separate both men and women and require different levels of performance. The school programs can be confounding with a sports club. In these spaces the games of indigenous peoples are not present. In indigenous villages the games are separated by gender, which marks the cultural identities of each society.

In Venezuela indigenous communities generally have competitive games between close communities. They invite each other to compete where young men and women play (eg football, volleyball). Currently state institutions that rule sport, also organize the Indigenous Regional inter-Municipalities Sport Games and the Scholar Indigenous Sport Games at indigenous schools.

The National Institute of Sport (IND) organizes the National Indigenous Games such as wood chopping (male and female), swimming (male and female), cassava grating (female), canoeing (male and female), luchayecuana (male), archery (male), blowpipe (male), encebado stick (male) strength test (male), watura running (female), football (male and female), futsal (male and female), volleyball (male and female), athletics (male and female).

In Brazil, despite the silencing imposed by processes of oppression (colonization, government programs for indigenous peoples, globalization and the like), traditional games are still alive in the memories of ancient peoples and have remained significant, at least in some communities (Rocha Ferreira, 2009). In the wake of the recognition of indigenous human rights included in the Brazilian Constitution, their cultures, languages and traditions have come to be recognized and protected as intangible heritage. In the process, some traditional games have resurfaced and others were appropriated and reinterpreted as popular games.

In 1996, the indigenous leaders, the brothers Marcos Terena and Carlos Terena, organized the first event called Indigenous Olympics, since renamed as Indigenous Peoples' Games. The games have appropriated elements from both ancestral indigenous cultures and the contemporary world (Terena, 2011). The scenery of the events congregate different moments: – (i) opening procession similar to the opening of the Olympic Games, where women and male enter wearing their typical attires, (ii) the arena – where games take place, (iii) arts and crafts shops, (iv) social forum to discuss different indigenous issues.

The Indigenous Peoples Games are nationwide in scope in Brazil and were held in different places: Goiania, Goiás (1996), Guairá, Paraná (1999), Marabá, Pará (2000), Campo Grande, MatoGrosso do Sul (2001), Marapani, Pará (2002), Palmas, Tocantins (2003), Porto Seguro, Bahia (2004), Fortaleza, Ceará (2005), Recife/Olinda, Pernambuco (2007), Paragominas, Pará (2009), Porto Nacional, Tocantins (2011) and Cuiabá, MatoGrosso (2013). The 1st World Indigenous games will be held in Palmas – Tocantins in 2015. These events influence the indigenous peoples in Brazil. In general the men bring their wives and small children to participate. In the first years of the games the wives used to come as companies, or to sell arts and crafts, but within time they started participate in some games and also in the social forum categories: (i) survival activities in the daylife of the settlement such arrow, cannon to fish, (ii) those inserted in the sacreated rituals such fighting, log running (iii) and more general ones such as hooping and football. (Rocha Ferreira, 2009, 2014, Kok& Rocha Ferreira, 2011).

The presence of women in the arena of the games has been increasingly constant, especially in the dances, 100 & 400 meters races, log race (50 kgs), tug of war, physical fights, dances and football. They do not however participate in bow and arrow activities, blowgun, canoeing, Ronkrã (bats and ball with two times), Tihimore (bowling ball with quince), Xikunahity (ball game with the head).

The indigenous people's games have contributed to exchange experiences other ethnic groups, to show and strengthen their culture, traditions and values, to affirm their rights among others. They bring new openings for the women such as involvement in the games and sports, open opportunities for them to meet other indigenous women, to get in contact with different cultures, to discuss different issues in the social forum and to re-think their role as indigenous women (Rocha Ferreira, 2014).

Indigenous Legislation

Currently, the legal dispositions contained in the Constitution of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela (1999), established from Article 119 to 126 all rights and opportunities that the indigenous people have in the national territory; likewise the Organic Law of Indigenous People and Communities was approved in 2005.

These rights have been recognized as specific and ordinary rights. In 2007 the Ministry for Indigenous People is created, the rector authority of government policies in indigenous matters. An institutional overturn has occurred, because the indigenous have begun to raise their voice and are beginning to be heard nationally and internationally. In Alto Orinoco in 2014, the first Municipality Office of Attention for The Indigenous Woman opened in Venezuela.

In Brazil the indigenous began to be recognized as citizens in the 1988 Federal Constitution. Article 215 states that the State shall ensure to fullest to exercise cultural rights and access to sources of national culture, and also to support and foster the appreciation and diffusion of cultural expressions. § 1 - The State shall protect the expressions of popular cultures, indigenous and african-Brazilian, and other groups participating in the national civilization process (Vade Mecum, p 130). Article 231 recognizes to the Indians their social organization, customs, languages, beliefs and traditions, and the rights to the lands they traditionally occupy, incumbent upon the Union to demarcate them, protect and enforce all of its assets (Vade Mecum, p. 231)

In education approved in the Law of Guidelines and Bases for National Education - LDB No. 9.394 / 96 Article 78 says: the Education System of the Union, with the collaboration of federal agencies for culture and assistance to the Indians, shall develop integrated teaching and research programs, bilingual and intercultural education for indigenous peoples (BRAZIL, 2013, art. 78 , p.

43). Article 79 states that in Union will support technical and financial education systems in the provision of intercultural education to indigenous communities by developing integrated teaching and research programs.

Final consideration

The social role of indigenous women in history has its greatest strength in daily life. They have a 'silent' protagonism which influences men and leaders in different sectors of society, such as conflicts and peace in inter-ethnic marriages and especially in the delivery of education. Women's empowerment in public life is becoming more common during recent decades as a result of social change processes. Some of them are now chiefs who represent their people in different governmental positions, and participate as 'athletes' in indigenous games. However, to attain new social roles, indigenous women require changes in the balance of power. This is needed between men and women, between indigenous and non-indigenous societies and also the state. The physical education programs are oriented to sport and should additionally recognize ethno-games and ethno-sports in the schools. Schools best address this challenge.

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