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In 2003 the Brazilian Congress approved a law that included as mandatory disciplines at regular schools the study of History of Africa and Africans, the fight of black people in Brazil, black Brazilian culture and the role of black people in the evolution of national society, causing distinct pedagogies related to African culture in Brazil to emerge. This has regained the contribution of black people in social, economical and political areas on the history of the country. However, many of these enterprises did not attract the youth to the debates, since the methodologies available couldn't handle the cognitive infrastructure that new technologies and networks provide to connected black youth. And Coco de Umbigada Cultural Center - which is also a *terreiro*, named Ilê Axé Oxum Karé - is actively engaged in building a cultural digital Brazilian literacy while proposing methods which enable the youth to have fun along with learning, on how to break the habit of prejudice and discrimination towards Afro-Brazilian religions, in a process that enriches ludicity as means for cognition. This cultural center is based in Olinda, at the state of Pernambuco, in the northeastern region of Brazil, and we believe that they have what it takes to gather and motivate, in a privileged manner, the transformations into the hegemonic frame.

In 2010 the project started being developed by 3Ecologias in a partnership with Coco de Umbigada Cultural Center. The method used in Contos de Ifá allows the implementation of games into public schools, cultural centers, terreiros and indigenous areas, for example. The media through which we speak to the youngsters makes things easier to involve them, impacting on the empowerment of people based on their cultural identity. Putting together technology, methods, youth and the knowledge of Afro-Brazilian religion and history, we now have four phases of Contos de Ifá available to play, each one dedicated to an orisha: Eshu (Exú), Ogun (Ogún), Oshossí (Odé) and Babalú-Ayé (Obaluaiê). Two phases are currently being developed



(Ossain and Oxumaré) and this is just the beginning out of 256 stories to be produced and shared.

**Q3: What is unique in Contos de Ifá, and in what way is it innovative? How is it related to video games and religion/culture?**

Contos de Ifá aims to reduce prejudice of color, tradition and religion. Youth is deeply connected to the different kinds of media. Interactive experimentations are highly used by them, daily. But what kind of message are they consuming? Usually games bring with them a heavy narrative loaded with violence, abuse and prejudice. At Contos de Ifá the player will learn ancestral and natural knowledge, since the orishas represent nature. Such as the story on which Yemanjá teaches that if there's not plenty of food for all we need to share, so that everyone has a proper meal.







technologies and communications. Many of them begin the lab thinking they are dealing with a binary method (teacher/student) and leave it as a co-creator of a product that's capable of transforming economy into more social and human. The turn in their attitudes when you face them, afterwards, with other challenges of the lab, is noticeable.

**Q4: Why did you choose this name, does it has a specific meaning?**

Contos de Ifá means "tales of Ifá". Ifá is the divination system of the yorubá mythology, from West Africa, composed by poems and proverbs that tell the story of the Orishas, representing nature. The system is composed of 16 stories subdivided into 256 situations and circumstances. Since Ifá is the storyteller in the religion - which actually is passed orally from the iyalawo<sup>iii</sup> (mother of divinities) or babalawo (father of divinities) to the others, we thought there couldn't be a name more appropriate than this.



Fig. 6: In a screen of the game, the shells are thrown indicating the start point of a phase. The conches are used at the Ifá, the divination system, to give people some advices.

## Q5: What are the objectives, aims or concepts you want to share in gameenvironments?

We want to share a perspective of a sustainability model engaging black youth in the market of creative technologies. Beyond capabilities on technical development and ancestral knowledge, the labs fulfill a gap on the creation of new business models that deliver results to communities as well as it implements different roles to the educational spaces put into action in suburban areas.



Fig. 7: Sound track recording for the game. Picture by Jarbas Jácome/Contos de Ifá







to explore the context of video games as a creation, experimentation, learning and reflection tool, which is particularly suitable for collaborative, transdisciplinary and transcultural work between young people and their communities. PlayLabito will be an international lab that will take place in four different countries — Argentina, Brazil, Mexico and Spain. Its main aim is to enable the creation of citizen collaborative teams that will develop video games and interactive artistic works as a methodology of analysis and reflection on citizenship and related social issues, both on a local and global scope. This project seeks to improve the regional presence of youth in the video game global production through the re-appropriation of the medium. The communication backbone is going to be provided by the website <http://playlabito.arsgames.net>. For now, you can check out a bit more about our projects on <http://3ecologias.net/>.

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<sup>i</sup> Dendê is a fruit of the African Oil Palm (*Elaeis guineensis*), native to West Africa in the region from Angola to Gambia.

<sup>ii</sup> Picture by Arisson Marinho/AGECOM This image is under a Creative Commons License CC BY 2.0

<sup>iii</sup> Iyalawo and babalawo are spiritual titles that denotes the woman or the man are such as a priest, if compared to catholic religion.