


CHAPTER 65

The narration of the experience by the elder Terena: reflections from Walter Benjamin

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ABSTRACT

Based on the role of narrativity in the sharing of ancestral experiences, the present work starts from Walter Benjamin's conception of narration, identifying the ancient of the Terena ethnic group, from Mato Grosso do Sul, as the exemplar of the classic narrator. From this perspective, the ancient is

taken as the authority of a time traveler, whose role in the community is to repress the immemorial experience [Erfahrung] of his people, to preserve them and transmit them to new generations. The work is based on fragments of narratives by teachers from Terena indigenous schools collected by one of the researchers. These fragments are taken as small Benjaminian monads, from which complex illuminations of meanings radiate on the experiences [Erlebnis] of the Terena people and their struggle of resistance against the shattering of their traditions and ways of life. Thus, the objective is to reflect on the fundamental role played by the Terena ancient in the conservation of archaic narrativity, which has the following characteristics: practical sense, authority in the preservation of tradition and guardian of the memory and wisdom of the native peoples, brushing the relevance of these guardians against the grain.

Keywords: Narrator, Narration, Ancient Terena Monads.

1 INTRODUÇÃO

The experience passed by word of mouth is the source to which all narrators have turned.
(BENJAMIN, 2012, p. 214)

In 1936, Walter Benjamin (WB) continued a series of works centered on the modern experience which, at its conclusion, fell into decline due to the shocks caused by the emergence of the great *city*. Still according to Benjamin, modern life produces too many shocks, without time for the proper psychological processing, triggering both repression and sensory anesthesia due to an overdose of stimuli.

Benjamin's classic example of the loss of experience is the case of combatants who returned from the front of the first war silenced, devastated and unable to narrate what happened: "Poorer in communicable experiences, not richer" (BENJAMIN, 2012, p. 213). The anti-war experience, although devastating, considering the barbarity of technical innovations to kill other human beings, would be repeated a few years later, expanding the powers of the human extermination machines, from Auschwitz to Iroshima and Nagasaki.

The reflections carried out in the essay *Der Erzähler Betrachtungen zum Werk Nikolai Leskows* [“The narrator: considerations on the work of Nicolai Leskov ”], reiterates the idea that the narrative faculty would be extinct, as well as the communicability of experience. However, despite the melancholy observation of its retraction, it can be seen in *The narrator* that the faculty of narrating frequently returns in history, being reedited by new narrators who find ways to exchange ancestral and modern experiences, such as Poe 's *Man of the Crowd* . , Proust's *Recheche* , Joyce's *Ulysses* , or in Kafka's general work.

It is in this perspective of rupture and fragmentation of the narrative that WB's ideas cross the reflections of this article, which takes the elder of the Terena ethnic group, from Matogrosso do Sul, as the prototype of the classic narrator, a traveler of the village and of time, whose role in the collectivity is to hold back ancestral experiences of its people, conserve them and pass them on to new generations.

Based on fragments of narratives by teachers from Terena indigenous schools, collected by one of the researchers in the course of his doctoral research, the objective is to reflect, based on Benjamin's fragmentary hermeneutics, on the fundamental role played by the Terena elder in the conservation of narrativity. arcaica, based on at least three main characteristics of the classic narrator of WB: practical sense, authority in the preservation of tradition and guardian of memory and wisdom. These characteristics, of mutual imbrications, allow the elder Terena to act as the *Angelus Novus* of *Theses About the Concept of History* (*Theses*), by WB, whose ethical-historical commitment is to stir up the debris of the storm of “progress” and find the voices silenced from its people oppressed by more than half a millennium of Portuguese invasion. We use the metaphor of history against the grain to corroborate the importance of the *Velho Truncos* as an immense constellation of sociocultural experiences of the *Tereno* people .

2 THE OLD TRUNK PLACE IN “THE NARRATOR” [*DER ERZÄHLER*]

The great narrator always has his roots in the people (BENJAMIN, 2012, p. 231)

In opposition to the neglect and disregard for capitalist relations of production, whose contempt is patent, in WB's essay the old man enjoys great prestige as a guardian of the memory and culture of a collectivity. It is not by chance that his choice falls on the Russian writer Nicolai Leskov , but because of his representation as a scribe from remote communities in the interior of Russia. Leskov was a commercial representative of an English firm and traveled to the corners of Tsarist Russia and collected traditions, knowledge and experiences from peasants, becoming, so to speak, an archaic narrator. It is from him that WB develops an original and profound theory of narration as an intergenerational exchange of experiences, in clear opposition to the solipsistic *status* of the modern novel.

The concept of experience [*Erfahrung*], resignified by WB in *The Narrator* , it is etymologically and semantically linked to the trip. The German word *Erfahrung* [experience] originates from the verb *Fahren* , which is linked to a crossing, a journey, that is, experience is something that accumulates from the

knowledge of those who travel, who come from far away, in time and in the space. So much so that the classic Benjaminian narrator is the sailor or old peasant, both travelers in their own way, “like someone who comes from afar” (BENJAMIN, 2012, p.214).

What covers an authoritative narrative is the substrate of the accumulated experiences, the lived life. Hence the importance that Benjamin attributes to the dying, precisely because he has already completed the trajectory of a lifetime and, even so, in the final moments, he enters the threshold of death to leave final advice to the living. Nowadays, as WB reminds us, no one dares to give advice, let alone to receive it. This is because there is a setback in the communicability of experience, which passes from generation to generation, matured by time and the tedium of a life lived according to natural time and not chronological time; time of more or less, imprecise and interchanged with other temporalities, and not an “empty and homogeneous time”. The maxims of advice that (re)emerge in the narratives are always lurking [a time from now, *Kairos*], as they are strategically taken from a waiting time [Cronos] to tactically convert into a time when Cronos brings back the *Kairós*, in order to echo as millenary practices of mockery of historical contingencies of improbable, but latent, overcoming.

With the brevity of time in modernity, so does memory and, with it, history. The “listening community” disappears and the “mass” emerges, without reference to itself and lost in the avalanche of information. The old narrator, on the other hand, informs nothing, imposes nothing on the listeners, except for his authority that comes from the wisdom gathered in his space-time travels, his raw material. However, he doesn't tell stories as they actually happened, with linear plot or proven cohesion; on the contrary, he feeds his narrative with a “I heard”, “I was told that”, “if I remember correctly”. Who gives meaning to the narrative is not himself, but the listener; this is the depository of the narrative and its continuator.

The old man in *Der Erzähler* occupies a privileged place of anamnesis, of bringing to memory the stories lost in the sands of time; not history with a capital H, but those collected in the heart of community life, in the distension of events signified by the collectivity, always traversed by oblivion. The old narrator presents himself as the guardian of memory, the one who holds back the weight of tradition, protecting the story from death through oblivion. At the same time, he needs to captivate listeners to become narrators, because he knows that when he is no longer among them, the narratives will be remembered.

In Benjamin's essay, the old man has an oracular *ethos* , one that unveils the veil of memories to update the past and give it a new meaning in the present. His wisdom is always pointing, like Janus bifronte, to the threshold portals between the past and the present, between the forgotten and the remembered, between what was and what can be. The allegories that enter the scene cross time, always lacking new meanings. To remind you, the word allegory, of Greek origin, refers both to another [*allos* - *αλλος*] speech and to the other of speech [*agoreuein* - *αγορευειν*]. This is one of the meanings that we can intuit from the Benjaminian conception of the narrative of the old man, a word that holds within itself the respectful Latin meaning of “antianus”, the one that confronts itself with the years, with time, with life and, therefore, has other words, other meanings, other stories to tell. Curious is also the origin of the adjective **old** , which

comes from the Classical Latin *vetulus*, which has an even more archaic origin in the Indo-European *wet* [year], whose meaning is derived from the previous year's harvest - opposing it -, coming to be referred generically by common usage to whatever *comes before*, ancient. At the same time, what comes before updates the past, or as Benjamin says, redeems it from death through oblivion.

As can be seen, this is a very different conception from the current one that has of the elder. As a result of a utilitarian view of the body and mind, everything that is old is currently subject to disposability. More and more new things are getting old, because they are briefly outdated for greater fluidity of the merchandise. In this logic, both the body and the subject are conceived as merchandise, whose productivity has an expiration date. The words relating to those who are no longer “useful” for the system, the retirees, are symptomatic: retired [in practice, yes, because the wear and tear is so great that the subject needs “reform”] and inactive [that is, the one who that lacks activity]. The ethics and culture of work, as a private exploitation of vital forces, ended up excluding the old from the important canons of modernity, relegating it to ostracism and associating it with everything that is decrepit. Therefore, the old man, as a subject, also lacks social importance. Like the soldier who returned from the war, the retiree from alienated work is someone who returns from the front muted, without communicable experiences. It is likely that from this *Zeitgeist* [spirit of the time] Benjamin's statement (2012, p. 213) comes: “People who know how to narrate properly are increasingly rare [...] seemed totally secure and inalienable: the faculty of exchanging experiences”.

There are many interpretations of the melancholy contained in WB's essay, alternating with more or less pessimistic views. However, as we said before, one can find in it a non-melancholic glimpse that concerns the transmutation power of the narrative, that is, as historical conditions have been transformed, the muses are in charge of finding other means of narrative expression. , in order to preserve the reminiscences. Thus, the ancestral oral narrative (epic poetry) acquired a new form, taking refuge in writing, whose immemorial symbology preserved forever the gift of storytelling. Even losing its collective bias, the modern novel protects the narrative from its decline, reappearing through the hands of narrators who usually ask the muses for inspiration in the opening of their writings, such as Homer, Hesiod and Camões, to tell stories that crossed the times while maintaining the their rumor, thus becoming universal classics. As Calvino said (1993, p. 10): “A book that is configured as the equivalent of the universe, similar to ancient talismans, is called a classic”.

This is the theoretical background contextualization that guides the investigation of Terena talismans, their ancient narrators, whose aim is to triangulate narratives by teachers from some visited indigenous schools about the archaic narrative function of the so-called *Old Trunks* based on the archetypes of the benjaminian narrator. But first, we move on to some notes on how to mobilize the Benjaminian constellation of narratives.

3 BRIEF NOTES ON HOW TO OPERATE WITH NARRATIVES IN A BENJAMINIAN APPROACH

Being dialectical means having the wind of history in your sails. (BENJAMIN, 2007, p. 515)

The way of operating with narratives, based on WB's fragmentary hermeneutics (VENTURA, 2019), does not fit into the traditional forms of phrasal analysis, categorizations and content analysis. This is because such forms demand inductive and deductive procedures typical of a logic that Benjamin (2016) called *more geometric* [geometric mode], whose search is for the explanatory exhaustion of the narrative. In a diametrically opposite direction, for the Berliner author, the method of interpreting the phenomena should follow a path of detour, of traces, of excavation of sediments of meaning long buried. He said: “Method this umweg . darstellung als umweg ” [“Method is bypass. Representation as a deviation”] (BENJAMIN, 2016, p. 31). This is because the phenomenon is always a montage, a junction of scraps of stories, a construction of images, always elusive. Hence his interest in images of thought [*Bilddenken*] or of thought as an image. But images, as we know, elude us all the time; and the more they flee the more we try to catch it in the nets of the logical-formal procedure “which tries to capture the truth in a spider's web spread between various forms of knowledge, as if it flew from outside to fall there” (BENJAMIN, 2012, p. 16). This conception is linked to an epistemological procedure that values the pictographic montage of fragments that, glued together in a mosaic, make an image shine that, as the author said, “fly by” (BENJAMIN, 2012, p. 19), because “knowledge it exists only in flashes” (BENJAMIN, 2007, p. 499).

Still according to Benjamin, wherever one deals with history [and stories] one must consider both the movement and its caesura. As we have seen, thought makes itself known through the image [*Bilddenken*], therefore, knowledge is the image of the object that is immobilized, photographed, by the observing subject. Here, in the Benjaminian stellar composition, another important star enters the scene: the monad . About this he says:

Thinking does not only include the movement of ideas , but also their immobilization. When thought suddenly stops in a configuration saturated with tensions, it communicates to them a shock, through which this configuration crystallizes as a monad . The historical materialist only approaches a historical object when he confronts it as a monad . (BENJAMIN, 20212, p. 2012, p. 251)

In several works Benjamin refers to the monad , a philosophical concept by the German philosopher Leibniz, which he re-signified. This “arcane” is recurrent in his works from the study of German tragic drama [*Trauespiels*] to the last writings of *The Theses* . Benjamin mobilized monadology until his last days of life, transforming it into a cognitive and ontological operation for the interpretation of the phenomena to be studied. In the monad , according to him, the micro and the macro of the phenomenon are contained, in a dialectical relationship [“dialectic of immobility” (BENJAMIN, 2007, p. 505)]. There is no

precedence of totality or mere trace, as there is a relationship of dialectical impregnation between these two phenomenal images of the presentation of the idea. The researcher's task, under this understanding, is to “[...] build large constructions from tiny elements, cut out with clarity and precision. And even discover in the analysis of the small individual moment the crystal of the total event ” (BENJAMIN, 2007, p. 502).

Here is what we intend, in an attempt to operate with the Benjaminian hermeneutics: to sketch an image of the important role of the Terena elder in the preservation and continuity of the memories of his people [“the crystal of the total event”] from fragments [“tiny elements”] from the narratives of teachers from Terena indigenous schools.

4 NARRATIVES OF TERENA SCHOOL TEACHERS

The remembrance establishes the chain of tradition, which transmits events from generation to generation. (BENJAMIN, 2012, p. 228)

The research data presented here and analyzed from the Benjaminian hermeneutics, are part of an ongoing doctoral research that investigates how Terena indigenous teachers use traditional knowledge, the important role of the elders in its transmission, and how the transposition to the westernized curriculum.

The collection of the teachers' narratives was carried out in 2021, amidst the wanderings and crossings of one of the researchers through six Terena communities, in the state of Mato Grosso do Sul (MS), thirty-one (31) teachers from municipal and municipal schools were interviewed. indigenous states. The semi-structured interviews were recorded and later transcribed, preserving the interviewees' dialectal oral language [in Terena Portuguese, due to the colonial imposition of the Portuguese language on this ethnic group], through which it is intended to build a kaleidoscope of tributes to the elders narrators of the Terena people. .

From the grand narratives (interviews) two small reports will be extracted, organized in the form of monads , whose function is to make the total event shine, as Benjamin said, the exemplary “rumor” of the Terena narrators’ performance and their influence for the recovery of ancestral wisdom. the risk of extinction at a time of danger. Well, that's what it's all about, since the self-devouring modernity wants to subsume its image and likeness. As Benjamin (2012, p. 243) reminds us in *Theses* : “Historically articulating the past does not mean knowing it 'as it actually was'. It means appropriating a memory, as it flashes at the moment of danger. [...] The danger threatens both the existence of tradition and those who receive it”.

selected two monads to characterize the role of the old narrator Terena in the opportune and necessary articulations and appropriations of the past and present of the history of his people, brushing history against the grain and preserving its memory and identity. The first monad is called “ Cubicá ” and the second, “The eggs of experience”. Let's go to them.

4.1 CUBICÁ

And that enemy has not ceased to win. (Benjamin, 2012, p. 244)

[...] in the old days, my grandfather who is the patron of this school Armando Gabriel. He was the only one who would do the calculation, he didn't talk about area, calculate area. For example of a certain crop, he talks. I don't know if this is what your culture says ... but they used to say the word “Cubicá”! Ever heard of it? “Cubicá”! This one, for example, I have land there. Then he arrived at my grandfather Armando Gabriel and spoke, they said: -Uncle Armando. They used to say: - What I want you to do for me is “Cubicá” this area. So I didn't use the area calculation as we mathematicians know today, right? So this relationship we bring to our students. For example, a word that was used in the past like this word “Cubicá”, right. I don't know about where did that word come from, I don't know, we can also search deeper with our, our ancestors. But that word we already knew was area calculation. Interesting that he had a way of doing this area calculation. But I later came to understand with him that this “Cubicá” is the area. It was to calculate the areas. And we always apply it in the classroom, right! The ancients did this, this type of calculation. I had this notion and we are going to do this type of calculation. (Teacher Terena J3¹)

The narrator, according to Benjamin, is among the wise. From this knowledge comes the practical sense, which underlies the most interesting narratives. Whether fairy tales, Homeric epics or fables, all great narratives rest on the practical or proverbial sense of archaic communities. The inventive genius of Ulysses, the Achilles heel or the dangerous vanity of Narcissus, has its origin in the human capacity to overcome the limits imposed by nature and, at the same time, it sounds like a warning that the creature can turn against its own creator. So the epic narrative keeps with it an ancient gift, that of giving advice. Thus Benjamin (2012, p. 216) refers to this aspect of the faculty of narrative:

It [the narrative] always brings with it, in an open or latent way, a utility. This usefulness can sometimes consist of a moral teaching, or a practical suggestion, or also a proverb or rule of life – in any case, the narrator is a man who knows how to give advice to the listener. But if 'giving advice' sounds old-fashioned today, this is because experiences are losing their communicability. [...] The advice woven into the substance of lived life has a name: wisdom – the epic side of truth – is dying out.

Found in many classic narrators, wisdom is what is most exemplary in the elder Terena, as he extracts his knowledge from the practical experience of solving immediate problems, developing a “practical sense” to which all narrators resort, as in the case of the *Cubicá*, this adaptation of the official surveying.

For political and ideological reasons, surveying never comes to us as *Cubicá*, which probably derives from the process of cubing Terena lands for agriculture. Area calculation is usually thought of as a Western, mainly Pythagorean, invention. Little or almost never is said that this invention is oriental, Egyptian and Mesopotamian, coming from needs linked to agriculture, as is also the case of *Cubicá*. The historian of mathematics Carl Boyer (1974, p. 10) recalls that “The Pythagorean theorem, for example, does not appear at all in the Egyptian documents found, but tablets from even the ancient Babylonian period show that in Mesopotamia the theorem was largely used”. And so it has been with the so-called western science, that is, the contributions of native peoples in the most diverse areas of knowledge are neglected, despising ancient

¹Research subjects will be identified by the initials of their names and the order in which they were interviewed.

traditions, as if knowledge of the world began with bourgeois society and the so-called sciences of nature. This is the case of *Cubicá*, which is not just a tradition, but an example that the ways of seeing the world and intervening in it go far beyond what was pre-established in hegemonic cultures, especially the colonizing ones. As Benjamin (2012, p. 245) well recalled in *Theses*, “There has never been a document of culture that was not simultaneously a document of barbarism”. And more: “The gift of awakening the sparks of hope in the past is the exclusive privilege of the historian convinced that the dead will not be safe either if the enemy wins.” (BENJAMIN, 2012, p. 244). In the specific case here, the “exclusive privilege” belongs to Mr. Armando Gabriel, *Xuve* [Old trunk] Terena who, with a thousand arts of making, to paraphrase De Certeau (2014), hunts [does science] in someone else's land. So make *Cubicá* it is to erect a document of resistance, articulating the past and the present not only to dam the Terena culture, but to protect the dead from death from oblivion and “brush history against the grain” (BENJAMIN, 2012, p. 245).

4.2 FERTILIZING EGGS OF EXPERIENCES

Boredom is the dream bird that hatches the eggs of experience (Benjamin, 2012, p. 221)

Yeah, I lived with him a lot! Because the stories told there, every morning. Terena he, he takes his mate, right! And there, cassava, potatoes were passed around the fire and transmitted this knowledge, right, of the Terena culture. Today is different; today I don't... well, I don't have that environment I used to have anymore. That you get there and get up there and live. That was from the very old culture, from the Terena culture. Nowadays, it's Terena's family, they're farther away because she has to work. So you don't have that moment, that meeting. [...] Yeah, today we have this difficulty, because I don't have many elders anymore, you know, who can talk. (Teacher Terena J2)

In the continuation of the sentence of the epigraph above, Benjamin says that any whisper in the foliage scares the *dream bird*, which is perched on the nest interwoven with activities linked to boredom, that is, those that still preserve a hint of work and shared dialogue, which creates the listening community. The entire passage is this:

The slightest whisper in the foliage scares him. Their nests – the activities closely associated with boredom – have already become extinct in cities, and in the countryside too, they are on the verge of extinction. With that, the gift of listening disappears, and the community of listeners disappears. Telling stories has always been the art of telling them again, and it is lost when the stories are no longer preserved. *It gets lost because no one else spins or weaves while listening to the story*. (BENJAMIN, 2012, p. 221, emphasis added).

What the monad above denounces is precisely the suppression of the traditional rounds of conversations, watered with the flavor of *tererê*, and the perilous twilight of narration, whether because of the imposition of capitalist labor relations undermining Terena subsistence, or because the “Old Trunks” [elders] are dying without bequeathing their wisdom to present and future generations. In another passage, taken from Paul Valéry, Benjamin laments the fleetingness of time and boredom in modernity, impacting the narrative capacity of subjects and the exchange of genuine experiences. He says: “Today's man no longer cultivates what cannot be shortened” (BENJAMIN, 2012, p. 223). In fact, for modern man, time is

an enemy and not an ally. This is because time is spent in isolated and individual experiences [*Erlebnis*], not sedimenting those necessary layers of observation, rest and reflection, which hatch the eggs of experience. It is in this sense that the bird flies and flees in fright. This is a continuous, homogeneous time that goes in a straight line, no matter where. The *Old Terena Trunk* is the opposite of this man, and therefore is the narrator par excellence. He not only tells ancient and traditional stories, he draws from the sap of his life what to tell, as Benjamin said (20212, p. 221), “like the potter's hand in the clay of the vase”. It is with his hands that the narrator Terena builds his stories and not only with his voice. He counts as he makes and drinks mate, when he plants, harvests and prepares manioc and potatoes in the flames of the ancestral fire. And as this artisanal way of life is in decline, the narrative capacity also declines, as there is no longer a stage for the theater of narration.

However, the paths of narrative and its conservation are hermetic and unfathomable. Apparently, many Terena teachers, like the two represented here, were “hooked” by the *Xuve narrators* . This is because without realizing it, they have also become narrators, transporting the bonfires to the classrooms [stealing again the fire of the gods], which can become a new *community of listeners* and where epic exploits can be remembered . of the Terena, restoring their foundational myth.

As is said in the Terena community of Cachoeirinha, such as pagan and Christian civilizations, the Terena have their founding myth, which is narrated more or less like this:

The creation of the Terena people

There was a man named OrekaYuvakae [in other Yurikoyuvakai translations]. This man no one knew of his origin, he had no father or mother, he was a man who was not known to anyone. He was walking in the world. Walking on a path, he heard the cry of a bird looking as if fearfully at the ground. That little bird was the good-bye.

This man, out of curiosity, started to get close. He saw a sheaf of grass, and below it was a hole, and in it there was a crowd, they were the Terena peoples. These men did not communicate and were shaky. There Oreka Yuvakae , holding it in his hands, pulled them all out of the hole.

oreka Yuvakae , worried, wanted to communicate with them and he couldn't. Thinking, he decided to summon several animals to try to make these people talk and he couldn't. Finally he invited the frog to make a presentation in front of him, the frog was successful because all these people laughed, from there they started to communicate and spoke to Oreka Yuvakae who were very cold. (BITTENCOURT; LADEIRA, 2000, p. 22-23)

Like Prometheus or Adam, Yurikoyuvakái emerges as an epic hero to give the Terena fire [knowledge] to soothe them from the cold, in addition to teaching them to speak, cultivate the land and domesticate animals. Varying a little from the classic narratives of a creator god, the Terena are created by a man, that is, they end up becoming creations of themselves. Certainly, Giambatista Vico would have liked this narrative, because in his conception of history the notion of human self-production of civil life is present, humanizing gods and heroes. Says he: “Every heathen nation had its Hercules, son of Jupiter. Varro, very knowledgeable about the things of antiquity, managed to enumerate forty of them.” (VICO, 1974, p. 45). Certainly Varrão did not enumerate Yurikoyuvakai, which must be noted in the telling of the world. Here, then, is the task posed to the Old and New Terena Trunks: brushing their own history against

the grain to once again “pull them all out of the hole”, from the great ditch of official historiography that has repeatedly silenced them.

5 CONSIDERATIONS THAT CANNOT BE FINAL

Nothing is more alien to Benjaminian hermeneutics than the conclusion. Quite the opposite of that, the narratives always deposit seeds wherever they go to bear new meanings and new stories, due to their immanent allegorical condition. As we have seen before, the prefix “allo” always presupposes the other and, consequently, the misrepresentation, the dialogical and dialectical contradiction. So that allegory is always a tributary of new meanings, never being able to exhaust the transcreating mediations of language.

Therefore, we are far from complete. On the contrary, each immobilization of the images of thought absorbed in the research could result in infinite monads, small pieces of history capable of mobilizing an entire life, the life of the Terena. Benjamin (2012, p. 240) said that the narrator's gift is to be able to tell his life, but “his dignity is to tell it all”. Hence the historical importance of the *Xuve*, of the old Terena narrators, because more than telling stories, they restore the traditional memory of their village and identify the new generations with their self-creation, until today resilient and resistant to the attacks of modern barbarism: the invasions the Portuguese, the Paraguayan army, the railroad, FUNAI or the farmers who (un)officially delimit the village, etc.

With so many *thousand other arts of making*, which would fit in a new essay, the Terena have resisted the most diverse types of violence, as well as the various native Brazilian peoples, pressured between illegal mining, predatory loggers and the unruly expansion in agribusiness, in the face of oblivious eyes of the state.

Xuve Terena is the counter-spring that resists [through the narration] the fragmentation that dangerously surrounds the community, *holding back* not only tradition, but the identity of its people.

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