

DOSSIER

THE NARRATIVE CONSTRUCTION OF VIOLENCE IN THE PARAENSE AMAZON IN THE NON-FICTION BOOK THE MASSACRE:

Eldorado do Carajás



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ABSTRACT – This article aims to understand how land conflict narratives in the Amazon are constructed in literary journalism – specifically the Eldorado do Carajás massacre, one of the more serious confrontations between military police and workers, and resulted in 19 farmers shot dead and more than 50 injured, in southeastern Pará. The corpus analysis selected for this work is the 2019 non-fiction book *O massacre: Eldorado do Carajás - Uma história de impunidade* (in English, *The Massacre: Eldorado do Carajás - A Story of Impunity*) written by journalist Eric Nepomuceno. Under the lens of Motta's (2007) "pragmatic analysis of journalistic narrative", we understand this book, with the results showing that it is essential to pay attention to cases of violence in the countryside, the devastation of the environment, and the excessive repression of people fighting for their right to land.

Key words: Amazonia. Land conflicts. Literary journalism. Non-fiction book *The Massacre*.

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A CONSTRUÇÃO NARRATIVA DA VIOLÊNCIA NA AMAZÔNIA PARAENSE NO LIVRO-REPORTAGEM O MASSACRE: Eldorado do Carajás

RESUMO – O presente artigo visa compreender como a narrativa dos conflitos por terra na Amazônia – em específico, o massacre de Eldorado do Carajás, um dos mais graves confrontos entre a polícia e os trabalhadores, que resultou em 19 trabalhadores mortos e mais de 50 feridos no sudeste paraense –, é construído no jornalismo literário. O corpus de análise selecionado é o livro-reportagem *O massacre: Eldorado do Carajás – Uma história de impunidade* (2019), escrito pelo jornalista Eric Nepomuceno. Sob as lentes da “análise pragmática da narrativa jornalística” de Motta (2007), tecemos a compreensão da referida obra, com a constatação, como resultados, da imprescindibilidade de atenção aos casos de violência no campo, da devastação do meio ambiente e da repressão demasiada ao povo que luta por seu direito à terra.

Palavras-chave: Amazônia. Conflitos por terra. Jornalismo literário. Livro-reportagem *O massacre*. Análise narrativa.

LA CONSTRUCCIÓN NARRATIVA DE LA VIOLENCIA EN LA AMAZONIA PARAENSE EN EL LIBRO-REPORTAJE LA MASACRE: De Eldorado do Carajás

RESUMEN – Este artículo tiene como objetivo comprender cómo se construye en el periodismo literario la narrativa de los conflictos por la tierra en la Amazonia – en concreto, la masacre de Eldorado do Carajás, uno de los enfrentamientos más graves entre la policía y los trabajadores, que se saldó con 19 trabajadores muertos y más de 50 heridos en el sureste de Pará. El corpus de análisis seleccionado es el libro-reportaje *O massacre: Eldorado do Carajás - Uma história de impunidade* (2019), escrito por el periodista Eric Nepomuceno. A través de la lente del “análisis pragmático de la narrativa periodística” de Motta (2007), hemos llegado a la comprensión del libro, con los resultados que muestran que es esencial prestar atención a los casos de violencia en el campo, la devastación del medio ambiente y la represión excesiva de las personas que luchan por su derecho a la tierra.

Palabras clave: Amazonia. Conflictos por la tierra. Periodismo literario. Libro-reportaje *La masacre*. Análisis narrativo

1 Introduction

As identified in the report *Conflicts in the Brazilian Countryside 2022*, published by the Pastoral Land Commission (CPT), a total of 2.018 protests were recorded in rural areas throughout the country in the year 2022. Of this total, 1.107 were held in the Amazon region, an area in which around 72.35% of all murders were the result of land disputes. This same report (published in April 2023) also described that of all the federation units that make up the Legal Amazon, the state of Pará (referred to as the “Pará Amazon”) registered the second-highest number of protests (175), only the state of Maranhão registered more (178).

The number of protests in the countryside of Pará is the

result of the deep-rooted and organized violence toward the local population in attempts to exclude them in favor of privileged political and economic groups (Loureiro & Guimarães, 2007). This situation became a constant and prominent issue in news reports, and after a few years, led to national and international coverage – as in 1996 when the State registered the highest total of rural workers murdered in the countryside; 72% of all deaths (Nepomuceno, 2019). Most of these deaths were the result of the massacre in Eldorado do Carajás, on April 17, 1996.

The massacre occurred as a result of military police attempting to remove around a thousand farmers who were camped out on the PA-150 highway to protest the state government's expropriation of the Macaxeira farm¹ (Barreira, 1999). However, their attempt to clear the highway turned into an uneven confrontation with landless rural workers armed with sticks and stones on one side, and more than 60 armed military police officers on the other (Costa, 2018). By the end of the day, 19 protesters were shot, two died in hospital, and more than 50 were seriously injured (Pereira, 2020).

Silva (2020) highlights that large-circulation Brazilian newspapers produced daily articles about the massacre for almost two months. However, Silva also points out that the press did not cover the complex issues involving the deaths of the farmers, whether for political or commercial reasons. In order to expose the injustice that occurred in the southeast of Pará, and present the relevant aspects of the land conflicts in the region, some journalists chose to write for independent newspapers or non-fiction books. This kind of format, according to Oliveira & Bernd (2021), has a wide range of detailed narratives which include roots, human projection, and possible developments.

Non-fiction books are one of the greatest expressions of literary journalism. This genre, which combines the objective techniques of journalism with the personal voice of literature, is an alternative to daily journalism because its literary language provides a space for creative experimentation (Costa, 2005) while the conditionality of language journalism is pressured by immediacy, time and space.

In other words, it constitutes a more interpretative form of journalism as it makes a concerted effort to understand the reality as experienced by certain subjects within a historical time frame and culture (Costa, 2020). When reflecting on the convergences

between journalism and literature, Marques (2002, pp. 15-17) states that language “seems to become literary when its use establishes a universe, a space for interaction of subjectivities (author and reader) that escape the immediacy, the predictable, and the stereotype of the situations and uses of language that shape everyday life”.

The relationships between journalism and literature are not identified here as homogeneous based on the historical perspectives underlying each field, with the presence of encounters and disagreements, divergences and convergences, conflicts, and negotiations. This research, however, is in line with the hybrid nature that non-fiction books use to address issues of social reality that are not present in the news daily, whether for editorial reasons, political alignments, a lack of professionals available to travel and cover stories, or temporal issues for more in-depth investigation.

In his attempt to publicize the lives of the people who suffered from one of the greatest barbarities in rural Brazil, journalist Eric Nepomuceno wrote his non-fiction book *The Massacre – Eldorado do Carajás: A Story of Impunity*. The book, published in 2007 and relaunched in 2019, reports on the events before, during and after the massacre and is based on testimonies from survivors and families of the victims. It also lays out a detailed examination of police reports, medical records, and other documents related to the event.

The Massacre was written by journalist, reporter, and translator Eric Nepomuceno. Born in the city of São Paulo, he began working in Brazilian newsrooms in 1965. Nepomuceno also worked as an international correspondent covering the coups d'état in Uruguay and Argentina. As a writer, he published short stories and non-fiction books, *The Massacre* being one of his best-known works.

The non-fiction book on the massacre in Eldorado is divided into five chapters: 1) “An Immensity of Land and Violence” which presents the historical and social context of rural conflicts in the Amazon; 2) “The Price of a Dream” which contains reports from the survivors, who were referred to as “the butchered ones”; 3) “The Story of an Unpunished Massacre” which details the massacre and the deaths it caused; 4) “The Long March to Meet Death” which details the events that led to the massacre; and 5) “A Story of Impunity” which focuses on the investigations, trials, injustice against victims, and the struggle of the survivors.

Based on these notes, this article looks at the literary journalism narratives used in the land conflicts in Eldorado do Carajás,

as discussed in the book *The Massacre*. Intending to investigate the narrative composition of land disputes in the Amazon, we selected Motta's (2007) "pragmatic analysis of journalistic narratives" as a methodological contribution to interpret the textual dynamics in Nepomuceno's book (2019).

To understand these narratives, we present an overview of the rural protests in the state of Pará and their relevance in journalistic-literary texts, with a focus on non-fiction books. We start our analysis by looking at Nepomuceno (2019) and his use of the main characteristics of literary journalism in his book and his interpretative nature of the events. We can see the land conflict narratives and how their significance is related to different contexts and social actors.

2 Protests in the Amazon countryside and the Eldorado do Carajás massacre

The protests in the Brazilian countryside paint a picture of the social inequality that has plagued the country since the colonial period, with the Amazon being at the forefront of the protests (Araújo, 2007). Over the years, the protests in the region have been a constant in the lives of indigenous peoples, quilombolas, rural workers, peasants, landless people, and other traditional communities (Feliciano, 2016).

In a brief look back at the exploratory stages that took place in the Amazon, some actions were significant for expanding mercantilism (to the detriment of nature) such as the search for drugs in the countryside at the end of the 17th century, the rubber cycle which began in the 1880s, and laws encouraging land occupation in the Amazon starting in 1960 (Becker, 2015). What these three periods have in common is a monetary interest in the region, to the detriment of the well-being of traditional communities and farmers who were removed from their homes and found themselves "carrying out economic processes through violence" (Malheiro, 2020, p. 93). Another factor inherent to this exploration was the intense migratory flows.

According to Silva and Scudeller (2022), migratory flows to the Amazon, especially since the 1950s, increased the population in the area: the number of inhabitants went from one million to around five million. Furthermore, the construction of highways in the region was another defining moment of occupation in the Amazon, resulting from the concessions of tax benefits.

According to Castro (2017), the incentive laws in Brazil during the military dictatorship promoted projects in the Amazon, the discourse surrounding these projects was that the North Region was an uninhabited place that yearned for national sovereignty in the face of international greed. Thus, in the years following the implementation of tax benefits through incentive laws, large projects coordinated by Brazilian businessmen (and later, foreigners) were established in the region.

The land reorganization in the rural area of the Brazilian Amazon also led to ordered deaths, murders, and massacres. According to Pereira (2015), despite the strong presence of the private market in the region, the majority of crimes involve public authorities, whether by default or actively. Some of these active crimes were committed by the military police who were hired by businessmen with strong political influences, or committed at the behest of the government itself, as was the case in Eldorado do Carajás (Pereira, 2015).

This massacre occurred on April 17, 1996, when former governor Almir Gabriel, a member of the Brazilian Social Democracy Party (PSDB), ordered Colonel Mário Colares Pantoja and his direct subordinate, Major José Maria de Oliveira, to clear a part of the PA-150 highway known as the “S” curve. The highway was blocked by families and members of the Landless Workers Movement (MST) who were calling for federal expropriation of the Macaxeira ranch.

Under orders from the state governor, 68 military police arrived at the scene and began removing the protestors, which “resulted in the killing of 19 landless farmers and more than 51 people injured” (Silva, 2020, p. 15). Two of the injured people died in the public hospital in Curionópolis.

The massacre, commonly referred to as the “Eldorado do Carajás Massacre”, was widely reported on by national and international media outlets. Large-circulation newspapers in Brazil published articles almost every day about the crime that occurred in the municipality of Pará (Silva, 2020). Barbalho (2014) points out the relevance of coverage in foreign newspapers, and how Portuguese media outlets chose to send their correspondents to the scene instead of just reproducing reports from communication agencies. Even still, despite the widespread publicity of the massacre, coverage was not in-depth and led to many incorrect terms being used and the victims being stigmatized. In fact, the MST itself corrected many of the expressions used. One striking example concerns the word

“invasion” which was used by traditional media in place of the word “occupation”. This shows the superficial coverage by the press of one of the many issues surrounding Brazilian agricultural reform (Souza & Silva, 2013).

Therefore, concerned with the importance of how subjects should be treated, written about, and published, Eric Nepomuceno decided to write his non-fiction book. In *The Massacre: Eldorado dos Carajás – A Story of Impunity*, Nepomuceno highlights land issues in the state of Pará, particularly the settlement struggles of rural workers and their families, the land occupation by members of the MST, and the injustices of the legal system. All of this was based on the reports of survivors and the re-analyzing of documents and materials. Nepomuceno humanizes the workers’ struggle to keep their voices heard in industrial and commercial journalism.

3 Literary journalism and non-fiction books: everyday life in the light of reality

Literary journalism is a combination of textual resources from journalism and literature and produces texts that are detached from instantaneity. It can also contain other composition elements. This hybrid genre is capable of placing contextualized reports at the center of its narrative, presenting the subjectivities of the subjects involved, removing itself from statistical coldness, and contributing to society and critical thinking (Quadros, 2021). It is a form of journalism that contributes to different fields of knowledge and promotes new archetypes to understand reality (Lima, 2009).

Scholars Norman Sims and Mark Kramer (1995) state that in order for a text to be considered literary journalism, it must contain eight essential features: humanization, symbolism, immersion, data, digression, authorial voice, style, and truthful information. Brazilian researcher Felipe Pena (2006) seconds Sims and Kramer’s (1995) statement, highlighting the need to understand literary journalism before applying it. Similar to other foreign scholars, Pena developed a “Seven Pointed Star” literary journalistic narrative, frequently cited in academic works. Pena’s concept presents the seven key points of a text for this genre: enhancement of narrative resources, breaking of everyday limits, broad view of reality, exercise of citizenship, distancing from the lead, distancing from official sources, and continuity.

When a journalist uses some of the elements formulated by Pena (2006), Sims and Kramer (1995), or other researchers in the field, he or she is helping maintain its format or expand its understanding. Even though this hybrid genre is seen as a counterpoint to daily journalism because of its narrative depth, it should never be thought of as superior; it is just one part of the informative realm that aims to communicate seriously (Borges, 2013). In other words, it is interpretive journalism, which addresses events in light of their social reality and the subjects involved.

Castro (2010) states that even if literary journalism is seen as a counter-narrative, it cannot be seen as something revolutionary that would take the place of conventional journalism. Quite the contrary, it is a convergence of different fields of knowledge which does not rule out any one methodology or narrative. It must be understood as a free, creative journalistic practice shaped by different social knowledge, and demands intense narrative skills on the part of its professionals. Eliane Brum is one such professional.

When Eliane Brum sets out to write literary journalism books such as *A vida que ninguém vê* (2006) and *O olho da rua* (2008), or major reports about the Amazon, she adopts a routine quite opposite to the one she uses in the newsroom: she travels to the location of the event, interviews as many residents as possible, and reduces the space for public representatives (Quadros, 2021). What is evident is that reports produced in newsrooms leave gaps that literary journalism is capable of filling by improving the “techniques, perspectives, and text” of journalism (Fontana, 2009, p. 170).

When a journalist produces content based on the elements of literary journalism, he or she is not restricted to the boundaries of language, they explore “a border genre, which takes advantage of literary techniques and basic journalistic elements, such as information gathering, to produce a thoroughly investigated and well-written piece” (Martinez, 2009, p. 71). One of the greatest expressions in this genre is the non-fiction book. Lima (2009) defines it as a publication that portrays a broader view of the events as there is no limit on the number of characters and time for coverage. Lima also states that the non-fiction book is not a periodical media format; it encompasses different styles and languages and includes interviews, data, sensitivity, immersion, and other components capable of increasing the potential for the art of telling real stories.

The non-fiction book was born out of daily newspapers because the subject it discusses comes from the published news (Pessa, 2009), and like an evolutionary process, its way of communicating improved. It is first seen as a space where it is possible to present camouflaged situations in evidence (Lage, 2001) and organize a case based on characters, plots, and descriptions, all revealed from the perspective of objectivity and presented with a commitment to information (Sodré & Ferrari, 1986). Non-fiction reporting got its start at the end of the 1910s and established itself in magazines such as *Time* (1923) in the USA and *Realidade* (1966-1976) in Brazil.

Although there is a greater narrative perspective in non-fiction reporting, the desire to achieve an even further reach in terms of understanding an event is achieved by the “great report” (Pessa, 2009). What’s more, according to Kotscho (2000), the term (“great report”) does not just reflect the increased number of lines but also represents the huge personal and financial investment that goes into it.

So, when a story has limited information, there is the potential for it to be amplified in other media (Pessa, 2009). Space, time, and the focus on everyday life in non-fiction reporting provide an important reconstruction of history. According to Lima (2009), certain key narrative aspects go into creating non-fiction reporting, such as research, testimony, and the humanization of the individuals in the reported event. These three “aspects” are contained in *The Massacre*.

4 Methodological procedures

The narrative is an inherent aspect of human life, whether in telling everyday stories or in producing elaborate textual or visual content. As Lima (2013) states, in addition to being a form of expression, the narrative is the conception of someone who observes, understands, and processes the social universe around them. In this paper (the result of research conducted for a Master’s dissertation for the Postgraduate Program at the Federal University of Pará – UFPA), we seek to understand how Nepomuceno (2019) constructed his narrative in *The Massacre*. The analytical view we took in this article was adapted from Motta’s (2007) “pragmatic analysis of narrative”. Through this analysis we seek to understand the insertion and construction of the interviewees, the plot, the conflict, the intrigue, and other elements directed by the author, in addition to the aspects

of literary journalism responsible for the narrative configuration of land conflicts in the Amazon.

There are six stages to the process developed by Motta (2007): 1) Reshaping the intrigue or journalistic event – connects the plot chronologically, giving the narrative a beginning, middle, and end which is defined by the analyst and must do without accuracy and coherence. 2) Identifying the conflicts and functionality of the story – recognizes the central elements that structure the narrative and the stories that keep it alive. 3) Building journalistic characters – identifies individuals and verifies their construction and participation in the narrative. 4) Communicative strategies – searches for the language devices used intentionally by the journalist, divided into objectification and subjectification strategies (the resources that offer the referentiality of the narrated reality are observed in the former, and the devices used to generate emotional meaning effects in the latter). 5) Communicative relationship and the “cognitive contract” – observes the game of intentions in the narrator/narrated (journalist/audience) relationship and whether the professional is able to report the truth to the public. 6) Metanarrative (meanings of the moral background or tale of the story) – shows and interprets the symbolic meaning of the plot.

The narrative analysis developed by Motta (2007) makes it possible to examine beyond the investigation of narrative resources considered essentially journalistic. According to Motta, narrative devices can be found in any type of text, whether in the pages of daily newspapers or products of literary journalism. Its analysis provides the opportunity to investigate plot, characters, stylistic patterns, and textual particularities.

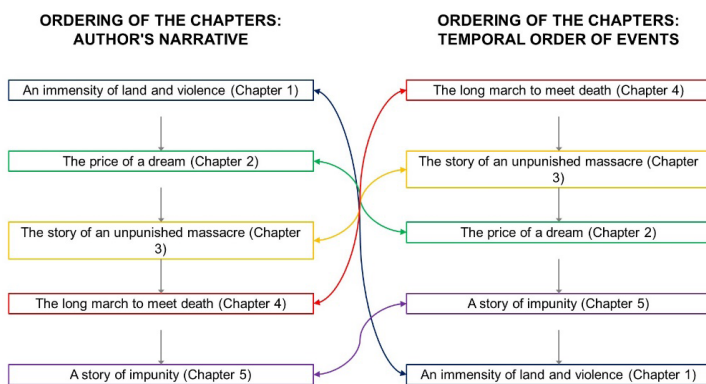
5 Analysis results

The first stage (“Reshaping the intrigue or journalistic event”) unites the fragmented parts of a narrative to discover the devices used by the author and understand its complete chronology. However, here, it is applied in a non-fiction report, known for its degree of textual completeness. Therefore, we quickly identified that the story in *The Massacre* is developed in a non-linear format, mainly because Nepomuceno (2019) does not begin the plot with the murder of landless workers, but with references to violence in the Brazilian

countryside and land conflicts in the state of Pará. We found that Nepomuceno arranged the chapters differently from the temporal order of events. We understood this ordering of the chapters in two ways, as shown in figure 1.

Figure 1

Narrative and chronological order of the chapters in The Massacre (2019)



We saw that Nepomuceno's (2019) choice to use a non-linear narrative highlights his impetus to show that the event is bigger than what is reported in daily media outlets. Furthermore, the use of this resource is intended to immerse the reader in the details of the event, not only to make them aware of the different cores in the story but also to purposefully delay revealing the central conflict. This reshaping involves something Pena (2006) calls lead disruption. Here, we see that the six basic questions of journalism – who, what, where, when, why, and how – are answered, detailed, and diminished during the writing of a non-fiction report.

The second stage (“Identifying the conflicts and functionality of the story”) involves the main conflict, the secondary conflict, and four episodes fundamental to the narrative, all of which were identified in *The Massacre*.

The main conflict in this book is the massacre of landless workers who are members of the MST. The secondary conflict is the impunity of the public agents involved in the action. This is identified in the preface when Nepomuceno (2019) claims that Almir

Gabriel and Paulo Sette Câmara, the former governor and security secretary on the day of the massacre, benefited from the privilege of impunity as they were not indicted. Nepomuceno draws attention to Paulo Sette's stubbornness by pointing to the privileges he enjoyed as public manager: "Ironically, he became a consultant specializing in public security. [...] Of all the many inconsistencies in this contradictory country, I regret this the most" (Nepomuceno, 2019, p. 8). Nepomuceno (2019) talks about how the legal system was kind to the two military police officers who headed the operation, Colonel Pantoja and Major Colares: these MPs were only convicted in 2012. However, they were released on house arrest, Pantoja in 2016 and Colares in 2018.

The four episodes and their narrative functions from the two events were delimited and ordered according to the temporality of the case. The first episode is about the occupation of the Macaxeira ranch which included the farms "Castanhal Macaxeira, Castanhal Fundos de Macaxeira, Castanhal Volta do Rio, and Castanhal Garota Verde" (Nepomuceno, 2019, p. 86). Rural workers had been fighting for months for the federal appropriation of the private property, claiming it had no social function, that is, no labor regularities, planting activities, and conservation of space. Thus, the purpose of this episode is to draw attention to the landless workers and their fight to overcome the obstacles put in place by public and private management.

The second episode is the organization of the demonstration from Curionópolis to Belém, organized by landless workers. The purpose of the demonstration was to draw the attention of politicians, the press, and society to the state government's neglect in moving forward with the expropriation of the Macaxeira ranch. Therefore, the purpose of this episode was to identify the "protest" and highlight the protesters' fight to claim the unused property.

In the third episode, Nepomuceno (2019) describes the physical and psychological consequences on the survivors of the massacre, who were also referred to as "the mutilated ones". The victims told of how they dealt with the attacks and the memories of the tragedy. To raise awareness, this narrative unit aims to highlight the important role society can play by not ignoring the cause of the events, as the victims in this story do not have this right.

The fourth episode addresses the irregularities of the Military Police and the legal system regarding landless workers. It narrates the failures of the military police, the trial of those who coordinated

the operation, and the process that held the state responsible for compensating the survivors and families of the murdered workers. The purpose of this episode is to denounce the contradictory attitudes of public agents, both in the political sector and in the legal system.

Identifying the main and secondary conflicts showed us the opening of the episodes and their purposes, as shown in table 1:

Table 1

Narrative episodes and their purposes in The Massacre (2019)

Narrative Episodes	Purpose
Episode 1 - Occupation of Macaxeira Ranch	Resistance
Episode 2 - Organization of the demonstration from Curionópolis to Belém	Protest
Episode 3 - The victims' experiences after the massacre	Awareness
Episode 4 - Irregularities of Military Police and legal system	Denounce

The conflicts and narrative units identified at this stage highlight that the author is not concerned with reporting just the case, but focuses on telling the before and after. In his writing, he performs what Lima (2009) calls breadth of reality: a literary journalism technique focused on the scope of the events, offering a thematic universality. In this case, extended coverage of the rural violence in the state of Pará and the experiences of the victims.

Motta's (2007) third stage ("Building the Characters") identifies the subjects who play fundamental roles in the plot. The characters highlight the narratives and induce feelings such as agony, anger, sadness, and affection within the reader, as their representation "is a construction that uses the reporter's subjectivity" (Motta, 2007, p. 154).

Nepomuceno's narrative (2019) contained 124 characters. For analysis purposes, we selected the five characters mentioned more than ten times: Colonel Mário Colares Pantoja (42 mentions); Major José Maria Pereira de Oliveira (30); former governor Almir Gabriel (25); Oziel Alves Pereira (21); and Carlos Medeiros (12).

Colonel Mário Colares and Major José Maria were involved in the activities that led up to the massacre, as well as during and after its execution. They were responsible, respectively, for ordering and carrying out actions against the landless while the military followed the orders of former governor Almir Gabriel. According to Nepomuceno (2019), Gabriel ordered to end negotiations and reestablish the site "at any cost" (Nepomuceno, 2019, p. 94).

Of all the victims killed in the massacre, Oziel is the most symbolic, according to Nepomuceno (2019). At just 17 years old, the young man was responsible for organizing the occupations and the march to Belém. On the day of the massacre, Oziel was one of the main targets and the one whose death was witnessed by a large number of people. This led to the municipal school in Vila 17 de Abril to be named in honor of Oziel. Vila 17 de Abril is the place where survivors of the massacre currently live and are still waiting for justice while dealing with the physical, psychological, and social consequences of the massacre.

Lastly, Carlos Medeiros is the only character who is not linked to the deaths in Eldorado. Nepomuceno (2019) included him in the story to exemplify the failures of the Pará legal system. Even though he has never been seen in person, he is surrounded by important people, such as "lawyers, employees from several governments in Pará, federal government agencies, city halls, courts, and notary offices" (Nepomuceno, 2019, p. 40). It is a reflection of how the Amazon lands are treated by the financially wealthy group. Meanwhile, inhabitants with lower economic statuses are constant targets of gunmen, landowners, and the government itself.

These characters play a central role in the book as they are directly involved in the agriculture protest in Eldorado. The chapters in the book follow the sequence of these characters' actions and are fundamental in building the narrative episodes. At this point of our analysis, it appears that the characters in Nepomuceno's narrative (2019) were enriched by receiving a treatment superior to the "common" treatment that a journalist in a newsroom would give. In this space, it is natural for reporters to present their interviewees using only their full name, profession, and, whenever possible, age (Essenfelder, 2017).

In *The Massacre*, Nepomuceno gives space to the experiences and situations that people have witnessed. By doing this the author gives the reader "the sensation of being inside the character's head,

experiencing the emotional reality of the scene as the character experiences it” (Wolfe, 2005, p. 54). At this point Nepomuceno does not focus on obtaining statements from legitimate personalities (like politicians and government bodies) but from ordinary citizens, placing them at the center of the narrative (Pena, 2006).

This brings us to the fourth stage, “Communicative Strategies”. In this stage, the presence of the author in the writing process is detected through the construction of meanings in the text, based on real effects (objectification) and poetic effects (subjectification).

The following four objectification strategies for real effects were found in *The Massacre*: insertion of data listed by entities, geographic position of key spaces in the plot, accurate dates and times, and quotes from interviewees placed in quotation marks. The following excerpts show how these strategies are applied in the book:

[...] the number of protests or attacks as a result of land disputes reached 1.043 and resulted in 1.399 murders. Of this total, only 77, or around 7%, went to court. Eight of every ten defendants were acquitted. The perpetrators were identified, fifteen of them were convicted and six were acquitted. Those who were convicted were not imprisoned for long. In the specific case of Pará, only 28% of all crimes were investigated by the police. (Nepomuceno, 2019, p. 31).

[...] Colonel Pantoja leaned against the fender of a burgundy A-20 truck parked on the side of a road in the interior of Pará, on the PA-150 highway, at a place known as the “S” curve, around 9 kilometers from the small city of Eldorado do Carajás and almost 800 kilometers from the capital, Belém. (Nepomuceno, 2019, p. 74).

On Wednesday, August 1, 2006 — seven years after the first court sentence, eight years after the trial began, and ten years, three months and fourteen days after the massacre — a settlement was reached for 1.2 million reais (at the time, around 580 thousand dollars), compensating each victim between 30 and 90 thousand reais. The attorney general of the state of Pará, Aloysio Cavalcante Campos, reached an agreement with the victims’ lawyer. (Nepomuceno, 2019, p. 51).

“Of course, it’s not much”, says Raimundo Gouvêa, one of the pioneers, who on April 17, 2006, was one of the most sought-after MST leaders in the region. [...] “But it is much more than before, when we had nothing, and just dreaming. We sometimes dreamed of a piece of land to work”, he continues. “I say sometimes because we rarely dreamed.” (Nepomuceno, 2019, p. 70).

The use of these effects verifies that the report presented is true and contains real information. In order to not write a rigid narrative but induce sensations and identification of this historical-social portrait, Nepomuceno (2019) also used three subjectivation

strategies: accurate description, characterization of spaces and people, and humanization.

The first strategy, accurate description, is mostly used with adjectives, as can be seen in the two excerpts below: the first strategy is the description of Vila 17 de Abril, the settlement where the victims of the massacre live, and the second presents Colonel Pantoja, one of the main characters in the non-fiction book:

[...] a small and orderly town of nothing, just over 100 kilometers from Marabá, which is the large city in the region, gateway to the south of Pará, and about 15 from Eldorado do Carajás, a poor and ugly place, with its dirt streets with poor commerce, but it has at least one privilege: it is at the junction of two important and unnamed state highways, the PA-150 and PA-276. Both are full of potholes, poorly signposted and dangerous — but paved. [...] The path that leads to the village has slight elevations, almost hills, where green fields, looking like pastures for scarce cattle, appear dotted with black trunks raised against nothingness: these are the remains of ancient chestnut trees, which dot the entire landscape of the region with their slender, dark and abandoned forms. (Nepomuceno, 2019, p. 47 and 48).

He was 49 years old, had spent 28 years in the Military Police, and was exhausted. Every muscle in his face trembled, his red eyes glowed, and he breathed through his mouth. His lips were covered in a light layer of foam, and sweat ran down his neck, soaking the collar of his uniform. His hands shook in disjointed movements. His fingers were white from gripping the handle of a 38-caliber, six-shot Taurus revolver so tightly. (Nepomuceno, 2019, p. 74).

The last strategy, the humanization of the story, is used in different ways in the text. However, for analysis purposes, including verbs of feeling was limited, a technique used when Nepomuceno (2019) highlights the reactions that the landless workers triggered among the region's residents during the demonstration, and the transcription of the residents' routine in Vila 17 de Abril, respectively:

The landless people took rice, sugar, apples, and all their sandals. They loaded almost 16 tons and took them to the gas station they were occupying. And, of course, they also took the fury of the mayor and the anger of the merchants in the region with them. (Nepomuceno, 2019, p. 89).

But not one of the leaders and coordinators of the demonstration forgot that, in October 1997, the Military Police were called to stop the protest in the settlement. For the residents of Vila 17 de Abril, finding out that some of these military police officers had also participated in the 1996 massacre was unnerving. (Nepomuceno, 2019, p. 62).

With the use of real effects and poetic effects, Nepomuceno hopes to bring the reader closer to the event, as well as make the text more in-depth and human. It is the production of material far

from the ephemerality of daily journalism, or as Pena (2006) says, the construction of a plot through a complex web of relationships and destinies.

Motta (2007) points out that the fifth stage of narrative analysis, “Communicative relationship and ‘cognitive contract’”, is when the relationship between the narrator (journalist) and the narratee (audience) is investigated. This can help verify whether the narrative process reproduces the reality of the depicted event. *The Massacre* has a non-linear narrative (presented in the first movement) and as such is split into five chapters. This ensures that the reader can focus on the main event, establishing a communicative relationship based on memory, in which the reader is able to reshape the story while reading and connect the past with the present.

Another point of the relationship involves presenting the protest from different perspectives. Nepomuceno (2019) uses several approaches to achieve this objective: the analysis of official documents, meetings with politicians, lawyers, and journalists, and interviews with MST members and victims of the massacre. The result of these approaches is seen in the municipalities described, in the preface, and the construction of the land conflict as a premise for remembering a rural problem in the Amazon of Pará, as pointed out in more detail in the fourth stage.

Thus, during the “communicative relationship”, the narrator’s recognition of the audience stands out: as the CPT is one of the databases used by Nepomuceno (2019), and the survivors of the massacre are the main interviewees, it appears that the reading public is mostly researchers and supporters of the struggle of landless workers who are members of the MST. It also attracts people who are invested in the issue of land conflicts and violence in the countryside.

It is also noteworthy that the cognitive contract between journalist and audience was strengthened through the methods used by Nepomuceno (2019) to construct the reality of April 17, 1996, and those who lived it. The testimonies connected the episodes and the reshaping of the event. Together, they generated a complete text, the result of in-depth research that improves the resources of journalism and overcomes the stylistic barriers of writing (Martinez, 2009).

The sixth and final stage involves recognizing the Metanarrative, also understood as the meaning behind the moral background or story. It details the events that cause the breakdown of ethics and their meaning within the plot.

The moral and ethical background of *The Massacre* can be found in its subtitle: *Eldorado do Carajás – A story of impunity*. These impunities are revealed throughout the chapters: filing the investigations of public managers Almir Gabriel, Paulo Sette Câmara, and other individuals responsible for ordering the forceful removal of protestors; reducing the sentence served by Colonel Mário Colares Pantoja and Major José Maria Pereira Oliveira; the acquittal of the 144 military police officers who went to court; payment of compensation to only 20 victims of the massacre and 10 years after the crime; survivors and victims of the tragedy having to wait for justice which, to this day, still haunts them.

When selecting the Eldorado massacre and reporting on it in non-fiction report format, Nepomuceno does not simply seek to reveal the stories in the cultural metanarratives of the news, its raw material, rather he hopes to exercise citizenship by rethinking the approach taken so that the reproduction of the event contributes to the formation of society on the issue (Pena, 2006).

6 Conclusion

Literary journalism is a narrative modality recognized for the polishment of journalistic practices and attention to the use of literary style. When a journalistic professional intends to further develop and describe an event that has already been presented in a news story, report, or major report, they often turn to non-fiction reporting. This hybrid genre achieved narrative relevance as it managed to increase the criticality of an event and place it in other spaces.

Journalist Eric Nepomuceno set out to investigate, scrutinize, and write all the possible complexities of one of the most serious land conflict tragedies in the country: the Eldorado do Carajás massacre. In his non-fiction report *The massacre – Eldorado do Carajás: A Story of Impunity*, Nepomuceno uses documents, testimonies, and victims' accounts of what happened on April 17, 1996, in southeastern Pará to report the event.

Given Nepomuceno's intent to reproduce a relevant subject from the state of Pará, our intention in this article was to analyze how he constructed the narrative of land conflicts from the perspective of literary journalism. For this purpose, we needed to identify the characteristics of the narrative modality in the text, a process supported by the pragmatic analysis of journalistic narratives

proposed by Motta (2007). Similarly, this type of journalism is given a more interpretative character, as it aligns with Ricoeur (2019, p. 126) when he says: “Explaining a text means, first of all, considering it as the expression of certain sociocultural needs and the answer to certain perplexities well located in space and time”.

He goes on to say that “(...) the first time, understanding will be a naive capture of the meaning of the text as a whole. From the second, it will be a sophisticated way of understanding supported by an explanatory procedure” (Ricoeur, 2019, pp. 105-106). Thus, we observe an interpretative journalism operated in Nepomuceno’s non-fiction report, which delves into the facts by consulting various sources, documents, and subjects involved. It seeks to understand and explain the events that date back to the political and social formation of the Pará Amazon.

In this analysis, we identified characteristics of literary journalism in *The Massacre*, as proposed by scholars of the genre: accuracy of information, humanization of characters, enhancement of journalistic resources, thematic expansion, authorial writing, and ethical commitment.

With the six stages of Motta’s (2007) analysis, we found that the structure of the report (split into five chapters) is not linear, and Nepomuceno (2019) did not do it in a completely “unchronological” way either. His method was to delay, divide, and present the protests and episodes like a soap opera. One of the resources that helped him do this was the construction of the characters. More than a quantitative issue, the characters’ quotes were relevant to recall the story. Identifying the people who shaped the course of the massacre humanizes them, as does giving names to the agents involved in this land conflict.

The objective and subjective effects, the communicative relationship based on memory, and the ethical sense within the plot also reveal the journalistic-literary makeup of *The Massacre*. All the instruments used by the author are key to naturalizing and humanizing the environment. These are techniques that help readers “experience” the universe of conflicts in the Pará countryside and place their trust in this narrative since they were not in Vila 17 de Abril, nor did they talk to any of the survivors or witnesses.

We look once again at Ricoeur (2019, p. 106) when he states that an asymmetrical relationship is established between the text and the reader, in which only one of the partners speaks for both. Thus, understanding is not just repeating the discourse in a similar event, but

generating a new event, which begins with the text in which the initial event took shape. This is the perspective of the narrative configuration of Nepomuceno's non-fiction report, in which his narration weaves new threads between the events and the survivors of the massacre.

The analysis carried out in this article is similar to other research on non-fiction reporting conducted in the field of communication. It is a form of literature that opens up space for the discussion of literary journalism and what surrounds it: the figures of speech, the interpretation of events, the placement of dialogues, the data, and the direct subjectivity of the author. *The Massacre* specifically focuses on land conflicts, a social problem that has existed throughout the history of the Amazon and its residents, and which is still absent from the agenda of daily journalism...and when it does appear, it is found in journalistic narratives that describe a deviation from normality or a confrontation between "good" and "evil".

NOTES

- 1 The Macaxeira Complex, commonly called Macaxeira Ranch, is situated on 42.558 hectares of land between the municipalities of Eldorado dos Carajás and Curionópolis. In September 1995, approximately 3.500 rural worker families, organized by the MST, camped out in protest near the complex to claim the area. These protesters claimed that the land was unproductive and, according to Article 184 of the Federal Constitution, the property should be used for agricultural reform purposes. A report attesting to the productivity of the land (which the MST believed to be false) led to a series of negotiations between rural workers and representatives of the state government. Since no concrete agreement was reached during the meetings, the protesters chose to occupy Macaxeira Ranch and march to Belém (Barreira, 1999).

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