

Breaking Ways, Opening Variants - Cowboy Culture in the City of Andorinha, Brasil

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Received: 03 Jul 2021,

Received in revised form: 06 Aug 2021,

Accepted: 11 Aug 2021,

Available online: 18 Aug 2021

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Keywords— Cowboy culture. Oral
Narratives. Identity.

Abstract— This work deals with the manifestations of cowboy cultures in the Brazilian Semiarid Region, more specifically in the municipality of Andorinha, Bahia. Throughout the work, four cultural manifestations of cowboys are described and analyzed from the perspective of ethnographic practice anchored in the perspective of qualitative research, which allows us, within the ethics, rigor and discipline required by the act of investigating, to portray the life contexts of concrete subjects. Thus, some events will be presented where the observations and their contextualization took place, their inscription in the historical and social fabric, interspersing the perceptions of the subjects about them within the context of their experiences, their cultural practices.

I. INTRODUCTION

In sertanejo speech, paths, or “varedas”, are paths, tortuous lines, crossed by the passage of cattle, of the creation that grazes freely in the caatinga, following its instincts, drooling over the branches, sniffing out water. The paths are widened by the passing and passing of animals and people, new paths are being opened and they often gain a peculiar layout, which influences the movements of the cowboy's body, on his gestures, on the way he sees and relates with the world.

The variants here are an allusion to demarcation lines, limits interposed by man, to separate and at the same time unite pieces of caatingas, pieces of ground, establishing a distinction between my space and the space of the other within a collectivity.

For us, the metaphor of paths and variants applies to entering the countryside, as we enter it with the spirit of adventure and discovery, of following paths that we didn't know where to go. But that's why it became exciting to allow us to let the instincts guide us in search of elements that could answer the questions that populated our thoughts. Would we find narrators? Would we know how to ask the

right questions to apprehend in depth the color of what might be narrated?

Sometimes we had to leave a variant open to access something that at first sight was not so undiscovered, the unspoken, let the flow of the narrative follow the intricacies of the word, just outlined to understand that sometimes emotion and crying sustained, they had already brought the answer, to questions that we had not even conceived.

Getting into the cowboy's perceptions about the act of narrating, an act that is part of their life contexts, deeply linked to orality, their natural form of expression and a place where they feel fully at ease, leads us to the concern of not only recording the content of their speech, their utterances, as well as apprehending the context where they were happening, the external factors at the time of the interaction.

It is important to highlight that to carry out the research we used ethnography as methodological procedures, with a qualitative approach. In addition, to bring the speeches of the research subjects here at work, we highlight them in italics, in order to differentiate them from the quotes in the theoretical framework.

II. CULTURAL PRACTICES OF THE COWBOYS OF SWALLOW-BA

Based on the hypothesis that oral narratives passed on between generations of cowboys are an important factor in the permanence of their culture in the municipality of Andorinha - BA, we searched through the situations in which participant observation and interviews were allowed, to insert ourselves in the multiplicity of meanings that constitute the universe, the context of its cultural practices.

We understand cultural practices as everyday actions that gain meaning as they are shared and repeated on a daily basis within a given group or community. Thus, throughout the research, we had the opportunity to register a multiplicity of these practices: Ox picking in the bush; Boi catch in Jiqui; the Argolinha Race; the Cowboy Mass; the Vaquejada; the Cavalcade and the Mutirão; in this sense, we consider it important to contextualize these, establishing a dialogue with a broader historical context and then making approximations with the more specific set represented by the municipality of Andorinha.

III. OX HANDLING IN THE MATO AND OX HANDLING IN JEQUI/JIQUI

Pega de Boi no Mato, and what we consider its simplified derivation, Pega de Boi no Jiqui (or Jequi) are legacies of the herding activities developed in the colonial period and that were, over time, incorporated into what Câmara Cascudo (1956)) called "Traditions of Northeast Livestock".

Ox magpies were part of the sorting activity during the sesmarias regime, where the cattle of all breeders mingled in the middle of the dense scrubland until wintering in June and July, when it was common to gather "tens and dozens of cowboys who spent weeks gathering the scattered cattle ranch in the mountains and capoeirões [...]" (CASCUDO, 1956, p. 13, emphasis added).

The practice continued for a long time, entering the 20th century, being gradually supplanted with the transformation of the caatingas into pastures and the replacement of extensive by intensive farming, demanded by the arrival of "progress" and by the demands of capital.

The large cattle magpies, similar to those described by Cascudo (1956), emerge in the reports of the older cowboys as a reference of a good time that was gone and about which the younger ones only knew from the reports of the older ones, as we can see in the speech of the cowboy Alonso, who, at 53 years of age, only knew this reality through the reports of his father, now deceased. He says that:

Then, as my father didn't have us... It was like this, we were little, he called some

companions, he had his brother, he had Otávio, there was Nequinho da Crema, Raimundo and others, and others... São of the Lameiro. Then, they would gather three, four and go to get those cattle. Then they were going to get someone else's. But there were times, my father told me, there were times when he caught 60 cattle at once. That it was to catch 60 oxen. Then these cowboys got together to catch these oxen, from outside to outside, until they caught these oxen. Sometimes each one on his horse, without changing animals because there was no way, and catch all these oxen. Now, it was difficult, but it was always up to everyone to gather their cattle. (ALONSO, 2018).

In Alonso's speech, the reference to a not-so-distant past is evident, in which the solidarity relations between the cowboys were still essential for them to overcome together the adversities of daily toil. This was an activity that required experience, in addition to fearlessness and the ability to capture and later identify the oxen on each farm.

The references used to endorse and legitimize the memory of his boyhood also draw our attention in his speech. When talking about this past, he uses as a reference the antecedent "my father told me" as an indication of a safe source from which he extracted the information, as well as the detail of the presentation of the names of the genitor's companions, participants in the narrated event. The fact of reporting this event in front of an assistance formed by other family members also makes us reflect on the meanings that are being re-elaborated by the participants when they narrate and listen to the testimony.

After the capture, came the sorting, which sometimes would only happen after a few days of almost uninterrupted work in the caatinga, where neither horses nor men would rest until the complete collection of the cattle, it being common to happen "of an ox, depending on where, to spend 08 days on foot in the woods because there was nowhere to gather" (ZÉ AMILTON, 2018).

The recognition of so many cattle, belonging to different owners, was done by identifying the signs made with the irons of each farm, and even by the characteristic features such as the mixture of colors in the coat, a birth defect, any peculiar sign that had been engraved in the memory of the cowboy, who had dealt with them daily since they were little calves. This knowledge that the cowboy dominates to this day, was one of the aspects that most astonished the writer of Os Sertões, Euclides da Cunha (2016) when talking about learning to deal not only with his cattle, but also with the neighbor knowing the genealogy, colors, ages, etc.

The ages that Euclides da Cunha refers to are called by the cowboys Eras; each era corresponded to the time the ox stayed in the caatinga, where it stayed until it reached the desired weight for slaughter. The dates of the cattle's release for fattening were recorded on paper by the farmer, but the surest record was the cowboy's memory.

It is in this context that some of the stories full of colors and emotions will manifest themselves, as it was common for some of these oxen to go missing for a long period, ending up *"burrow into the mountains, staying there holed up"* (ZÉ AMILTON, 2018). When any of the cowboys spotted him, he immediately warned his colleagues, including those from other farms, leading to a series of careers that would make him famous and respected, as well as the cowboy who managed to capture him.

The context of careers is also the source from which other beliefs will emerge that will compose the plots, the plots that will enrich their repertoire of stories. Stories where the central character is the ideal ox, enchanted through some prayer or magic formula made in *"[...]at the same time, on the trail...or on the left end..."* so that no one comes to pick up the ox, thus increasing its fame (CABOCLO, 2018).

According to the interviewees, these are mysteries that only a few people know how to do, and undo, leaving the authors of cunning hidden because *"no cowboy wants to carry the reputation of knowing how to do what is no good"* (ZÉ AMILTON, 2018), starting to be seen with looks of distrust and suspicion on the part of fellows

But, at the same time, this is a theme that still exerts fascination, and that produces many reviews and jokes among the cowboys, as we can infer from Caboclo's statement: *"There is ((laughter)). We've already done a review and have already discussed it here, we cowboys. 'It's nothing, it's a horse, it's a bad cowboy. But it exists, it exists, I believe!'"* (CABOCLO, 2018).

Today, the spirit of adventure that involves the capture of wild cattle is still evoked, although less and less linked to the daily practice of the cowboy in Andorinha; it presents some variations, being, in its more traditional version, the oxen released in the forest some time in advance, allowing time for them to spread out before the entry of the cowboys, making their capture more difficult and exciting.

In a more simplified way, and more recently, comes Pega de Boi no Jequi or Jiqui, a fact that has led to the realization of the most performed ox pegadas, where diversified audiences compete, and there is a greater spectacularization of the practice of running after the bull that has just fled terrified from the confinement of the makeshift corral. Previously, the inscription and the draw are made to define the order in which pairs of armored

cowboys will enter the forest in timed pursuit of the cattle; in this way, for agility and dexterity, the pair that overtake the others in the ox's grip, previously identified by a password attached to their neck, are rewarded. The challenge of the project comprises subduing the animal, removing the password and handing it over to the person responsible for the event.

These moments are invested with a festive character, as are all events that involve the cultural practices of the cowboy. There is more and more the insertion of elements of urban culture, such as the insertion of sound cars, and more recently, of the famous walls that dictate the rhythm of the party with music that goes beyond the traditional toada, with a predominance of stylized vaquejada.

IV. THE COWBOY MASS

The Cowboy Mass is commonly inscribed in the rites that denote the deep religiosity of the sertanejo people. A religiosity that has in Catholicism the amalgam through which a colorful mixture of beliefs, rituals, superstitions, "knowledge and spirit" inherited from the ancestral practices of the peoples who made it, constituted the sertão as it is.

The celebration takes place in practically the entire northeastern hinterland, despite having its origins fixed in the recent past. The official narrative that founds its origin is that the Missa do Vaqueiro was conceived in 1971, by Luiz Gonzaga, in partnership with Father João Cândio, as a tribute to the cowboy Raimundo Jacó, cousin of the artist, "traiculously murdered in the caatingas of the Sítio das Lages, district of the municipality of Serrita, located in the upper sertão of Araripe, located 553 kilometers from Recife" (FUNDAJ, 2010).

Despite this more traditional version, there are signs that the Mass has its origins located in a more distant past, as we can see in the work of Tapety (2007), who talks about the sociocultural practices and representations of the cowboy in Piauí from 1960 to 2000. According to the author, in 1963, "Cônego Antônio Cardoso de Vasconcelos, [...] celebrated a mass in honor of the cowboys. [...] And every May 31st celebrations were held in honor of the cowboy" (TAPETY, 2007, p. 63).

The fact is that the celebrations quickly spread and were soon invested in a form of representation that characterizes them as a traditional cultural practice of the backcountry cowboy. The Mass is marked by the role of the armored cowboy who prays for souls and exalts the memory of the companions who are gone, companions. At the same time, in which he pleads for protection against the dangers of

dealing, he asks for the blessing of heaven with the mercy of the rains, celebrates and thanks him for his arrival.

For the cowboy, as it is for traditional peoples, faith does not depart from joy, from celebration; seriousness and respect for the divinity and its manifestations are not neglected, but the act of celebrating is also given for the pleasure of singing, dancing, eating and drinking. It is the typical mix between the sacred and the profane that characterizes popular national cultures so well.

This aspect of religion as a cultural system is what, in a way, contributes to maintaining cohesion within social groups, helping to create the value elements, or their "ethos", as well as their worldview that boils down to a picture that each people elaborates "of things as they are in simple reality, their concept of nature, of themselves, of society (GEERTZ, 2008, p. 92).

At the Masses where we were present, this interweaving is very noticeable; generally held outdoors, in front of the churches, or under a more leafy tree in the orderer's yard. They share space with the food, beverage and sound system trade, which are turned on as soon as the signal indicating the end of the religious festivities is given. Often the improvisation of a raised surface for the realization of the sacred, also serves as support after the completion of the mass, for the profane festivities as a stage for musical performances.

However, respect for the time of the liturgy is maintained, including the suspension of alcoholic beverage sales and, despite the difficulty in suspending the laughter and conversations stimulated by meetings with friends, relatives and compadres, we still see serious cowboys, hat on top of the saddle or carried to the chest as a sign of contrition, a gesture that is imitated by the younger ones, especially those who are mounted and armored, denoting a concern to maintain the respect that their prominent position demands in front of the audience.

A fact that caught our attention at the first mass we attended at the invitation of Mr. Milton at Fazenda São João, at the end of April 2018, was the reversal of the purpose of the celebration, usually held in honor of the cowboys who are gone. At the time, the rite was held to commemorate the birthday of a cowherd boy who was 10 years old, a relative of the host. Immediately, our eyes were drawn to the ornamentation of the party, whose main motif was a Marvel© superhero, Iron Man, a motif that was also on the birthday boy's shirt, matching his little leather hat.

When describing the social practices involving the backcountry cowboy, it is common to make this confrontation between the traditional and the modern, and many times, criticisms are made of the "innovations" introduced in events of this nature. However, the picture

formed by the mix between leather costumes and pop culture elements immediately leads us to the hybridization processes developed within cultures in the context of modernity and intensified in the post-modern era, a concept deepened by Néstor Canclini (2008, p.27), and defined by him as a set of processes and exchanges which include:

[...] the "racial or ethnic fusions called mestizaje and updated for identity combinations, the syncretism of beliefs and also other modern mixtures between the artisanal and industrial, the cult and the popular, the written and the visual in media messages (emphasis added).

Despite the sense of the crumbling of an identity based on traditionality, or of the distortion of the defining traits of the cowboy culture, with the incorporation of elements considered extrinsic to it until recently, we cannot forget that the Mass of the Cowboy itself is a "tradition invented" already in the context of the second half of the 20th century and popularized precisely by mediatization.

The celebrations held at the headquarters, according to oral reports collected from the research participants, began in the mid-1980s, and were being held annually at the initiative of Seu Ananias, a deceased cowboy and mentioned with great respect by older cowboys, as it is the case of Seu Bêlo, who inherited the task.

The figure of Father Luiz Tonetto is also remembered with affection and nostalgia, a charismatic figure who was active in the struggle for land ownership during the institutionalization of pasture fund communities. Masses were always held in the parish church, where the cowboys paraded after going around the city. In the early 2000s, masses began to empty, being held sporadically, the last one, before 2018, held in 2004.

The alleged reasons for the decline of the celebration are based on the lack of support from the public power, always very unstable with the changes in management, and with the extinction of the old association of cowboys also idealized by Seu Ananias, in addition to the difficulties in raising resources to provide feeding, comfort and safety to the cowboys who came from distant points.

However, the rite is maintained in various parts of the municipality's rural area, being held throughout the year, generally following a specific calendar, marked by some form of homage, either to a deceased cowboy or to celebrate some festive event, such as was the case of the anniversary recorded here.

V. A “RUSSIAN-JAPANESE WAR” IN THE CAATINGAS DO SERTÃO

When we analyze the cultural practices of backcountry cowboys, including those in our locus of study, we realize that most of them have their origin in those old games that used to attract crowds thirsty for emotions and fun.

This is the case of ring races, which are still very common in small towns and especially in rural areas of the northeastern interior. The race, according to Cascudo (2001), was recorded in Dutch Brazil (Pernambuco), when the governor “divided the riders into two squads of Dutch and Portuguese” to compete in a tournament in which riders “in parade” should withdraw with the tip of a spear, a ring that was hung on an “ornate bow or pole”, and, after this process, “the ring inserted in the spear was offered to an authority to the girls and ladies, with prizes” (CASCUDO, 2001, p. 22).

These days, these games continue to attract a large contingent of individuals, whole families who will root for their respective teams, it is common to have members of the same family on rival teams, although it is a rivalry involved in a festive spirit.

However, a fact that draws attention to the practice in Andorinha is the theatricality of the race, which gains a spectacle air with the inclusion of cultural elements that are distinct from other regions. Here, the teams once again represent and even wear the colors of a nation, and give a festive character to the event with the inclusion of music bands and competition from fans who cheer for their favorite groups.

The teams are divided into two nations: “Russians” and “Japanese”, represented by the colors blue and red, colors that are part of the uniform and flag of each nation formed by a minimum of 07 to 20 riders who are commanded by a “boss” and a “counterboss”. These two leaders, who can belong to any of the rival groups, organize the dispute, and, in advance, they invite the girls who will be the “queens” to carry the flag and animate their respective teams.

The reference to the Russian and Japanese nations, there is no way to go unnoticed, leading us to evoke the conflict that occurred between them in 1904, causing us immense curiosity to know the reasons, the origin behind it, something that the research informants were unable to inform, only emphasized that this is a practice carried out “long ago” in the municipality, in addition to others that are neighboring, such as the districts of Quicé, belonging to the municipality of Senhor do Bonfim, and Santa Rosa de Lima, belonging to Jaguarari.

When we searched on sources located on the internet, we found that similar practices carried out in the same mold

were registered in some locations in the city of Juazeiro, with at least one locality that performs it in the same or similar ways. In an article found in the blog “O Sertão” (2019), there is a reference to the coming of this tradition from the state of Piauí, a fact that can perhaps be verified in later studies.

The registration made in the Lagoa da Onça community allowed us to observe two families participating in the research, who at the time were part of the organization of the event, and also ran, taking part in the competition. This one caused us interest, as it denotes the multiplicity of practices in which the participants are inserted, going far beyond working with cattle, also integrating other ways of expressing their identity.

VI. THE MUTIRÃO – ANCESTRAL PRACTICE

The mutirão is one of the most beautiful forms of expression of sertanejo solidarity, being part of our childhood memories when it was common to see the people of the community gather around bean batters, flours, cleaning water, building and repairing houses, among other activities. The organization of residents of small communities around a common goal represents a relationship of interdependence, mutualism that guarantees the preservation of natural resources and goods of common use in the community.

Once again we turn to Cascudo (2001) to understand other meanings involved behind the word mutirão, which, according to the author, is of Tupi origin, denoting that this is an ancestral practice, inherited from the indigenous custom of gathering men and village women at harvest times, for example. The author also defines the collective effort as “a spontaneous social institution that attenuates the individualistic effects that the land-owning economy has imposed on Brazilian rural life, correcting them” (CASCUDO, 2001, p. 409).

We believe that such “individualistic effects”, alluded to by the author, are the result more of the geographical distance between the large rural properties, than the absence of solidarity ties between them. Among the cowboys, even those from the colonial period, who lived in great territorial isolation, the relationships of interdependence are evidenced when it was necessary to gather in larger groups to capture loose cattle, among other activities.

The absence of the “absentee boss”, in a way, stimulated the individualism of their relationships. According to Medrado (2012), this was a strategy to avoid establishing horizontal relationships of friendship between the cowboys, which could be disadvantageous for them.

However, after the abolition of the large property and with the possession of the territory by the former cowboys, who now became owners of a property in common with their peers, these ties are strengthened, as we could see in the previously presented compadrio relationships.

On the occasion when we had the privilege of following a joint effort carried out by Mr. Olímpio – one of the cowboys participating in our research project – we noticed in the meantime the ties, solidarity, involvement in work and the festive atmosphere between them.

It was surprising to come across this activity as we did not know beforehand that it was taking place. We had arranged to meet the cowboy Dudu, in Vila Medrado, on a Saturday, so that an interview could be held with him and his role as a seed in the region explained. When we arrived at his home, even before the interview started, we were invited by him to meet a friend who was carrying out the task force, to which he had not been able to go earlier due to the care of animals during the drought.

The invitation caused us great enthusiasm and emotion for the spontaneity with which it was made and also for Dudu's sensitivity in realizing that this could be an interesting fact for our study.

We immediately went there, and were introduced to the owner of the house, Mr. Olímpio, who, despite having just met us, immediately invited us to take part in the lunch, served under the shade of an umbuzeiro, a delicious cooked beef mush. , accompanied by a cachacinha, a common aperitif of rich country meals, attesting once again to the legendary hospitality of the simple and generous people of the hinterland.

As soon as we arrived, we were faced with the scene of compadres and friends engaged in the task of raising the fences of the pigsty under renovation. According to the “owner of the service”, that was a service for the expansion of the “corralzinho”, or pigsty, used to arrest “a few goats, or a cow, from time to time...”.

The atmosphere was one of festivity, as there was, in addition to the joy of shared lunch, todas and vaquejada songs were played in an automotive sound, denoting the relationship between the collective work and musicality, the singing that, even in sound mechanic brings out the animation that softens the harshness of the hard work of laying stakes and posts in the noonday sun.

During lunch we didn't interfere in the interactions between them, when they took the opportunity to continue the conversations about amenities, issues related to the drought, among others. We didn't notice mention of any cattle story, nor mention of any activity related to them, but, however, we noticed a lot of jokes and laughter when we

informed the reason for the visit, a fact that aroused a lot of curiosity among them, the jokes were usually about the being cowboy: “Is it, homi, what cowboy likes to tell stories?” “Are you a cowboy, compadre?”, among other sayings that are common among them when we ask about it.

Seu Olímpio, upon learning the reason for the visit, was very enthusiastic and immediately accepted the invitation to give us an interview with his son Neném, who also helped his father in organizing the adjutant. He invited us in and introduced us to a little of his history as a cowboy, and as a cowboy, and a former craftsman who worked in the manufacture of the leather hat, showing us that within the cowboy there are many other identities that intertwine, that define him .

In the context of the task force, we did not prioritize so much to gather the impressions of the other cowboys present there, in order not to interfere in the work being carried out, preferring to observe the interactions that were taking place in that specific situation.

VII. VAQUEJADA - TO THE SOUND OF THE SEAWALL, THE "STYLIZED COWBOY"

The vaquejada has served as a demonstrative example for how the culture of the country cowboy would be detaching itself from the contexts where they originated, moving away from its popular character and approaching more and more the format advocated by the mass culture characteristic of capitalism.

However, like the ox magpies in the bush, this one will find itself inscribed in cultural practices inherited from the cowboy's daily toils as a resignification of work, of the material conditions of existence. Similarly to them, it had its origins linked to the apartamentos and cattle tools in the colonial period, before the existence of fenced pastures; times when work becomes game.

The description brought by Cascudo (2001) makes us think that little has changed in this form of entertainment that has traversed the centuries and was able to incorporate elements that make it a great spectacle today in some regions of Brazil. However, a closer look will make us realize that some things are different: in addition to the previously rural, almost unpopulated, and now urban setting, the cowboy and the horse that are part of the modern vaquejada have also changed.

Issues related to changes in the management of cattle, now almost entirely raised in an intensive regime, also act, in this case, as a factor for the reconfiguration of the traditional vaquejada. Research participants also relate the decrease in caatinga areas with these transformations.

A fact that caught our attention was the cowboy's perception of the phenomenon of cultural transformations not only modifying the relationship between men and nature; and how much animals are also affected by them, because, as we can see in the speech of one of them, the oxen raised in captivity would also be unlearning to run in the forest.

[...] things were coming to an end, or a beginning, which I can't even say what it is, that each one was finding a place to hold their animals, dividing.... So animals today are no longer used to being released like they used to. Animals, today, are released on a more private property (HENRIKY, 2018).

This factor of the disappearance of the caatingas has led younger cowboys to seek the modern vaquejada, but it is also perceived that, in addition, aspects related to the glamorization that currently involves the practice are also influencing. In one of the last activities we observed, a cowherd held at the municipal headquarters, we could see the clear differences between the so-called track cowboy and the cowboy who runs in the woods.

In the past, in the context of apartamentos, the act of knocking over oxen in the clean space, in moments of rest between long periods of toil in the caatinga, was seen as a revelry, as bravado and affirmation before the group. At present, the practice takes on other contours and meanings that identify it from the sense of play to sport.

The first sense, that of play, is more limited to family nuclei, smaller parks, where those cowboys who are still learning go, with future aspirations to become one day cowboy professionals. For beginners, there is a high investment in the purchase and maintenance of a necessary structure, with exercises and animal training. In this way, in addition to their own professionalization, they yearn to become, who knows one day, a champion of the vaquejadas.

Cowgirl is also linked to values that involve the definition of the masculinity of the cowboy, both in the past and in the present. The cowherd universe is permeated by this issue, and it is not possible to ignore it. The specters that concern the definition of the cowboy's identity are directly related to concepts such as manliness, virility, pride, bravery, daring, fearlessness, honor, among other concepts evoked in this universe as a way for the cowboy to assert himself and prove his value before the group.

Albuquerque Júnior (2013), when explaining the historical-discursive contingencies that would contribute to trace and fix in the national imagination the figure of the Northeastern goat-male says that this is an identity manufactured in the context of the search for a definition of the cultural traits that would characterize us and distinguish

as a nation. In this sense, the references of an original, authentic culture would be located in the interior of Brazil and, more specifically, in the Northeast region.

It is in this context that a representation of the sertão will be instituted around symbologies linked to the past permeated by characteristic male figures such as the jagunço, the cangaceiro, the colonel, the landowner, the cowboy. The latter, even in the present, has been taken as one of the main characters that would characterize the "finished type" of the sertanejo.

These representations were, by force of repetition, being transmitted to each generation, with the reinforcement of the media, to inculcate an idea of the Northeast that generates and "sells" cultural goods that will serve different interests, especially those linked to the cultural industry.

This factor is very noticeable when one looks at another form of musical expression of the cowboy, traditionally identified by the predominance of the aboio and the toada. In the context of vaquejada, these rhythms no longer find a place among the new generations, who consider them "old", "out of fashion"; in its place, the presence of the famous walls playing at the last volume dictates the rhythm of the party, usually with the consumption of alcoholic beverages, which were always present, but now taking on a sophistication.

The consumption of alcoholic beverages, especially whiskey, also gives the dimension of what happens in the context of social interactions in this universe marked by the tension of knocking the ox down on the track, and thus managing to defeat opponents. The consumption of whiskey, and no longer of white cachaça, or cold beer is indicative of status, of ostentation, which would facilitate the conquest, the euphoric "catch the ladies" for their performance on the track, thus winning, for part of the companions, the certificate of a cowboy who is not soft, proving doubly his virility.

During the observations, in the exploratory phase, these signs were very evident, even in the handling of oxen in the bush, the incorporation of exogenous elements to the traditional handling of cattle in the caatinga, the walls or automotive sounds, the clothing, more similar to from meadow races in other regions of the country, except for the fortuitous presence of an older cowboy more attached to a leather hat.

A singular fact discovered during the interview phase was the number of cowboys who travel through these two universes, that is, they are at the same time cowboys who run with ox in the woods and track cowboys. Of the six participating families, three fit this profile: the Serra Branca, São João and Andorinha families, including runners between the first and second generations.

VIII. CONCLUSIONS

The impressions that the study arouses are, without a doubt, provocative in the sense of helping us to think about the multiplicity with which backland cultures are constituted.

Thinking about the cultures of cowboys is thinking about the different forms of cultural expressions, identities, representations and belongings. This requires saying that they are plural processes, just as this group of people is plural, which is much more and greater than a bunch of people, it is strength, faith, material and spiritual manifestations of different people who were before, who are now and who it will be in times to come.

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