



Contradictions between nature safeguarding and the social representations of the Parque dos Manguezais Conservation Unit (Recife-PE) through the prism of the ZEIS Ilha do Destino.

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ABSTRACT

The discussion presented here proposes to delve into the issue of protected areas in urban territories. These ecological enclaves, geographically delimited by specific instruments and legislation, arise from efforts to safeguard what is understood as nature and natural resources. However, the social and environmental conflicts arising from the limitations of use and access for related communities raise the question to what extent the policy of creating protected areas succeeds in its goals of protecting nature. In this paper we analyze the dissonance of the man-nature relations between the community Ilha do Destino and the UCN Parque dos Manguezais, in the city of Recife. Through the understanding of the social representations elaborated by local residents regarding the UCN, we sought to elucidate which are the main forces that engender the conflicting actions between this community and the mangrove ecosystem. With this reflection and discussion, it was understood that the traditionally agreed upon safeguarding of nature in the city is more allied to management processes that take into account the social representations elaborated about the territory than with the delimitation of geographic enclosures separated from the urban socio-environmental dynamics.

KEYWORDS: Protected Areas. Traditional Communities. Social Representations.

1 INTRODUCTION

Built in an estuarine geographical condition, the city of Recife has evidence of man's adaptations and conflicts over the occupied aquatic territory in its history and landscape. Dardel (2015) summarizes that the city is the intervention of man on the land, which, in other words, raises the consideration that the urban fact is not an exclusively cultural phenomenon but an overlap of man's desires on pre-existing physiographic factors.

It is important to note that in this article when we allude to these physiographic factors, we often reproduce certain simplistic conceptualizations of what is conventionally referred to as "nature". In fact, assuming that anthropic activities are shaped on the planet as a whole (LA BLACHE, 2012), with a greater or lesser degree of intensity, we point out that traditional and dichotomous abstractions are equivocal, inducing the understanding of nature as a phenomenon separated from the cultural production of the territory. However, for a better understanding of the discussion proposed here, we rely on common sense, understanding the physiographic territory and "nature"/"natural" attributes as the elements, comprising the territorial or object scale, which, even in the urban territory, still retain a specific ecosystem dynamics of geophysical and biotic factors and some traces of the landscape prior to human occupation.

This explanation is necessary because, when we allude to the focus of the problem explored in this paper - the human-nature relations in the territories surrounding intraurban Conservation Units - we are dealing with geographically delimited territories whose borders are physically and legally established under the bases of essentially dichotomous precepts, as pointed out by Moura (2022), Diegues (2001), Bressan (1996), among other authors who address the issue of the creation of Protected Areas.

In the specific case of Recife, Castro (1966) and Bezerra (2017) described the initial condition of the territory, once characterized as an irrigated pond, or, in other terms, a large plain watercolored by mangroves, rivers, and streams, as well as typical formations of the tropical jungle inserted in the Atlantic Forest biome. The human occupation that developed in this territory and that gradually, through landfills and the suppression of native forests, fragmented the pre-existing ecosystems, responds to the current condition of the city and its 25 instituted Nature Conservation Units. Notably, these forest fragments are disconnected

from each other and generally surrounded by middle-class occupations, low-income communities, traditional communities, and urban infrastructures, especially roads.

In a transition strip condition, the edges of the Conservation Units trigger various socio-environmental conflicts that represent a challenge to the institutionalization of the safeguarding of ecosystems in the city. The central question that arises in this context is: how to equalize the interests of biodiversity conservation with urban growth, with the interests of the formal and informal real estate market, and with the demands of local communities, especially traditional ones? The answer to this question is not evident since the principles governing the delimitation of these areas, conventionally and since their origin, are based on the separation of the dimensions of nature and culture.

In order to meet the objectives of the conservation processes of these remnants of urban ecosystems, in 2014, the Municipal System of Protected Areas - SMUP (Municipal Law No. 18.014/2014) was established by the Recife City Hall, where the 25 UCNs (Nature Conservation Units) of the city are recognized, among other categories and typologies of protected areas. From the moment they become part of the SMUP, each remnant is recognized not as an isolated geographical unit but as a component of a system seen as ecologically interconnected, either directly (UCNs that border each other), or indirectly, connected through ecological corridors (rivers and streams). In this sense, the ecological importance of the network of green and free spaces, public and private, inserted in the urban fabric of Recife is institutionally recognized and legally supported.

The consolidation of municipal protected area systems comes from the contribution of the National System of Conservation Units - SNUC (Federal Law No. 9.985/2000). In this system, it is proposed the categorization and subdivision of conservation units into two groups: Integral Protection Units and Sustainable Use Units, with those inserted in the first group, restrictive to human presence and those inserted in the second group, with tolerance to specific uses of the territory's resources in accordance with restrictions of the objectives of conservation of ecosystems and the local landscape.

Evidently, in this case, especially in conservation units in the category of integral protection, socio-environmental conflicts will emerge from the clash between the interests of ecosystem conservation processes and the demands of traditional populations, many of which are not even considered in municipal systems¹. An example of this is the case of Recife's protected areas system, where, despite a definition of traditional populations in the initial glossary, they are not mentioned again in subsequent articles (MOURA, 2022). If the traditionality of certain groupings is projected in territoriality and if many of the social and cultural practices are related to subsistence and extractive activities, unequivocally, regulatory

¹ We understand that the conceptualization of people, cultures and traditional populations is still simplistic, especially with regard to those inserted in urban territory. The legal instruments that deal directly or indirectly with traditional people resort to the articles of Federal Decree No. 6.040, of February 7, 2007, whose Article 3 points out: I - Traditional People and Communities: culturally differentiated groups who recognize themselves as such, who have their own forms of social organization, who occupy and use territories and natural resources as a condition for their cultural, social, religious, ancestral and economic reproduction, using knowledge, innovations and practices generated and transmitted by tradition (our translation); The lack of more precise characterization, involving those in urban territory and their nuances (insertion in the formal and service sectors, absence of ancestry, etc.), often place them in the same group as local communities - those whose social reproduction and ways of life are not directly linked to a specific territory.

and prohibitionist actions of practices prior to protected units lead to socio-environmental conflicts and, ultimately, to the suppression of these collective identities. Souza (2007) corroborates this issue by stating:

These two faces of the same medal - man/environment are the key to understanding the wefts of territoriality, the meaning of the modes of management of eco-resources, and the continuity of their collective individuation. These individuals, when acting with/on the environments where they live, recreate their daily lives and establish territorialities, in the sense of conferring to the extension of the territory appropriated and used by particular population characteristics of exclusivity, that is, of belonging to what belongs to us (SANTOS, 2001, p.9). In this ancestral sense, territoriality precedes and even does not require the presence of the State... (SOUZA, 2007, p. 185, our translation).

Nature is associated with cultural production represented by the experience of human existence, whether material or even symbolic, socially elaborated based on the culture of people. Culture, as Whitaker and Bezons (2006) rightly point out, should be understood as "a structured complex, formed not only of material techniques and practices, but also of values, norms of conduct, judgments, laws, morals, arts and, above all, patterns of behavior...". This systemic set of material and immaterial dimensions constitutes "a web of symbols that gives meaning to the actions of human beings who live this culture." (WHITAKER and BEZONS, 2006, p.65, our translation). Thus, even Conservation Units with relevant natural attributes have significant sociocultural content.

The disharmony between the delimitation of a protected area and the adjacent population will be discussed, in this paper, through a reference case, the community "Ilha do Destino", located on the banks of the Parque dos Manguezais (Conservation Unit of the city of Recife) and in the neighborhood of Boa Viagem, one of the square meters of greater speculative real estate value in northeastern Brazil. The example of the community is emblematic. Since it was born in the 1960s from a fishing occupation on the margins of the mangrove, the urban growth around it caused a major disruption in the fishing practice, whose effects are revealed in the relationships of individuals with the natural site.

Even with the physical-territorial delimitation of the UCN Parque dos Manguezais and the definition of the perimeter of the community in 1994, established as a Special Zone of Social Interest, the pressures on the ecosystem did not cease, persisting to the present day, registering suppressions to the mangrove in the areas closest to that community. In this context, we assume that the dissonances of this relationship are analogous to the way individuals reproduce the values attributed to the ecosystem, that is, from the social representations elaborated as a stance towards the environment in which they live. We sought to understand how the common knowledge shared among community members engenders their actions that affect the natural environment, overlapping with legal restrictions and the principles of conservation processes. Parallel to this problem, we reflected on how the changes imposed on the community's fishing dynamics contributed to exiling people from the natural territory - hence the real driving force for the emergence of negative and contradictory representations that erupt in socio-environmental conflicts.

2 SOCIAL REPRESENTATIONS, BASES THAT STRUCTURE ACTION IN THE TERRITORY

The objectives of a protected area are defined in the management plans - basic instruments for conservation management, where, according to the specific characteristics of the Conservation Unit and its surroundings, the goals and zoning of the delimited territory are stipulated. Regarding those in urban context, the insertion of these units within a system of protected areas is preceded by the zoning of the municipal territory, which protects the areas of ecological and landscape interest. These delimitations are usually part of specific municipal legislation, decrees, and urban planning instruments, such as land use and occupation laws and master plans.

Whether in urban planning instruments or established in the System of Protected Areas and endowed with management plans, restrictions on the use and occupation of these areas are imposed as urgent measures to preserve the natural attributes of these ecosystems. In the absence of regulation of urban territories, individual and collective demands are the main drivers of urban occupation. It is in this sense that, highlighting the caveats, we admit the positive intentions of international and local environmental policy in institutionalizing the creation of protected areas, against the pressures on ecosystem redoubts and unique landscapes, despite the fact that the same policy also triggers other socio-environmental conflicts.

However, in the case of the city of Recife, even the natural fragments delimited and safeguarded by specific legislation, the management or territorial development plans, using physical means (barriers, fences, walls, etc.) or normative means of inspection (punitive sanctions, fines, etc.), have not been able to ensure the intactness of its natural attributes in the face of land, real estate and socioeconomic pressures. In investigations previously conducted within the scope of the Natural Heritage Conservation Research Group (CNPq-UFPE-Landscape Laboratory-CAU/DAU), it was observed that, since 2016, when analyzing 8 (eight) Municipal and State Conservation Units (Dois Irmãos State Park - PEDI, Mata do Engenho Uchôa Wildlife Refuge - RVSMEU, APA Sítio dos Pintos, ARIE Jardim Botânico, ARIE Tamandaré, ARIE Vila São Miguel, ARIE Mata do Jiquiá, Parque Natural Municipal dos Manguezais Josué de Castro - Figure 1), dissonance of postures regarding the conservation of natural elements was identified, observed in the relations between the surrounding communities and the existing ecosystem in the urban environment. Among the damages caused to the natural sites investigated, the suppression of native vegetation and the area of urban forest cover, the occupation of river banks, streams, and canals, the inadequate disposal of solid waste and sewage, hunting and predatory extraction, and the expansion of crustacean farms in mangrove areas are the main impacts observed in loco (Figure 1b and 1c).

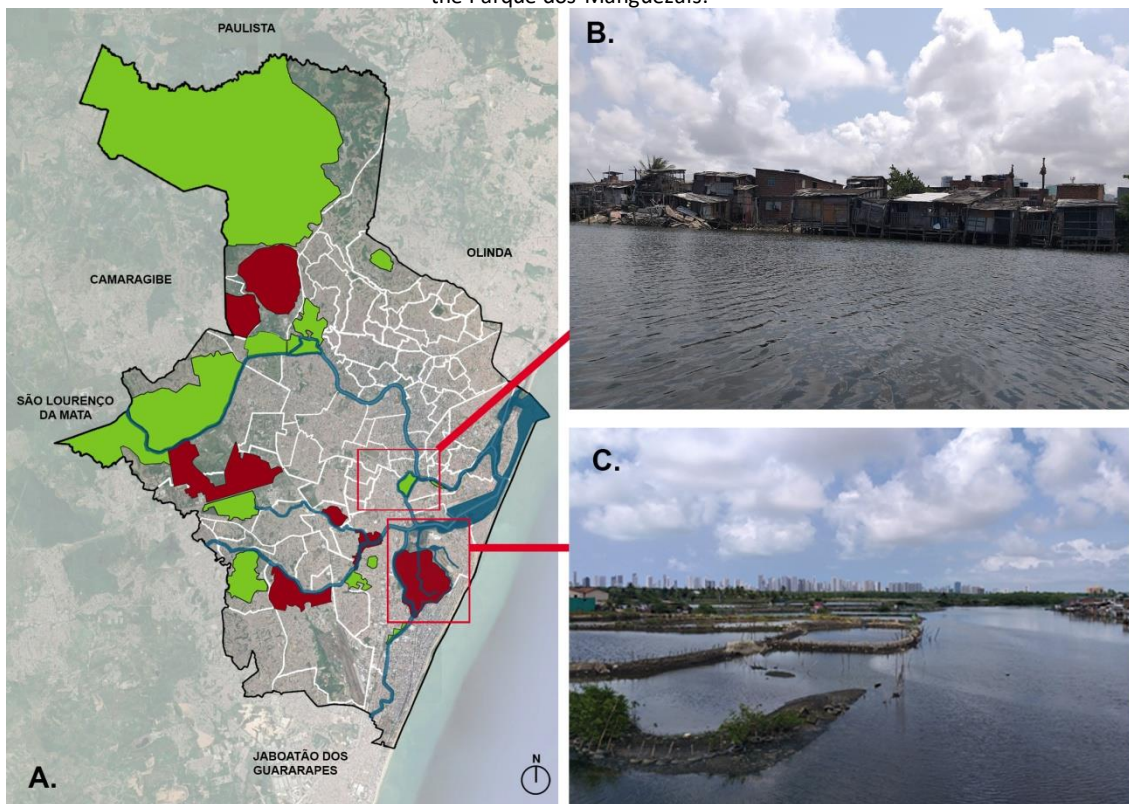
Different authors address the explanation of the motivation for the incursion into natural sites. Bressan (1996) sought to deconstruct the argument that man is inherently an agent of environmental degradation. For the author, the mediation of the relationship between man and nature is subject to a system of capital accumulation. Hence natural attributes become resources to be exploited and monetized. Diegues (2001), in turn, assumes that in the relationship between man and nature, the cultural factors of certain communities

stand out from legal restrictions. In this sense, it is based on social practice, amalgamated in the identity of these communities that man projects himself in the territory. In a similar vein, when discussing the exploration of the Brazilian Atlantic Forest since the threshold of the Portuguese occupation, Dean (1996) explains how different cultures manage the territory, challenging the notion that even the original peoples were necessarily conservationists. He then admits that, in other terms, human beings impact the surrounding territory, but what should be discussed, in fact, is the scale of these pressures. In any case, it is unequivocal that man projects himself over his territory and imprints his actions. In line with this, Godelier (1984) relates human actions on a territorial basis to socially elaborated representations. The author states that the differentiation between men and other living beings is due to the fact that, in their adaptive process, representations have fundamentally been the mechanism by which man interprets nature.

Representations were the object of study and theory of the French sociologist Serge Moscovici (1925-2014). In general terms, the author defines them as structures of knowledge inserted in the domain of common sense, being primary formulations (interpretations) of a reality that permeate and materialize as knowledge from the communication between the members of a society (MOSCOVICI, 2015). As Jodelet (1989) points out, representations are a modality of knowledge on which the understanding of the world and communication are built. It is from this construction of objective reality that the human being elaborates the responses to external stimuli.

Thus, it is assumed that social representations are the bases of human action on the territory, and from this conception, the hypothesis to be verified in this research is built: human incursions on the territory are more aligned with the social representations elaborated by the entities that interact with it than with the legal permissions and restrictions of the established systems of protected areas.

Figure 1 - a. Conservation Units of the City of Recife; b. Stilt houses bordering ARIE Ilha do Zeca; c. Shrimp farms in the Parque dos Manguezais.



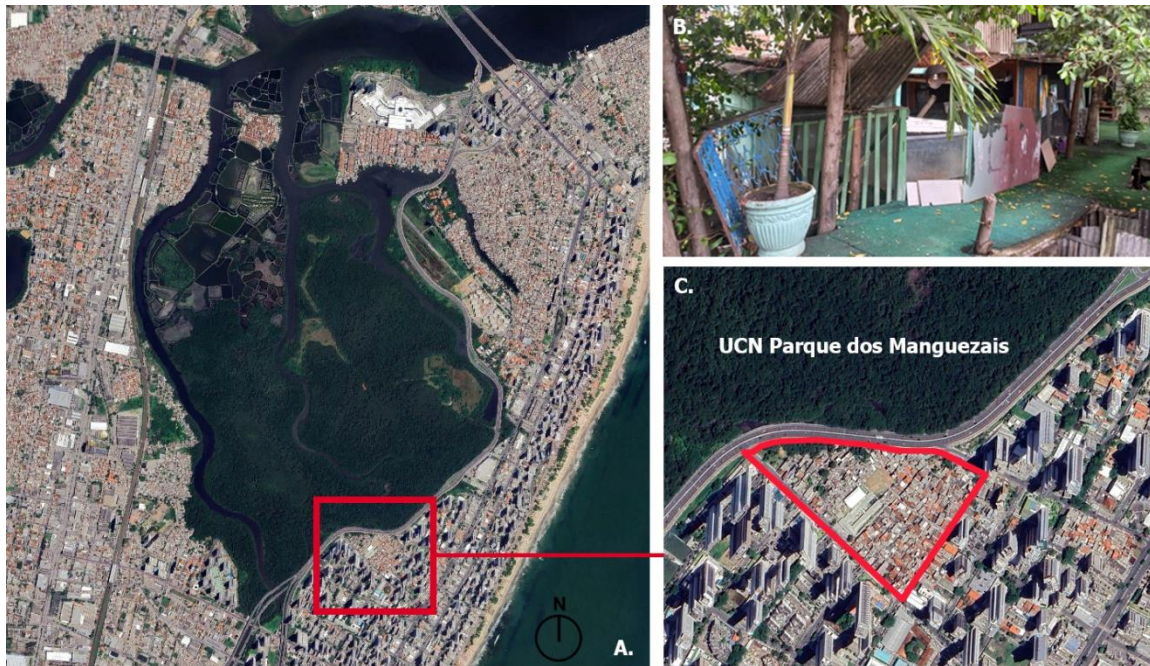
Source: a. Elaborated by the authors, 2023; b/c. Authors' personal archive, 2022.

3 ZEIS ILHA DO DESTINO AND THE ANALYSIS METHOD

The empirical case analyzed in this study is a low-income urban occupation adjacent to the Parque dos Manguezais, corresponding to the Special Zone of Social Interest (ZEIS) Ilha do Destino (Figure 2). Located in one of the areas bordering the neighborhood of Boa Viagem, south of Recife, the community has its occupation dating from the 1960s, when the city's coastal zone became the principal target of urban expansion. In contrast to the summer residences that were once established on the newly urbanized Boa Viagem beach, and the residential buildings that were increasingly evident in the landscape, Ilha do Destino followed the occupation pattern of the other Recife fishing communities that emerged in the 20th century: successive landfills with the construction of wattle-and-daub buildings.

Only in 1994, through Municipal Law No. 15.997/94, the community is recognized as a ZEIS, safeguarding its right to remain in the locality. At that time, the aforementioned law recognizes that "The community interacts harmoniously with the surroundings, both in the provision of services, developing informal sector activities such as: cleaning, surveillance, and others, as well as in the use of basic health, education, leisure, and transport services". There is no mention of fishing activities, which were common in the first moments of the occupation, which indicates the tendency of migration of the economic activities of urban fishing communities - gradually, their members are integrated into the formal labor market of the cities, generally working in the service sector.

Figure 2 - a/c. Location of the ZEIS Ilha do Destino. b. Stilt house on the margins of the ZEIS.



Source: a. Google satellite images, authors' edition, 2023; b. Authors' personal archive, 2022; c. Google satellite images, authors' edition, 2023.

In order to collect the data necessary to identify the central social representations (SR) that some members of Ilha do Destino have elaborated about the Parque dos Manguezais, we prioritized the speeches and discourse of a social group that has an essential role in the elaboration and transmission of SR. According to Duveen (2015), representations are always a product of interaction and communication. Thus, a script was prepared for the application of a semi-structured interview with ten local residents, whose speeches were recorded and transcribed. The decision to use a semi-structured script was due to the qualitative approach of the research. As Melo (2003) points out, research using social representations is necessarily qualitative due to the commitment to social and natural phenomena.

The data treatment of the transcribed material was performed using the software Iramuteq (Interface de R pour les Analyses Multidimensionnelles de Textes et Questionnaires), used for textual content analysis. It was thus possible to understand the structure of the individuals' discourse separately (how the main ideas of the speeches are hierarchized) and to synthesize them from keywords that, in turn, correspond to the social representations of the object studied.

The data collected allowed the discussion on how social representations engender the actions of individuals on the ecosystem and how they solidify the distancing of the community from its territory and from the social practices originating in that nucleus, alienating the individuals of the community from their territorial identity.

4 THE MAN-NATURE RELATIONS IN THE ZEIS ILHA DO DESTINO

In studies that aim to investigate the imbrications of human-nature dynamics, with conservation units and their correlated communities as the object, the discussion can be

guided by prioritizing the protected area itself. In this case, it is necessary to understand, for example, how social practices influence the ecological and physiographic processes and the site's landscape. On the other hand, it is possible to discuss, through the prism of the communities, how the sociocultural dynamics of these settlements relate to the territory, or what influences the surrounding nature has on the social practices and ways of life of individuals. Even though they do not originate from the same references, both approaches do not cancel each other out since, when it comes to protected areas and their surroundings, the scale of the territory must be considered, encompassing what is conventionally called a natural site and an anthropic site. Based on this assumption, in studies that propose to immerse themselves in this issue, it is important to emphasize the focus on the object, reiterating that a deeper analysis of the facts cannot be done unilaterally.

Studies of sociocultural dynamics, and especially those involving the scale of territory and encompassing the so-called natural sites, must therefore be essentially interdisciplinary. This conception, far from being an innovation in thinking, was already advocated by Vidal de la Blache at the dawn of the so-called humanistic geography. Alluding to the geographical explanation of a region, the author points out that no part of the earth contains an explanation in itself (LA BLACHE, 2012, p. 44), that is, even the attributes that characterize the physiognomy of a region are inserted in a larger scale structure:

Seen in isolation, the features that form the physiognomy of a country have the value of a fact; however, they only acquire the value of a scientific notion when repositioned in the chain of which they are part. Only this linkage is capable of giving them full meaning [...] Thus, in trying to show a region [contrée] from different angles - in the same way that one submits to different angles the various faces of the object one wishes to know - I have had no other objective than to illuminate the principle of connection that unites geographical phenomena. If I borrowed from neighboring sciences, it was not only to lead the thought to different themes but to draw useful testimonies from them (LA BLACHE, 2012, p.43, our translation).

In the same direction, the tendency to investigate protected areas, closing the study from the perspective of the conservation unit itself (often tangential to human projections on the territory), tends to reproduce limited visions in ecology, botany, geology, and other strict natural sciences, overvaluing quantitative approaches of a positivist nature. If socio-environmental conflicts intensified during the 20th century as national and international policies to safeguard nature were solidified, it is clear that the natural sciences alone cannot answer the question of the conservation of natural territories. Similarly, the social sciences, without the seal of the studies of the natural sciences, cannot encompass the totality of the factors that influence the conservation of ecosystems and, consequently, the safeguarding of the ways of life and production of correlated communities, - so interconnected to the ecological balance and landscape of the sites.

Thus, we emphasize that this study represents only a part of a broader investigation, that to understand the totality of the phenomena involving the protected area studied (the UCN Parque dos Manguezais) it would be necessary to compare the anthropic factors

mentioned here with the singularities and nuances of the ecosystem, from the point of view of the natural sciences.

In fact, the fieldwork and the interviews showed, through empirical evidence - the interviewees' speech - that the ecological imbalance in the conservation unit, mainly from the intense process of urbanization and verticalization of the Boa Viagem neighborhood and other border areas, considerably reduced the supply of seafood available to the communities. The impacts of this reduction for the ecosystem itself need to be investigated beyond the personal experience of the authors interviewed, hence the need to resort to the natural sciences - but it is evident that in the absence of the supply of inputs for personal consumption or for commercialization in the local market, the sociocultural dynamics of the Ilha do Destino community have changed. It is at this moment that a traditional fishing community loses its references linked to the territory and subjugates itself to the formal or informal labor market demanded by its immediate surroundings.

The folks still go fishing, catch some crabs, some "aratus" when there are some. I only fish in Via Mangue and do not feel like going here to fish anymore. I go on foot, I used to have a boat, but there's no more access. The fishermen sold their boats and went to live off the land.²

I used to fish behind "Bompreço" of Pina. I used to fish with my hands, but I also play "tarrafa". People here fish by hand. I used to fish by boat, but now it's more polluted, you can't get there. I'll tell you that many fishermen here have become painters, servants, dealers...³

This change in dynamics reverberates in how the community relates to and projects itself onto the conservation unit. If, in the past, the income and subsistence of Ilha do Destino were linked to fishing activity, which requires greater proximity to the territory, the change in dynamics intensifies a denial of the ecosystem. Contributing to this denial are factors exogenous to the community, when the environmental degradation of the conservation unit influences the transformation of the landscape and the community environment. In this context, water pollution, from household waste or solid waste deposited in rivers that flow into the mangrove, will be agents of structuring people's thinking and interpretation of the territory, being elaborated through them, the representations of the Parque dos Manguezais as naturally, the environment of unhealthiness. This same dynamic that engenders this representation was identified by Bezerra (2000) when, in conducting interviews with residents around the UCN, she concluded that the dominant representation for those who lived closest to the banks was the mangrove as "Mud". Moura (2022) ratified this denial of the mangrove when he pointed out that, in the case of the riverside residents, mud is an allegory that opposes a particular notion of progress. In other words, for these residents, "mud" is associated with sewage, with garbage, being the image of the unhealthiness of the banks.

²Man, 65 years old, Fisherman, resident of the Ilha do Destino community for 50 years.

³Woman, 33 years old, housewife, resident of the Ilha do Destino community since she was born.

Because you know that what ended the mangrove here was the community. Garbage on top of garbage. They did not realize that they had to put the garbage in the right place. Then everything goes into the mangrove. Then all the animals disappear. I myself have eaten a lot of crabs here, out of here they walked in the middle of the street. And with this Via Mangue, that's when it really got away. Also, the people are invading. Right there at the aeroclub you could catch "guaiamum", fish, everything.⁴

Mangrove is life in the old days, and now it's not anymore. In the old days, you used to see many people there in the Pina basin. There was crab, "aratu", and some little fish sunk in the mud. Nowadays, there aren't any more.⁵

Those who have money have it. I'm going to build my house on the waterfront because it's beautiful to look at, but if I have the opportunity to sell it to get rid of the slum dwellers and build a building, I'll sell it. To make money.⁶

Everything here used to be tidal, each one was landing their place, and it got better, nowadays it's much better.⁷

Contradictorily, in the case of a previously fishing community, another representation confronts the pejorative view of the mangrove. The mangrove as a resource, based on its inputs (seafood), results from the constant reaffirmation, mainly through the former fishermen, that, beyond its current condition, the ecosystem is endowed with valuable attributes essential for the population's survival. It is interesting to note that, even if no longer directly linked to fishing activities, this representation perseveres, revealing a latent fishing memory in the community. It is this memory that differentiates it from independent communities in the Parque dos Manguezais, where pejorative and negative representations of the ecosystem are more common.

Although the changes in community dynamics are not recent, former residents pointed out that, until the early 2010s, some remaining fishermen still performed their activity to commercialize in the local market (there is a difference between fishing for commercialization, which entails a scale of production with greater dedication to work, and fishing only for sometimes feeding, which does not require daily dedication and is a much more sporadic activity). According to the interviewees, this recent past was definitively ended when the "Via Mangue" was built, an expressway that borders the Parque dos Manguezais and isolates the community from the ecosystem (Figure 3).

The Via Mangue changed the way people worked. It improved the surroundings significantly, but the project was supposed to be better than this one. Because the first project was supposed to be elevated. They left it low because it makes access to the mangrove difficult, otherwise, people invade.⁸

⁴Man, 64 years old, Packer and Mover, **resident of the Areinha community since he was born.**

⁵Man, 65 years old, Fisherman, **resident of the Ilha do Destino community for 50 years.**

⁶Man, 65 years old, Fisherman, **resident of the Ilha do Destino community for 50 years.**

⁷Woman, 52 years old, waste picker, **resident of the Ilha do Destino community since birth.**

⁸Man, 65 years old, Fisherman, **resident of the Ilha do Destino community for 50 years.**

Before Via Mangue, there was a boat, people would go fishing for crabs, moray eels... Now they walk.⁹

The Via Mangue is there, and many fishermen stopped fishing because of it. You can't pass, it's too low. And there's a lot of garbage. You can see it there.¹⁰

Figure 3 - Via Mangue separating ZEIS Ilha do Destino and Parque dos Manguezais.



Source: Author's personal archive, 2022.

The limitations imposed on the development of fishing activities, whether due to the ecosystem's degradation or the territory's division caused by the Via Mangue, answer questions about how different residents represent the ecosystem. If on the one hand, the denial of the mangrove is more present in the speeches of those younger interviewees who have never been directly involved with fishing activities, on the other hand, the mangrove as a resource is a recurring representation in the speeches of those older residents when they remember the fishing dynamics of the community. However, regarding this last representation, residents point out that, currently, the mangrove is a resource for fishermen outside the community, no longer for those who still develop some fishing activity in the region. Thus, they refer to other fishing communities in Recife by mentioning the fishing culture associated with the ecosystem.

I wouldn't build anything in the mangrove because it would affect the people there a lot. For me, it doesn't mean much. It's more for those who live off fishing, like the people from Ilha-de-Deus.¹¹

It's on the Pina side that people like to fish. Fishing was more common here in the old days. The mangrove used to be life for us here, but not anymore.¹²

Whether by denial or the impossibility of carrying out the fishing activity, what results from these representations are conflicting relationships between the conservation interests of

⁹Woman, 52 years old, waste picker, **resident of the Ilha do Destino community since birth.**

¹⁰Man, 40 years old, General services, **resident of the Ilha do Destino community for 23 years.**

¹¹Man, 50 years old, Mechanic, **resident of the community of Vila Imbiribeira for 30 years.**

¹²Woman, 52 years old, waste picker, **resident of the Ilha do Destino community since birth.**

the UCN and the appropriation of community space. Reiterating the principle that social representations engender human actions on their exteriority, it is evident that, when there is a pejorative representation of the mangrove and a denial of its existence, then the residents tend to contribute to the process of environmental degradation. When it is shared in common sense that the mangrove margin is an environment of unhealthiness, then it is there that the solid waste of the community will be deposited - after all, even if they did not deposit, such waste would be intertwined in the roots of the mangrove, brought from other localities of the city, by the movement of the tides. It is not a problem caused exclusively by endogenous factors but rather intensified when the community rejects the ecosystem.

At the same time, if the mangrove is considered a resource, two main consequences can emerge from this representation, according to Moura (2022). In the first instance, a sense of belonging and awareness regarding its conservation can be awakened, after all, the maintenance of fishing activities would require a harmonious relationship with the ecosystem. Hence the author observed that, in communities with a strong fishing tradition around the UCN, the representation of the mangrove as a resource encourages the appearance of conservationist actions and activities led by the communities' individuals. However, when in parallel, there is a strong rejection of the mangrove, and when the community members no longer perform the guiding activity of the representation (fishing), then the representation of the mangrove as a resource has, as a consequence, the exploitation of natural attributes. Currently, what has been observed in the surroundings of the Parque dos Manguezais is a slow but gradual expansion over the mangrove area, with significant landfills of its margins, especially on the edges that border the community of Ilha do Destino.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

This paper was not intended to criticize the policy of conservation of natural sites based on the creation of protected areas. We recognize the merit of the efforts to establish these physical-geographical strongholds, but we are reluctant not to connive with this model - hence the criticism is less incisive. The intention not to antagonize protected area systems, nor to praise them uncritically, is based on the assumption that, in the absence of immediate solutions to contain anthropic pressures on the natural environment, the delimitation of protected areas, as an urgent management measure, somehow effectuates the preservation of the natural attributes of that valuable territory. However, it is essential to ratify that legal restrictions are inefficient and ineffective both to contain socio-environmental conflicts and in the long-term viability of the nature conservation policy itself.

Unlike the preservationist voices that started the movement to create protected areas, in the second half of the 20th century important discussions emerged and stood out in challenging the romantic ideal of nature as an untouchable and untouched entity. The basis of sustainable development emerged as an announcement that efforts to conserve natural sites and resources can only succeed when contextualized with the reality in which they are inserted. An example of this was the contribution made in the Brundtland report in 1987 when the principles of sustainable development were established:

A world in which poverty and inequity are endemic will always be prone to ecological and other crises. Sustainable development requires meeting the basic needs of all and extending to all the opportunity to satisfy their aspirations for a better life. (CMED, 1987, p.47).

The efforts to conserve natural territories and their resources are palliative when based on the division of nature and human dimensions. If, at first, the delimitation of physical-geographical redoubts prevails in its safeguarding objectives, in the long term, human pressures tend to reproduce on the territory the demands and ways of life of populations previously associated with them or those who, after the creation of the Conservation Unit, come to inhabit its margins. Hence, in the planning and management instruments of protected areas, it is common to emphasize the monitoring processes of the territory occupied by the ecosystem, since the principles adopted so far place anthropic action on the opposite side of nature conservation. Monitoring becomes an action to suffocate the social use of the Conservation Unit.

There is still a sinuous path to follow regarding improving conservation policies and instruments. Even if the principles are still dichotomous, it is necessary to recognize that there are at least attempts to implement participatory models of environmental planning and management of the territory, especially since the 1988 federal constitution when it establishes that "everyone has the right to an ecologically balanced environment, a common asset of the people and essential to a healthy quality of life...". (BRASIL, 1988, Art. 225, our translation). However, it must be admitted that there is a great distance between legal determination and practice. This gap can only be overcome by challenging the stance that public policymakers and managers adopt on the territory, moreover, participatory management will only be a prerogative and not a principle.

The case discussed here of Ilha do Destino and the Parque dos Manguezais illustrates this issue. Since the appearance of the community, the change in fishing dynamics has been guided by the imposing distance of the riverine from the ecosystem. The demands of the surroundings, coupled with the pollution of mangroves, the limitations on the use of the protected area, and the construction of the "via mangue", have hindered what was once not only a socioeconomic but also a cultural activity, which is fundamental to the riverside identity of the settlement. The effects of this, as discussed, was the emergence, among community members, of pejorative representations of the neighboring ecosystem, which increasingly began to deny it from their collective and socio-environmental experiences. This denial, built for decades on a dogmatic division contained in the principles of ecosystem management and conservation, is projected onto the territory in the form of socio-environmental pressures and conflicts.

The clashes that occur in the city involving the pressure of the population on the natural remnants are derived from principles of ethical and moral order, whose understanding should guide public managers and urban planners in the processes of formulation and implementation of public policies for nature conservation. It is understood that the immediate measures of creating protected areas will be nothing more than palliative actions if the implementation of the conservation process does not contemplate the populations inserted in

the environment and their ways of life as the guide for the formulation of instruments for the management of urban territories and the natural resources contained therein. We conclude that the perpetuation of a dichotomous model of planning and management of natural and anthropic territories is responsible for the suppression of socio-cultural identities of traditional urban settlements and that they lead human-nature relations to unbridled antinomies and contradictions.

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