

Between the anthropic and the natural heritage: The relationship of the residents of the Bode community with the Parque dos Manguezais, Recife-PE.

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SUMMARY

This investigation is inserted on the nature conservation heritage cover, starting from the comprehension of an intrinsic relation between ecosystems and dependent communities, this article covers the Parque dos Manguezais, A Conservation unit of Recife city and the Bode community, historically related to the ecosystem. From this relation flourishes fisher activities developed by inhabitants since the XVII century, at the first territorial occupations, shaping the natural territory, until the contemporaneity, when real estate market pressure imposes to these residents a slowly but continuous process of gentrification. Hence, the research pointed out the relations of the residents with the Parque dos Manguezais, identifying how fishing is converted on an element that defines culture and the local social dynamic, being an essential fact to be considered to the anthropic and natural management to grant the community survival that coexists with the nature and historically manages its natural resources.

KEYWORDS: Bode Community. Parque dos Manguezais. Natural Heritage.

1 INTRODUCTION

Since the beginning of its occupation in the 16th century, Recife city was characterized by its large springs of fresh and brackish water under the influence of the tide, constituting an estuarine plain typical of an ecosystem of the Tropical Rain Forest. Regarding the geographical conformation of the territory, Bezerra (2017) states that the waters, mangroves and hills give to the city the morphology of an alluvial plain, formed by sediments from an old bay. In this context, the author highlights the role of water in the landscape:

The city of Recife has the waters that intersect it, the mangroves and the flooded areas, the vegetal massifs represented by the remnants of the Atlantic Forest and the hills that delineate its territorial horizon in the shape of a semicircle, its landscape reality or landscape system. the Recife As a basic element of its natural substrate, water is the protagonist of landscape (p.39)

Under this marshland territory, the city was built, whose characteristics Josué de Castro (1908-1973) highlights in his novel "Homens e Caranguejos" (1967), alluding to the universe of Recife's mangroves and its inhabitants, men and crabs. The author discusses the condition of the mangrove as a pioneer conqueror of the Recife bay, once the floodplain surrounded by hills to the west and reefs to the east (BEZERRA, 2017).

According to Josué de Castro, mangroves are the real builders of the soil in this territory, where they emerge from the islands of alluvial deposits "grasping tooth and nail on this soil to survive" (CASTRO, 1967, p.14). Says the author:

[...] the mangroves gradually intertwined their roots and their arms in a loving promiscuity, and thus consolidated their life and the life of the loose soil of the mud crowns, from which they sprouted. With the alluvial deposits that were accumulating in the maze of mangrove roots and under their layers of green shadows, the ground level was progressively rising, and extending its area under the protection of this dense vegetable crate. There is, therefore, no doubt that all this land that today floats at the surface of the waters, in the bay of Recife, was a creation of the mangroves. (1967, p. 14)

This ecological characteristic of the original site of Recife city (understanding the original site as the configuration at the time of Portuguese occupation, at the beginning of the 16th century) is responsible for the process of urban occupation, whose history reveals a broad

conflict, domination and agreement between the natural and anthropic dimensions. In this context, the mangrove ecosystem emerges to this day as one of the city's greatest identity marks, being part of the popular imagination and cultural manifestations (through literature, music, poetry, mainly).

This reveals a patrimonial facet of the ecosystem, which has a vital importance for Recife, as Fred Zero Quatro writes, in his manifesto “Caranguejos com cérebro” which announced the mangubeat movement:

Emergency! A quick shock or Recife dies of a heart attack! You don't have to be a doctor to know that the simplest way to stop a person's heart is to block his veins. The fastest way, too, to infarct and empty the soul of a city like Recife is to kill its rivers and fill in its estuaries (FRED ZERO QUATRO, 1992).

Recognized the importance of the mangrove for the city, this article will investigate through the empirical example of Parque dos Manguezais, the largest remnant of an estuarine ecosystem of the city, and the surrounding communities, more specifically the Bode community established as a Special Zone of Social Interest (ZEIS PINA /Encanta-Moça) by the law of land use and occupation of Recife (Municipal Law nº 16.176/1996).

The ecosystem and the community are located in the current Pina neighborhood, in the South Zone of the city, in an area of intense real estate activity. The arrival of new private buildings in the region caused a drastic change in the dynamics of the surroundings, including the construction of road infrastructure that provides access to these new demands on the territory, such as the “via mangue” (mangue expressway) built on the margins of the mangrove. Silva et al. (2016) emphasizes that traditional occupations are seen as “obstacles” for the neighborhood's real estate growth. The FipeZap¹ index highlights that in 2021 Pina was already the Recife neighborhood with the most expensive square meter for buying and selling properties, above traditionally valued neighborhoods such as Jaqueira or even Boa Viagem. The arrival of the RioMar Shopping Mall, the city's largest shopping center, in 2012 brought real estate valuation to the land located in the interior of the neighborhood, on the borders of ZEIS Pina/Encanta Moça (SILVA et al., 2016), causing an intense verticalization between the years 2012 and the present.

This factor emphasizes the urgency of investigating population dynamics with the ecosystem, seeking to go beyond understanding and then support territorial management plans (of the natural site and of the anthropic site) that aim not only to safeguard the ecosystem's heritage and ecological characteristics, but also the traditional communities related to it, their ways of life and their right to for housing.

2 OBJECTIVES

In this article, we will explore the intricacies of the historical occupation of the natural site of the mangrove swamps in the city of Recife, located in the current Pina district. Rec-

4 Available at: <<https://jc.ne10.uol.com.br/economia/2021/05/12125363-do-pina-a-varzea-veja-os-bairros-mais-caros-e-os-mais-baratos-para-morar-de-aluguel-no-recife.html>> Accessed, May 19, 2021.

ognized its importance as an identity ecosystem of the city and, therefore, a natural and cultural heritage, we will investigate the relationships that populations establish with the ecosystem and its transformations over the centuries. According to the Australian Natural Heritage Charter (IUCN, 2002), the natural heritage can no longer be seen apart from its cultural dimensions that emerge from peoples related to the property. In this sense, the proposed objective aims to contribute to a public management model that recognizes the existence of traditional populations in riverbanks areas, to improve the heritage management system of natural sites, considering their ecological and anthropic dimensions.

3 METHOD OF ANALYSIS

In order to identify and understand the relationships of the inhabitants of the Bode community with the Parque dos Manguezais, interviews were conducted with local actors from February to May 2019, in a total of 12 individuals, within a sampling unit.

These individuals inhabit the area investigated shown in Figure 1. Of the total, 3 of the interviewees work as fisherwomen and fishermen in the region, harvesting seafood directly from the Mangrove, while the others work on various activities related to the service or trade sector. In addition, 6 declared to have Incomplete elementary education, 2 declared to have completed elementary education, 3 declared to have completed high school and 1 declared to be attending higher education.

Figure 1 - Delimitation of the study area. In yellow, limits of the Pina neighborhood; In red, the perimeter of the interviews corresponding to ZEIS Pina/Encanta-Moça (Bode community).



Source: Elaborated by the authors.

Regarding to the living environment (Figure 2), the Bode community presents itself as a large territory of horizontal building mass in contrast to the vertical surroundings of the Boa Viagem and Pina neighborhoods (Photo a). The Spatial Configuration of the community varies according to the distance from the mangrove. On the riverbanks there are unhealthy stilt houses, located just above the tide waters (Photos b and c) and are environments with little circulation width, with one or two room houses and with improvised electricity and water supply systems. A little further away are the masonry houses which are built in a limited space. Many times the proximity is such that it does not allow the passage of people in opposite directions (Photo d). The interior of the community is relatively uniform, with vehicular traffic

streets and masonry buildings that are sometimes commercial and sometimes residential (Photos e, f, g, and h).

The study of the interviews, according to the set of questions formulated, was processed according to three categories of analysis, presented in this article as: I. Relationship with the Parque dos Manguezais; II. Relationship with the place where they live; III. Relationship with the Pina neighborhood.

Figura 2 – Living environment of the ZEIS Pina/Encanta-Moça.



Photo a



Photo b



Photo c



Photo d



Photo e



Photo f



Photo g



Photo h

Source: authors' personal collection, 2019.

4 OCCUPATION OF THE PINA NEIGHBORHOOD: A BRIEF HISTORY OF MAN-NATURE SYMBIOSIS IN THE URBAN TERRITORY.

The initial occupation of the current territory of Pina neighborhood takes place in the seventeenth century, when the place was still formed by a set of islands, limited to the east by the Atlantic Ocean, to the north by the Jordan, Pina and Tejiþiþ river basin, and to the west and south by the wetlands and mangroves that made up the landscape of Recife at the time. In this territory, the sugar sheds of the Portuguese brothers Antþnio Gomes Pina and the knowed as "Cheira-dinheiro" are installed. The islands of the territory, were named according to their owners, being known the island of Pina and the island of Cheira-dinheiro, this second one the most famous (SILVA, 1990). Since then, there were signs of fishing activities in the region, with small fishermen sites, due to the richness of marine species typical of coastal ecosystems such as mangroves.

In 1630, when the Dutch invaded Pernambuco, they established their bases on the Cheira Dinheiro island, as a base for the conquest of Afogados (SILVA, 1990). Still in the 17th century, the region was close to an opening in the reefs which allowed the passage of fishermen from the current Antþnio Vaz island (occupation core of colonial Recife) to the sea, favoring the fishing activities. This opening ended up being closed in 1849 by the government, in order to protect Recife's port from the sand and debris that accumulated there (SILVA, 1990). The construction caused the displacement of fishermen from Cabanga, located on the opposite bank of the basin and traditionally occupied by the riverside population, to the islands of Pina, bringing them closer to the access to the sea through the "barretinha", an interconnection between the Pina River and the ocean in the vicinity of the current neighborhood of Boa Viagem.

Figure 3 - Detail of the Map of Recife by Cornþlio Golijþth, 1648. Collection Josþ Antonio Gonþalves de Mello. Edition by the authors: In red, territory of the current Pina district; In black, Ilha de Antþnio Vaz.



Source: FUNDARPE.

Some accounts brought by Silva (1990) reveal the estuarine condition of the place, at the beginning of the occupation of the territory, such as that of the mentioned "Quiabo Duro", resident of the ZEIS Pina/Encanta Moþa:

The bridges, within the neighborhood, connected one island to another... To my knowledge, the first bridge they built here in Pina was the bridge of “seu Máximo”. It connected the Nogueira island to Encanta Moça, behind the Social Center. Then there was the Bode bridge. It was located at the corner of Rua 12 de Julho, connecting the island of Nogueira to Bode. From the same time was the Camelo Island, at the end of Rua 26 de Janeiro. Later they built the bridge that connected Encanta Moça to Bode, called Cantílio's bridge, named after the barber that repaired the bridge. Cantílio died from a fall off the bridge. (SILVA, 1990, p.31).

This account reflects not only the geographical and social condition of the locality (highlighting the adaptations made by the residents in order to survive in the environment), but also the existence of a range of communities in the same territory, scattered across the fragments of land, even if under the influence of the tides.

At the end of the 19th century, the abolition of slavery forces the former slave peoples living in the central areas of Recife to move to the islands in the territory of the current neighborhood of Pina, which caused the construction of the mocambos (SILVA et al., 2016). The migration also occurs by the remaining fishermen of the locality of Cabanga, due to the works in the Port of Recife as a result of the Recife Sanitation Plan (1909-1915) undertaken by the Engineer Saturnino de Brito (1864-1929) and the construction of the railway line that linked the island of Recife to the municipality of Cabo de Santo Agostinho, when the “barretinha” in Boa Viagem is finally closed. The Plan of Sanitation and Hygienization of the modern Recife, demands in the early 20th century, a volume of workers in the areas surrounding the territory of the Port of Recife, which intensifies the process of housing in the areas of muddy territory of the mangroves (SILVA et al., 2016).

It is important to note that the demographic growth of Pina occurred through the housing of the most popular layers of Recife, since the 17th century, who start to inhabit the peripheral areas of the city, many of which, located in mangrove areas. Silva et al (2016) on this fact, states that:

In this sense, it can be seen that the social and territorial division of labor implies in socio-spatial differentiation, because access to land is private, its distribution is unequal quantitatively and qualitatively, putting on one side the elite who occupied the city of Recife, and on the other the individuals who did not technically satisfy the labor market, these occupied environmentally fragile areas devoid of basic infrastructure for housing, such as Pina. (p.65)

Jucá (2004) corroborates this statement when he talks about Recife's urban growth and the spatial configuration of the city divided into classes:

The suburb of Madalena was privileged as the place of residence of the wealthy. On the other hand, Boa Viagem was nothing more than a settlement with a hundred fishermen's houses and an intense coconut grove, with a large saltwater marsh in the center. In fact, earlier, in 1821 Maria Graham Even churches reproduced racial

segregation, with some being set aside for whites and others for blacks and slaves. (2004, p.129)

In addition, the effect of spontaneous occupation in the territory of the Pina neighborhood causes a drastic change in the landscape because the man-nature relationships begin to exist in the field of subsistence. When primarily in the seventeenth, eighteenth and mid-nineteenth century people began to occupy the region adapting to the adverse geography through the construction of bridges connecting the islets, in the twentieth century there is a paradigm shift in the appropriation of the space, when it becomes landfilled as a result of the demand and transformations of these relations between man and nature, also driven by the changes and social demands.

According to Silva et al., (2016), in the nineteenth century the natural environment of Pina, begins to be gradually artificialized through landfills, increasing the territory for housing, although the characteristic physical-natural aspects were still present. A larger number of precarious habitations appeared in the landscape, which grew in the early nineteenth century, made mostly of wood and with roofs of coconut straw, the so-called mocambos (Figure 4).

Figure 4 – Pina's landscape, 1922.



Source: Collection of the Museum of the City of Recife.

Between the years 1921 and 1930 the Pina bridge was built, which incorporated the swampy lands of Recife's southern coast into the urban expansion of the territory. According to Silva (2014), the construction of the bridge divided opinions: on one side the backwardness of the muddy and marshy land was debated due to its insalubrity while, on the other side, the neighborhood of Boa Viagem was debated as an image of progress. The new interconnection of the city with the old coconut groves and fishing villages intensified the densification process in the southern region, which no longer had sparse houses and villages, but summer vacation buildings, at a time when the Capibaribe River, the largest river in the city, became increasingly unsuitable for bathing. The urban, social and natural transformations begin to be felt in the region, with the arrival of infrastructure (lighting, sewage, transportation, etc.). Silva (1990) transcribes the advance of the metropolis over the small southern villages:

In Pina, the contours of the islands are already fading: embankment, work, ground. Recife expands and its owners arrive in Pina in search of that piece of Brazil where, for so long, workers had sailed free, creating their own world. That independence was only apparent, permitted, permissible. The bridge symbolizes the appropriation of

Pina by the city. Sewage, transportation, police, religions. The logic of capital does not ask permission from the workers: dredges, avenues, supermarkets. (p.43)

The textual fragment above translates, in a symbolic way, the appropriation of the urban space and the landscape of Pina, especially the surroundings of the mangrove. The current territorial condition of the neighborhood highlights the environmental problems involved in the issues of city's growth and especially of the locality, such fact did not happen in isolation, but in a process of deforestation and degradation of the Atlantic Forest and its associated ecosystems.

5 CONTEMPORANEITY: THE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN MAN AND NATURE IN THE TERRITORY OF THE DISTRICT OF PINA

The historical process of occupation of the estuarine lands of the city of Recife, synthesized in this essay through the urbanization process of the Pina neighborhood, has substantially modified the relationships that these populations establish with their territory. Ascending from a fishing population, the traditionally established communities suffer from a continuous pressure for expropriation of the occupied areas. Still in the late 1930s, the Civil Aeronautics Department already planned for the area the construction of the Recife Land Airport - Encanta Moça:

The project of this airport will require, however, the expropriation of about 900 mocambos, according to the data I collected in the "Census Commission of the Mocambos", in addition to the houses of taipa and some of brick. (IPHAN, nº 1042, p. 291)

The right to housing would only be relatively materialized in 1996 when the Law for Land Use and Occupation of the city of Recife (Municipal Law no. 16.176/1996), inspired by the PREZEIS Legislation (Municipal Law no. 14.947/1987) delimits the polygon of occupations of what would become the Special Zone of Social Interest (ZEIS) Pina/Encanta-Moça.

The institution of the ZEIS represents a landmark for the historical occupation of the Pina neighborhood in the sense that it establishes the right to housing for populations usually excluded from the urban dynamics.

At the same time, when the processes of occupation of the natural territory modify the site, the extensive mangrove swamp once characteristic of the estuarine pond of Recife's coast is reduced to a vegetated massif inserted in an intra-urban territory. The urban pressures resulting not only from the occupation of poor populations, but also from the pressure of the real estate market, induced in 1996, through the Law of Land Use and Occupation, the recognition of the mangrove as a Special Area of Environmental Protection (ZEPA). The institution of the ZEPA represented the safeguard of the remaining mangrove and served as the basis, finally, for its institution as a Nature Conservation Unit, in the year 2014, under the seal of the Municipal System of Protected Units (SMUP - Municipal Law No. 18.014/204).

The legal recognition of the mangrove as "Parque dos Manguezais" inserts it within the technical management scope of the municipality, under the tutelage of the municipal secretary of environment and sustainability (in addition to the Brazilian navy, owner of the

land). If, on the one hand, its institution as a Nature Conservation Unit safeguards its natural attributes, on the other hand, it distances the traditional uses of the area by the local fishing community, which now has greater restrictions on access and collection in the region.

Besides this, the economic dynamics of the city itself are a key factor for the change in the community's habits, when the residents start to enter the formal and informal market, mainly focused on the service sector. Thus, gradually the dynamics of the fishing community tends to change, adding new economic activities that directly impact the relationship of the people with the mangrove ecosystem.

In order to identify these transformations, it will be explained the analysis of the interviews carried out, which, from three different points of view, discuss the man-nature relations and the perceptions of the current residents about the neighborhood that is consolidating in front of a territory historically marked by the presence of the anthropic and the natural in symbiosis.

5.1 Relationship with the Parque dos Manguezais

The complex relationship of the inhabitants of the riverside communities with the Parque dos Manguezais occurs, at first, by the need for subsistence due to the social vulnerability of the residents. Thus, the fishing and extractive activities developed in the ecosystem provide important inputs for the community, both to feed the residents and to sell in the local market. Even those residents who do not work directly with fishing activities recognize its value and give the Parque dos Manguezais the role of sustaining the life of the community.

This point of view implies directly in the way these residents see their place of residence, where there is a recognition of its positive attributes, despite the unhealthy conditions to which some of them are submitted, especially in the stilt houses:

This mangrove is important because it benefits a lot of families... it generates an income and they can sustain themselves....²

A lot of people practice fishing, a lot of people depend on it.³

Well, I think that if it wasn't for this mangrove, we wouldn't have these houses. If you look closely at the wood of the houses...⁴

I think that if it didn't exist, we wouldn't be here.⁵

Such fragments reinforce the role of the Parque dos Manguezais in the context of the adverse social conditions to which the residents are submitted. From this relationship emerges a recognition of the local biodiversity and the ecological importance of the ecosystem. In a relationship of closeness between man and nature, the appreciation of the elements of biodiversity makes reference mainly to the local fauna, such as crabs, aratus, siris, crabs, shellfish, sururus, etc. The following speeches exemplify this:

5 Man, 24 years old, self-employed, resident of the community for 8 years.

3 Woman, 45 years old, Fisherman, resident of the community since birth.

4 Woman, 36 years old, Fisherman, resident of the community for 32 years.

5 Male, 40 years old, Fisherman, resident of the community since birth.

...To catch food, right? Everything is extracted from the mangrove. The survival of us here on stilts is because of the mangrove.⁶

The Mangrove is everything... It's shellfish, sururu, crab. But first it's the shellfish, the people eat them.⁷

The inhabitants of the masonry houses, close to the local traffic flow roads, traditionally endowed with greater purchasing power in relation to the residents of the interior of the community, and who do not deal directly with fishing activities on a daily basis nor depend on it for survival, further emphasize this importance by virtue of their knowledge of the internal, economic and social dynamics between the inhabitants and the mangrove. Thus, from their perspective, the ecosystem is seen as a means of life support:

Look...directly...it's very selfish for me to say that for me it doesn't matter, due to the fact that I know that the people in the community there need it, right? No, for me it makes a difference, for me it is necessary! For me it does make a difference!⁸

You have to preserve it. I tell you that 50% depends on the mangrove to survive there in Bode community.⁹

5.2 Relation with the living place.

The unhealthy conditions to which the community residents are submitted reflects their negative perceptions about the environment where they live. The biggest negative emphasis in the region was given in relation to the garbage existing inside the community on the banks of the mangrove and below the stilts, mainly. According to reports from the residents of the stilt houses, the situation is very evident in periods of high tide when "The garbage keeps hitting the floor all the time"¹⁰. This scenario favors the proliferation of pests such as rats, cockroaches, and other animals harmful to health, which invade the homes of the community's inhabitants:

This dump...garbage, rat, everything, everything! The worst thing is this, the worst thing is really this. My house is full of rats.¹¹

This mangrove isn't treated, the edge of the mangrove. And the garbage that is thrown in there is floating, when the tide rises, it's full of garbage.¹²

There are rats and scorpions around...rats, scorpions, everything!¹³

6 Male, 40 years old, Fisherman, resident of the community since birth.

7 Male, 49 years old, Fisherman and Mason's Helper, resident of the community for 1 and a half years.

8 Woman, 24 years old, ADM Intern, has lived in the community since birth.

9 Man, 61 years old, Freighter, resident of the community since birth.

10 Woman, 45 years old, Fisherman, resident of the community since birth.

11 Woman, 36 years old, Fisherman, resident of the community for 32 years.

12 Man, 58 years old, Security guard, resident of the community for 30 years.

Another negative condition highlighted is the increase in crime in the region. 50% of the residents pointed out violence as one of the biggest problems in the area.

As for the positive aspects, the residents mentioned the possibility of developing fishing activities in the nearby mangrove as a source of income, even when asked about what they like most about the community itself. This reflects the central role of the Parque dos Manguezais in that experience, emphasized through the speeches of the riverside dwellers:

What do I like most about Bode? What I like the most is the fishing here in Bode.¹⁴

In fact, what I like most is the fishing here.¹⁵

Here in the community what I like more is this tide blessed by Jesus, that always sends this way of life for the people to live as best they can.¹⁶

5.1 Relationship with the transformations of the Pina neighborhood

The construction of the Mangue expressway, according to the majority of the actors interviewed, did not bring improvements to the areas. According to them, the construction proposal was aligned with promises of relocation of the population for housing that were never fulfilled. Moreover, they are emphatic in affirming that the improvements in the region resulting from the implementation of the road have been in areas other than the community:

Boy, for us here it didn't get better, no. It got better there...¹⁷

Here it didn't get better, but over there it got better... Here you see, the canal is here, every year the dredge came and cleaned it. Now there are places that you can get in and never get out. Now with this Mangue expressway, if it wasn't already coming, now it won't come at all.¹⁸

For the traffic it improved, right? But for us it didn't improve anything, because for it to be built a lot of families that already had some land left... The Mangue expressway came to progress but it didn't change the lives of those who lived here in the past.¹⁹

Complementarily, they reported that the interferences in the ecosystem have changed the dynamics of fishing. According to these actors, in addition to pollution, the construction of the road resulted in impediments for the passage of boats, which forces some fishermen to seek their income from the mangrove further away than usual:

13 Man, 58 years old, Security guard, resident of the community for 30 years.

14 Woman, 45 years old, Fisherman, resident of the community since birth.

15 Woman, 36 years old, Fisherman, resident of the community for 32 years.

16 Woman, 21 years old, housewife, resident in the community for 3 years.

17 Man, 58 years old, Security guard, resident of the community for 30 years.

18 Woman, 21 years old, housewife, resident in the community for 3 years.

19 Woman, 43 years old, construction worker, resident of the community since birth.

They made this road there...the fishermen hardly pass there. They still left a lot of wood, they didn't remove the wood. There are a lot of places where a lot of concrete has fallen, but they haven't removed it. When the tide is not high, you can see under the viaduct there is residue from the Mangue expressway that they didn't remove.²⁰

It didn't improve anything. It got worse. Because there were many people who lived on the tide, fishing...Today, to take something away you have to go far away.²¹

Boy, I think this Mangue expressway was bad because it attacked the mangrove.²²

Besides Mangue expressway, the new constructions in the Pina neighborhood such as the RioMar Shopping Mall and the new residential and business developments represented profound changes in the dynamics of the area, according to the residents of the local communities. They say that the proximity to the mall is a positive factor, but that it does nothing to increase the quality of life in the communities:

It is close, but here for the community it has not improved at all.²³

It got better because it is close, but here in the community, in the streets, nothing has changed.²⁴

Progress has improved, but the life we have today... In the old days you had a better quality of life, you had more peace, you had more quiet, it was less busy.²⁵

Other residents report the strangeness that the shopping center along with the new developments cause in an area traditionally occupied by communities:

There was no need for this, right? I don't know...I think everything here was low...Nowadays we are finding a lot of things strange.²⁶

Businesses are created, shopping malls are created... well, it doesn't change anything in the life of the people around, in the life of the communities around, on the contrary, it isolates the population, it makes people understand that this is not their space and that they will always live surrounded.²⁷

20 Man, 40 years old, Fisherman, resident of the community since birth.

21 Woman, 73 years old, Cook, resident of the community for 50 years.

22 Man, 61 years old, Freightier, resident of the community since birth.

23 Woman, 21 years old, housewife, resident in the community for 3 years.

24 Woman, 73 years old, Cook, resident of the community for 50 years.

25 Woman, 43 years old, construction worker, resident of the community since birth.

26 Woman, 36 years old, Fisherman, resident of the community for 32 years.

27 Woman, 24 years old, ADM Intern, has lived in the community since birth.

A lot of things are created on top of the houses, and there is no space for the people who live there. As if there was a barrier...and there are people there, there is existence there. And more and more they are taking away the mangrove, they are taking away the area from the people who always had this to build and build.²⁸

6 CONCLUSION

The transformations of the current Pina neighborhood in the city of Recife are the result of an intense process of confrontation between urban expansion and communities historically excluded from the territory's social dynamics. Its formation by those excluded from formal activities represents a landmark of popular resistance against gentrification processes undertaken by the appropriation of land by wealthier classes.

The insertion of central areas traditionally occupied by low-income populations to the frontiers of the real estate market is neither a recent nor an exclusive phenomenon of the territory of Pina or the city of Recife, but is spreading in large Brazilian cities, representing a risk for these more vulnerable populations that traditionally hold less political power.

This situation is even more alarming when such pressures are still imposed on a territory with a strong presence of natural remnants, as is the case of the Parque dos Manguezais. In this sense, this article reveals through the statements of the residents themselves, considered here as active agents in the process of perception of space, how the advances of the so-called "formal" city imposes risks to the conservation of the ecosystem.

The Pina neighborhood represents a broad field of study where the interaction between the natural and the man-made environment occurs concomitantly with massive pressure from the real estate market. This pressure leads not only to the replacement of the construction pattern and the social facet of the territory, but also to the contribution of new infrastructures that are foreign to the traditional landscape.

We consider that discussing the relations of traditional residents with their ecosystem is a primary step in the complex process of understanding the city and its different territorialities. The city cannot be seen as a single site susceptible to market conditions or private capital, but as a multifaceted phenomenon of human occupation and, therefore, endowed with meanings and values in its different locations.

Such meanings emerge precisely from the process of identification of residents with their space, and go beyond: they reflect the meaning of nature for these residents and for the city as a whole. Thus, the perceptions and relations of the population of the Pina neighborhood about the mangrove ecosystem reverberate for a whole aspect of the city culture. The man-nature relationship with the mangrove translates through popular voices the condition of the city of Recife as an estuarine urbe and as a mangrove city.

Even if controversial, the relations of the residents of the ZEIS Pina/Encanta-moça with the mangrove reiterate the need to think not only about social housing policies (which may represent a risk to the permanence in the place), but also about the improvement of the health and work conditions (strong local demand) aiming to guarantee the safeguard of this historical activity developed since the beginning of the occupation of Recife.

28 Woman, 24 years old, ADM Intern, has lived in the community since birth.

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