REAL THAT IS NOT WORTH A PIN: A CRITICAL REFLECTION ON THE SOCIAL INVISIBILITY OF CLAY EXTRACTION PROFESSIONALS IN TWO VILLAGES IN CANTÁ-RR

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ABSTRACT

Objective: This article seeks to promote a critical reflection on the social invisibility of workers who extract clay for brick production in the villages of Real and Vintém, in the municipality of Cantá-RR.

Theoretical Framework: Social invisibility is a concept used to describe people who are socially invisible due to prejudice, indifference, and stigmatization established by hegemonic groups. This phenomenon is evident in interpersonal and socioeconomic relationships of the contemporary era, despite globalization and the social advances achieved.

Method: To this end, field research and interviews were conducted with formal and informal workers actively engaged in production in the two mentioned villages, as well as documentary research. The theoretical production was based on the concept of labor as a commodity in the capitalist system, revealing the process of devaluation of this category of brickmakers.

Results and Discussion: The main results of the research indicate that some actions and inactions of the State, known as public policies, have reinforced the naturalization of the expulsion of these low-income people from their social spaces, contributing to a possible process of social cleansing.

Research Implications: The research questions current public policies, which, if applied in concrete reality, could improve the living and working conditions of brickmakers, promoting social inclusion and preventing their marginalization.

Originality/Value: This study offers an unprecedented analysis of the social invisibility of pottery workers who make bricks in Cantá-RR, providing a discussion on public policies aimed at improving their socioeconomic conditions and promoting social equity in contradiction to the ongoing social cleansing.

Keywords: Social Cleansing, Social Invisibility, Pottery, Public Policies, Sociabilities.

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REAL QUE NÃO VALE UM VINTEM: UMA REFLEXÃO CRÍTICA SOBRE A INVISIBILIDADE SOCIAL DOS PROFISSIONAIS DE EXTRAÇÃO ARGILA EM DUAS VILAS NO CANTÁ-RR

RESUMO

Objetivo: Este artigo busca promover uma reflexão crítica sobre a invisibilidade social dos trabalhadores que extraem argila para a produção de tijolos nas vilas Real e Vintém, no município de Cantá-RR.

Referencial Teórico: A invisibilidade social é um conceito utilizado para descrever pessoas que são socialmente invisíveis devido ao preconceito, à indiferença e à estigmatização estabelecidos pelos grupos hegemônicos. Esse fenômeno é evidente nas relações interpessoais e socioeconômicas da era contemporânea, apesar da globalização e dos avanços sociais conquistados.

Método: Para tanto, foram realizadas pesquisas de campo e entrevistas a trabalhadores formais e informais que estão em plena atividade produtiva nas duas vilas, referidas, bem como pesquisa documental. A produção teórica fundamentou-se no conceito de trabalho como mercadoria no sistema capitalista, revelando o processo de desvalorização dessa categoria de oleiros.

Resultados e Discussão: Os principais resultados da pesquisa indicam que algumas ações e inações do Estado, vulgo políticas públicas, têm reforçado a naturalização da expulsão dessas pessoas de baixa renda dos seus espaços de sociabilidade, contribuindo para um possível processo de higienização social.

Implicações da Pesquisa: A pesquisa questiona políticas públicas vigentes, as quais se fossem aplicadas na realidade concreta poderiam melhorar as condições de vida e trabalho dos oleiros, promovendo inclusão social e evitando sua marginalização.

Originalidade/Valor: Este estudo oferece uma análise inédita da invisibilidade social dos trabalhadores da olaria que fabricam tijolos em Cantá-RR, fornecendo uma discussão sobre políticas públicas que visem melhorar condições socioeconômicas e promover a equidade social deles em contradição à higienização social que está em curso.

Palavras-chave: Higienização Social, Invisibilidade social, Olaria, Políticas Públicas, Sociabilidades

REAL QUE NO VALE UN PIN: UNA REFLEXIÓN CRÍTICA SOBRE LA INVISIBILIDAD SOCIAL DE LOS PROFESIONALES DE LA EXTRACCIÓN DE ARCILLA EN DOS PUEBLOS DE CANTÁ-RR

RESUMEN

Objetivo: Este artículo busca promover una reflexión crítica sobre la invisibilidad social de los trabajadores que extraen arcilla para la producción de ladrillos en las aldeas Real y Vintém, en el municipio de Cantá-RR.

Marco Teórico: La invisibilidad social es un concepto utilizado para describir a personas que son socialmente invisibles debido a prejuicios, indiferencia y estigmatización establecidos por los grupos hegemónicos. Este fenómeno es evidente en las relaciones interpessoales y socioeconómicas de la era contemporánea, a pesar de la globalización y los avances sociales logrados.

Método: Para ello, se realizaron investigaciones de campo y entrevistas a trabajadores formales e informales que están en plena actividad productiva en las dos aldeas mencionadas, así como investigación documental. La producción teórica se fundamentó en el concepto de trabajo como mercancía en el sistema capitalista, revelando el proceso de desvalorización de esta categoría de trabajadores de la arcilla.

Resultados y Discusión: Los principales resultados de la investigación indican que algunas acciones e inacciones del Estado, conocidas como políticas públicas, han reforzado la naturalización de la expulsión de estas personas de bajos ingresos de sus espacios de sociabilidad, contribuyendo a un posible proceso de limpieza social.

Implicaciones de la Investigación: La investigación cuestiona las políticas públicas vigentes, que, si se aplicaran en la realidad concreta, podrían mejorar las condiciones de vida y trabajo de los trabajadores de la arcilla, promoviendo la inclusión social y evitando su marginación.
1 INTRODUCTION

Clay is one of the mineral fractions of the soil, formed from weathering of pre-existing rocks, where the type and quality will depend on the type of parent rocks. They are raw materials used in the manufacture of tiles and bricks. The choice of site for the extraction of clay for civil construction is due to the viability of the soil, also considering the proximity to the consumer market (COSTA, 2019).

The extraction of clay for the manufacture of tiles and bricks, is one of the main activities that moves the Brazilian economic scenario, reaching in 2019 a nominal market value of R $ 42.4 billion. The contribution of income from this activity to the economies of various regions is remarkable. The socioeconomic impacts are also significant and the changes produced in the surroundings in which the activity is installed, directly affects natural resources in the social and economic sphere (SOUZA, 2021).

Mendes (2023) found that the wood used as fuel for heating the drying ovens in the production of bricks and tiles originates from native forests, which directly impacts the environment, as well as affecting the health of workers and the local population in general. The burning has been polluting air seriously affecting potters, as they often work in a precarious way and without adequate protective equipment (LIMA et al., 2021).

Historically, pottery work has been devalued, mainly due to the policies of precarious production model. These industries often resort to practices that minimize production costs at the expense of workers’ rights and welfare (ZENELATTO et al., 2023). Job insecurity includes low wages, lack of benefits, lack of job security, child labor and unhealthy working conditions. These factors not only compromise the quality of life of workers, but also perpetuate a cycle of poverty and social exclusion (MENDES, 2023).

The social impacts of this devaluation are profound. Families that rely on clay extraction face economic and social insecurity. The lack of stability in employment and low pay make
access to basic services such as health and education difficult, exacerbating social inequalities. In addition, precarious work in pottery can lead to an increase in informality, with workers without any kind of legal or social protection (ALVES et al., 2021).

In Cantá-RR, a municipality located in the metropolitan region of Boa Vista, there is a production of bricks under the Macuxis bridge, in part of the Rio Branco. When this activity began, it attracted many workers who have formed families and have remained in the area for more than 30 years. There are no official records on the formation of riverside communities around the extraction of clay for making bricks. However, there is a publication that mentions the emergence of Vila Vintém by means of an action that, on July 7, 1994, granted 150 hectares with 410 plots of land from the old pottery Cunhã-Pucá to the Association of the Autonomous Potters of Boa Vista (RORAIMA, 2002).

During the course of the doctorate, which had as one of its objectives the understanding of the environmental impacts of clay extraction, there was an approximation with the population that resides in Vila Vintém. On this journey, the existence of Vila Real was also perceived, located literally on the banks of the Rio Branco. The contact with the reality of the workers of Pottery occurred during the survey conducted in 2021, and this immersion in the field revealed a symbiotic relationship between traditional lifestyles and the demands of a capitalist society.

The villages Vintém and Vila Real were notified in 2024, once again, by the State Foundation for Environment and Water Resources - FEMARH, on charges of practices and activities harmful to the environment and public health, due to the imminent proliferation of vectors. The notification required residents to vacate the Pottery within 10 days (FOLHA BV, 2024).

The production of bricks, especially through the extraction of clay in the villages Vintém and Vila Real, plays a fundamental role in the sustenance of several families, due to its direct relationship with the productive chain of the civil construction in Roraima. However, the withdrawal of hundreds of families from these areas did not generate a commotion among the population in general. It is taken as a starting point that this apathy can be attributed to a combination of factors, including social invisibility and economic and political interests.

According to Iamamoto (2013), "capital, in its appreciation movement, produces the invisibility of work and the trivialization of the human, befitting indifference to the sphere of social needs and use values". And social invisibility is intrinsically linked to contemporary

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7 Established by State Complementary Law No. 130, of December 21, 2007, it comprises the municipalities of Alto Alegre, Boa Vista, Bonfim, Cantá and Mucujuri.

8 Area of brick production in Vila Real and Vila Nova, called by clay extraction professionals as Olaria.
society, in which individuals are segregated by class, income and environment in which they live (CELEGUIM; ROESLER, 2009).

This article seeks to promote a critical reflection on the social invisibility of workers who extract clay in the villages Real and Vintém, in the municipality of Cantá-RR. It is assumed that some categories of work become invisible, and that the occupation of desired spaces by the market can lead to social hygiene. Thus, the study seeks to illuminate the complex and often adverse dynamics faced by pottery workers, highlighting the need for public policies that recognize and protect these individuals and their way of life.

The manuscript presents a brief analysis on public policy, exploring the processes of social invisibility and social hygiene, and relates them to the case in question, suggesting that such phenomena can reproduce in different realities. This points to the formation of contemporary social thought, evidencing how these concepts are relevant and influence social dynamics in various situations.

2 THEORETICAL FRAME

2.1 PUBLIC POLICIES AIMED AT REHABILITATING RIVERS

Public policy, according to Jobert and Muller (1987), is a manifestation of the State in action, translating interests and objectives through programs directed to specific sectors of society, and can evolve from government to state policy. Farah (2004) complements this view by defining public policy as a targeted course of action that reflects organized social interests. Dye (1976) emphasizes that the formulation and management of public policies are complex dynamics, involving diverse social groups and political interests, often disputed in the state apparatus.

In the global context, urban river rehabilitation initiatives, as noted by Saenz (2010), have adopted a holistic approach that goes beyond sanitation, integrating rivers into the urban landscape to promote environmental services and improve urban quality of life. Cotrinho et al. (2023) highlight the importance of actively involving the local community in the planning and execution of these projects, increasing environmental awareness and ensuring that interventions meet local needs.

However, there is a risk that revitalization projects, by not considering resident communities, could result in social hygiene processes, as alerted by Rosa Filho (2023). Property
valuations and improved infrastructure can increase the cost of living, leading to the eviction of low-income residents and the loss of their social and subsistence networks.

Mendes (2015 p.210) points out that this process:

[...] represents oppression and symbolic violence against diverse communities and neighborhoods throughout the world of capitalist socio-spatial training, under a narrative of the criminalization of poverty, applied to abandoned, degraded or underused areas (urban voids and/or areas of informal or clandestine urban growth) [...]

In Brazil, due to the still limited effectiveness in controlling point loads, projects aimed at river basins have historically prioritized effluent control as a way to improve water quality (SILVA et al., 2020). Such a limited approach to river basin management can indeed hamper the participation of communities, especially those in situations of social vulnerability. This is because these projects often require more advanced technical and financial resources, making them less accessible to these communities. In addition, lack of training and limited access to information may further hamper the effective participation of these groups in decisions that affect their livelihoods and well-being.

2.2 SOCIAL HYGIENIZATION IN THE LIGHT OF URBAN REHABILITATION

The gentrification process, described by Zukin (2000) and Bidou Zachariasen (2006), involves urban transformation that revitalizes degraded central areas, resulting in the expulsion of low-income residents through real estate speculation and commercial refinement. This dynamic, known as social hygiene, reflects a deliberate movement to attract private investment and raise the status of these areas, often at the expense of the original communities that developed socio-economic subsistence practices based on local conditions.

Local authorities have the autonomy to act on the central spaces, prioritizing the improvement of the image of the valued areas and seeking a change of use in these places. Public investments are aimed at stimulating the return of private actors, the middle class and tourists, transforming these places into privileged areas for investment. This transformation often involves commercial refinement, the installation of sophisticated shops and the improvement of existing facilities, which generates real estate speculation and expulsion of traditional residents (ZUKIN, 2000; BIDOU ZACHARIASEN, 2006).
Social hygienization, combined with the developmental discourse of public power, focused exclusively on the interests of the real estate market, is consolidated as a phenomenon known as gentrification (CORTEZ, 2023). Originating in developed countries, gentrification refers to the alteration of the social composition of certain urban areas due to reskilling programs that cater to real estate, business and financial interests. In essence, it means the expulsion of residents from degraded urban areas belonging to less favored social classes, due to the valorization of these areas by urban interventions. This expulsion occurs in several ways, including increasing taxes, withdrawing public transport, and moving schools (primary and secondary) to other neighborhoods, as well as criminalizing residents, as observed in Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo (FIDELIS et al., 2022; CARDOSO et al., 2023).

3 METHODOLOGY

A qualitative approach was used to analyze the contextual, decision-making and structural aspects involved in the phenomenon under study, reflecting the complexity of human social phenomena. Moura Castro (1977) highlights the methodological challenges in the humanities due to the complexity of human phenomena. This study was based on the theoretical framework of historical materialism and Marxian dialectics, addressing how urban-industrial civilization structures the economy and society through the logic of capital valorization.

Various data collection techniques were employed, including field research in the communities of Vila Real and Vila Vintém, where social invisibility was observed. Documentary sources such as photographic surveys, historical information, reports and technical reports were used. The bibliographic research, founded in Vergara (2003), adopted a critical perspective. In addition, semi-structured interviews were conducted with 23 clay extraction professionals, following a roadmap with previously formulated questions and adjusted as necessary during the talks, according to Minayo et al. (2011).

Intensive direct observation, suggested by Laville and Dione (1999), was another technique used, allowing active research based on specific issues or hypotheses. The combination of multiple methodological approaches provided a comprehensive and detailed analysis of the phenomena studied, contributing to a deeper understanding of the complex social and contextual dynamics. This multidimensional and integrated approach highlighted the importance of addressing complex social issues with a holistic perspective, offering a rich and detailed view of the subject matter of study.
The research followed all ethical procedures: approved by the Research Ethics Committee/UFRR through the CAAE: 67022122.1.000.5303 and signing the Register of Free and Informed Consent.

4 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 A BRIEF CONTEXT ON VILA REAL AND VILA VINTÉM

Cantá is a municipality of Roraima, located in the east-central part of the state and is connected to the capital, Boa Vista (Figure 1A), by a bridge known as the Macuxis Bridge (Figure 1B), which crosses the Branco River. The bridge starts at km 2 of the BR-401, which connects the capital (Boa Vista) to Lethem (Guyana) and has a total length of 1,200 meters.

Figures 1

(A) Municipality of Boa Vista connected by the bridge to Cantá Municipality. Photo: MACÊDO, Jorge/ G1 RR. (B) Ponte dos Macuxi.

In the region under the bridge, the communities of Vila Vintém and Vila Real, in the municipality of Cantá, are located, in an area known by the workers and their families as Olaria. These riverside localities are accessible by the BR-401, on the left bank after the Macuxi Bridge. According to an article published on the Roraima 1 Portal (2024) on March 27, 2024, community leader Real reported that about 500 families, including Brazilians and immigrants, reside in the region, concentrated mainly in ceramics.
According to the community leader of Vila Real, the formation of the village and the population increase in 1980 are directly linked to the growth of ceramist activity in the state. The production of clay bricks, one of the main economic pillars of the region, is concentrated more intensely in Vila Real, depending heavily on the availability of clay on the banks of the Rio Branco. Santos (2013) points out that the urban economy of the low-income population, such as potters, is exploited by another sector through the conditions of trade, which limit the ability of small manufacturers to develop cumulatively. The recent forced migration from Venezuela to Roraima has increased the demand for housing, making proximity to the river a viable option for migrants. The pottery activity gives them the opportunity to support their families without paying rent, integrating them into the local community and providing livelihoods and belonging.

However, the increase in productivity and quality of production, as noted by Marx, results in the loss of the ability to influence its specificities, reproducing inhumanity within capitalist practices (FOERSTE; CAMARGO, 2010). Migrants and potters, living on the banks of the Rio Branco, face significant seasonal challenges. The White River, with its length of approximately 1,215 km, is crucial for water supply and as a source of raw material for ceramics (SANDER, 2015). During the period of heavy rainfall, the volume of the river increases, making ceramics activities in the villages Vintém and Real unfeasible, which represents a substantial challenge for the continuity of brick production and the local economic stability.
Figure 3 shows that the area is flooded, which directly impacts the productive and social practices of the families residing there. When the professionals of the Pottery were asked about the quantity of thousands produced per day during the dry season, a variety of responses were observed, with some reporting significant numbers, while others mentioned more modest productions. However, it is clear that during the rainy season production is drastically reduced and described as very small or even non-existent. This disparity in production between the periods of drought and rain highlights the strong influence of climatic conditions on the activity of brick production, according to reports.

In the 1980s and 1990s, they produced about 90 million a month. Currently, with help, one can produce two thousand a day, or about 200 bricks when it is alone during the dry season”. (interviewed 14)
During the rainy season, production diminishes significantly, sometimes going so far as not to produce anything or to cover with tarpaulins to protect the bricks already made. (interviewed 18)
In the dry season, production is about 500 bricks a day, while during the rains it falls to about 400, facing many difficulties and sometimes without producing anything. 
During a week in the dry season, one can manage to produce around 4 thousand people, but during the rains the production is unfeasible. (interviewed 21)

Production of bricks in Pottery varies significantly between dry and rainy seasons, with reports of production up to 25 million a week in the drought and only 2 million a week during the rains. This seasonal variation directly affects the income and livelihood of the families involved, who face additional financial difficulties in the periods of lower production. The rains and the increase in the volume of the Rio Branco forced families to migrate to areas not affected by flooding, interrupting the ceramics activities and obliging them to seek other forms of subsistence. This temporary displacement brings socio-economic challenges, including the loss of housing, furniture and artifacts produced, and the need to use canoes to move around, resulting in additional costs and loss of "jobs".

The precariousness of working conditions is evidenced by the lack of labor guarantees, with only two of the 23 interviewees having a signed license. Most workers deliver bricks to intermediate companies, resulting in the suppression of labor rights. The study by Costa et al. (2024) shows that 30.4% of potters depend on financial support from family members, and 43.5% receive remuneration below a minimum wage. This situation is aggravated by poor pay, especially among those who did not have access to formal education, justifying poor working and income conditions. These challenges highlight the need for policies and measures to improve the working and income conditions of this professional category.

Speaking of the types of precariousness to which a worker may be subjected, Druck (2011, p. 14) explains that:

[...] can be identified in the difficulties of trade union organization and the forms of struggle and representation of the workers, arising from the violent competition between themselves, their heterogeneity and division, implying a fragmentation of the unions, created mainly by outsourcing.

The precarious nature of work in the Pottery, manifested in low wages, lack of benefits, lack of job security, child labor and unhealthy conditions, undermines the quality of life of workers and perpetuates a cycle of poverty and social exclusion. According to Mendes (2023),
these factors create an adverse work environment that hinders social ascension and perpetuates inequalities, limiting the possibilities of progress for future generations. In addition, the devaluation of artisanal work in the Pottery, in the face of competition with large industries, marginalizes the workers and reduces the recognition of their traditional practices. During periods of low seasonal production, working and income conditions worsen, exposing workers to long hours, low wages and lack of social protection, negatively affecting their physical and mental health and perpetuating cycles of poverty and socioeconomic inequality (ALVES et al., 2021; REZENDE et al., 2022; MENDES, 2023).

The research identified that the precarious situation of the workers in the Pottery is known by the public authorities, but there is a lack of effective actions to change this reality, reinforcing the social invisibility of these people. Pinto de Sá (2008) points out that, in a society dominated by the spectacle, what is invisible tends to be considered insignificant, contributing to marginalization. This invisibility results in the absence of political recognition and support, making the struggles of these communities almost invisible to the majority of the population. Without the necessary visibility, it is difficult to mobilize solidarity and public support, further perpetuating marginalization and lack of access to adequate resources and opportunities. There is an urgent need to implement measures to improve the working conditions and quality of life of these workers, as well as to promote their inclusion and recognition in society.

4.2 POINTS ON THE REVITALIZATION POLICY FOR RIO BRANCO

In December 2011, the National Water Agency (ANA) and water resources managers of the states and the Federal District signed the National Pact for Water Management, aiming to strengthen the State Water Resources Management Systems and promote institutional cooperation in the National Water Resources Management System (SINGREH). The pact seeks to address common challenges in managing the country's water resources, ensuring multiple and sustainable water use and recognizing the importance of efficient and collaborative management for economic and social development. Specifically, the pact promotes the articulation between the processes of water management and the regulation of its uses, both at the national and state levels, besides strengthening the Brazilian model of water management, characterized by being integrated, decentralized and participative.

In the state of Roraima, despite the existence of the right to use water resources and a Water Resources Master Plan, the implementation of the instruments of the State Water Resources Policy was low at the beginning of Progestation, highlighting the need for a more
effective and integrated management. FEMARH has addressed the communities of Vila Real and Vila Vintém on the environmental impacts of pottery work, while facing legal actions related to clay extraction without environmental licensing and the precariousness of housing. In March 2024, residents of these communities were fined by FEMARH for extraction in a permanent preservation area, revealing local challenges with environmental regulation and housing safety, leading them to seek legal guidance at the Public Defender of the State of Roraima (DPE-RR).

**Figure 5**

*Mobilization of the residents of the Royal Village and Vintém village in the DPE-RR. Source: FRANCO, Nilzete*

The legal advisor of the Treasury Court, reported that the potters reported that they have been living and working in that area for 30 years and that, during all this period, the environmental body of the State never carried out any inspection or reported that the production of bricks was irregular.

They told me that they have been on site for 30 years, working on site and had no oversight. Femarh was never there to justify that it was improper, apart from being their home. Because of the fines, they are like trustees of the bricks, that is, they can only
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take care of the bricks, they can't sell, they can't do anything. Some reported that the production was already sold and was seized. In addition to having production embargoed, they cannot work and cannot deliver the production they have sold upfront (Folha BV, 2024).

Figures 6

(A and B) Public Defender of the State of Roraima (DPE-RR) in meeting with the potters of Vila Real and Vila Vintém

(Photos: Ascom/DPE (2024)).

The legal advisor of the Treasury Court, via journalistic material, commented that the potters informed (Figures 6A and 6B) that they have lived and worked in that area for 30 years and that, during all this time, the environmental organ of the State never did any inspection or justified that the production of the bricks was irregular.

The workers say that they did not have the space to present their demands and needs, since it has been greatly harmed by the rainy season as they need to withdraw from the houses due to flooding. This period is critical, as one of the residents reports:

When it rains a lot we have to leave here and go to another Village (Vila Nova) or to the family home. We can neither produce nor sell. We have already lost our production and starved. There's a day that doesn't have enough to eat. Our children suffer. There are days when an institution appears that sends something, other days it seems that we don't exist. It's very difficult to be here, but we have nowhere to run.

It is understood that comprehensive water availability studies would be essential to establish the environmental impact. These studies involve the precise measurement of the volumes of water available in the various river basins of the state, the analysis of seasonal and annual variabilities, and the identification of sources of recharge and critical points of scarcity.
In an interview, one of the potters also reinforced the speech of the legal advisor.

We've been here for years making bricks and supporting our families; we often saw the FEMARH car passing by and taking pictures. When this happens, we already know that no good thing is coming. The threats to get out of here are constant, but no one sees what we do for the state. We made a lot of bricks for the houses. There was a day here, which was a car in and out and the companies telling us to produce more. Now that they are consolidated we lose our value, almost no one comes here. When you come, you tell us to leave.

On observation, there was a decline in interest and investment in pottery, indicating that space lost its relevance for manual clay extraction. On the contrary, the area now appears to be the target of interests for other emerging productive activities in Roraima, such as large-scale agriculture. This suggests a shift in economic priorities and a search for new development opportunities, which can significantly impact the landscape and local socioeconomic dynamics.

The public interventions that bring about the upgrading of the "gentrified" city trigger contradictory mechanisms of expulsion and repossession. Public interventions that favor urban regeneration and regeneration actions, also determined by the need to improve the image of the city, to make it more creative and attractive in a strategic framework and scenario of global inter-urban competitiveness; very often imply the expulsion of inhabitants of lower socio-economic status from the central areas, condemning them, henceforth, to a socio-spatial marginality in peripheral areas (MENDES, 2015).

It is necessary to examine how agricultural, industrial practices and consumption in urban areas affect water resources. It is worth mentioning that in the same locality, on the other side of the road, there is an extensive production of irrigated rice (Figure 7). Surprisingly, there does not appear to have been government intervention in relation to potential environmental impacts caused by the owner or lessee of these lands. This contrast raises important questions about the consistent application of environmental regulations and the need to ensure a fair approach to the different activities that impact the environment.
Figure 7

*Visualization of Vila Real, Vila Vintém and Plantation of rice in Cantá - RR (2024).*

There is a discrepancy in the focus of environmental studies in villages compared with capitalist enterprises, such as agribusiness, which takes place close to the river. While there is attention to vulnerable communities, the impacts of agribusiness are not given the same concern. It is crucial to conduct equitable studies for both ceramics and agriculture, using advanced technologies such as remote sensing and geographic information systems (GIS), to mitigate environmental impacts and promote sustainable management of natural resources. Active participation of civil society and transparency in decision-making are essential to build trust and ensure the well-being of communities and the ecosystem. Villagers resist accusations of environmental offenses, arguing that the negative impacts are exaggerated and that their coexistence with the environment is more harmonious than is claimed.

[...] we know the region well, and we prove that the impact here is less than the trucks that emit smoke, we buy from Switzerland the wood to burn the bricks and we hardly sell our production, that is to say, there are no provocations on the part of FEMARH but there is no report on this impact. Our work is handmade, but there's company that comes here as machine makes a lot of hole, goes away and nobody says anything.

The resistance of the inhabitants of the Pottery in Boa Vista-RR is not limited to the defense of their homes, but also of their way of life connected to the land and local natural resources. Silva, Ferretti and Sette (2008) point out that policies of preserving historical centers...
often result in gentrification in practice, driving residents out in favor of commercial interests. This phenomenon creates new centralities that favor financial return, marginalizing local cultural characteristics.

The urban regeneration of the historic center of Boa Vista-RR, analyzed by Walter and Rosa Filho (2020), exemplifies how urban improvement measures move residents from "Beiral" to distant areas, under the pretext of improving their living conditions, resulting in socio-spatial segregation. Pottery, essential to the local economy and managed by the "Association of Posters of Boa Vista", led by Perci Morais for more than three decades, faces significant challenges ignored by public policies, perpetuating the exclusion of riverside dwellers.

5 CONCLUSION

The research on the impacts of clay extraction in Vila Vintém and Vila Real highlights the social invisibility of the workers involved in this activity and the contradictions of state policies. Although they allow the production of artifacts for civil construction, these policies also expel families from the spaces they have occupied for decades. Clay extraction is crucial for local livelihoods, but it faces pressures due to environmental damage, without proper analysis of the social and economic impacts of this activity.

In addition, the neoliberal environment aggravates the instability of work and the expulsion of low-income families, justified by the discourse of sustainable development. The research emphasizes the need for an integrated and participatory management of water resources, essential for the sustainability of the affected communities. The limitations of the research point to the need for future studies that evaluate in the long term the environmental and social impacts of clay extraction, as well as the effects of recovery policies and environmental surveillance on the life of the communities.

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