



[Unpublished articles]

“If we had the right, we wouldn’t need to be protesting for nothing”: the struggle of shellfish gatherers from Farol de São Thomé, RJ – Brazil against gender stereotypes in public policies.

“Se a gente tivesse direito, não teria necessidade de estar fazendo manifestação pra nada”: a luta das marisqueiras de Farol de São Thomé, RJ – Brasil contra estereótipos de gênero em políticas públicas

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Abstract

The work carried out by women in the artisanal fishing production chain is historically invisible, whether in the internal prestige of communities, in fishing management, or in the legal identification of workers. Women's invisibility even incurs the restriction of social security rights, such as the so-called Defeso. Over the years 2018 to 2022, the research investigated the struggle of shellfish gatherers from Farol de São Thomé, a community located in Norte Fluminense, RJ - Brazil, against gender stereotypes present in the public policy entitled Projeto Bolsa Cidadão (PBC), instituted in the municipality of Campos dos Goytacazes/RJ from 2000 to 2021. Based on qualitative methodological techniques, such as direct observation in fieldwork, semi-structured interviews, and organization of a focus group, as well as a critical legal-anthropological epistemology, the text seeks to reflect on the dimensions of redistribution, recognition, and female participation in artisanal fishing and concludes that discriminatory blocks restrict or even exclude female workers from accessing social programs. This article results from research funded by the Pescarte Environmental Education Project (PEA), a mitigation measure required by the Federal Environmental Licensing conducted by IBAMA.

Keywords: Artisanal fishing; Female invisibility; Social justice

Resumo

O trabalho desenvolvido pelas mulheres presentes na cadeia produtiva da pesca artesanal é historicamente invisível, seja no prestígio interno das comunidades, na gestão pesqueira ou na identificação legal das trabalhadoras. A invisibilidade feminina incorre, inclusive, na restrição a direitos de seguridade social, como o denominado Defeso. Ao longo dos anos de 2018 a 2022, a pesquisa investigou a luta das marisqueiras de Farol de São Thomé, comunidade situada no Norte Fluminense, RJ - Brasil, contra estereótipos de gênero presentes na política pública intitulada Projeto Bolsa Cidadão (PBC), instituída no município de Campos dos Goytacazes/RJ de 2000 a 2021. A partir de técnicas metodológicas qualitativas, como a observação direta em trabalho de campo, entrevistas semiestruturadas e organização de grupo focal, bem como de uma epistemologia jurídico-anropológica crítica, o texto busca refletir sobre as dimensões da redistribuição, do reconhecimento e da participação feminina no âmbito da pesca artesanal e conclui que bloqueios discriminatórios restringem ou mesmo excluem as trabalhadoras do acesso a programas sociais. Este artigo é resultado de pesquisa financiada pelo Projeto de



Educação Ambiental (PEA) Pescarte, que é uma medida de mitigação exigida pelo Licenciamento Ambiental Federal, conduzido pelo IBAMA.

Palavras-chave: Pesca artesanal; Invisibilidade feminina; Justiça social.



1. Introduction

The presence of women in the artisanal fishing production chain is commonplace but historically invisible (MENDES, 2019). Women's work is considered complementary and secondary (HELLEBRANDT, 2019), whether in terms of the internal prestige of the communities, in the spaces of fisheries management and representation or, externally, through the state, in terms of professional identification and access to public policies aimed at the sector (HUGUENIN; MARTINEZ, 2021). Regarding social justice, the invisibility of women artisanal fishing workers creates problems of redistribution, recognition, and participation (FRASER, 2006; 2007), which add to the discriminatory class-gender binomial.

With this in mind, the shellfish gatherers of Farol de São Thomé, a beach located in the north of the state of Rio de Janeiro, in the region of the Bacia de Campos (BC), one of the country's main oil and gas producers, have been fighting for years to be included in social unemployment insurance programs, known as Defeso. These are important income redistribution policies that, at the same time, promote some professional recognition. However, in the opposite direction, the political participation of shellfish gatherers reveals the very invisibility of these workers, forged in their material precariousness, social discredit, and demands for public space. These women's lives have been marked by humiliation (GONÇALVES FILHO, 1998) in dramatic episodes of dispute with the state over their dignity.

The situation of the shellfish gatherers of Farol is reminiscent of the reflections addressed in seminal studies on the sexual division of productive and reproductive labor in the fishing production chain (WOORTMANN, 1992; ALENCAR, 1993), whose "game of invisibilities" (MOTTA-MAUÉS, 1999) ends up separating, hierarchizing and devaluing women's work. In other words, it's not that women's work in fishing is becoming more precarious due to globalization (HIRATA, 2002). The situation of women in the fishing industry has always encountered internal and external barriers that hinder its formal legalization. Of course, this problem is not out of step with the material and ideological constraints and expectations that the production of gender in the sexual division of labor provokes in all women.

Differences that define feminine and masculine in a dual way, although codified by biological understandings of sex, stem from the distinct attribution of abilities, tasks,



and alternatives in constructing desirable (and acceptable) standards for women and men, modulating male privileges. From this assumption, the sexual division of labor is activated by social institutions and public policies (or even the absence of certain policies) as obstacles to income equality, social prestige, and action in the public sphere. Suppose these blockages affect all women despite distinctions of class, race, age, and other variables that can be listed as elements of intersectionality. In that case, there is a fruitful reflection field in the artisanal fishing production chain.

Thus, the text aims to reflect on female invisibility based on the Projeto Bolsa Cidadão (PBC), a public cash transfer policy in the municipality of Campos dos Goytacazes (RJ), Brazil, which reached shellfish gatherers between the years 2000 and 2021, always during the annual shrimp fishing ban periods in the state of Rio de Janeiro. The paper problematizes social justice dimensions - redistribution, recognition, and participation - based on the workers' accounts of their historic struggle against the gender stereotypes instituted in the program. In addition, the text seeks to position the particular case of shellfish gatherers with the demands of women in the artisanal fishing production chain in Brazil, considering that the problem of invisibility has wider repercussions.

This article results from research funded by the Pescarte Projeto de Educação Ambiental (PEA), a mitigation measure required by the Federal Environmental License conducted by IBAMA. PEA Pescarte follows the parameters and conditions of Technical Note CGPEG/DILC/IBAMA No. 01/2010, Line A and the Participatory Diagnosis of PEA-BC (2012), and aims to build and articulate a regional social network made up of artisanal fishermen and fisherwomen, as well as their families, promoting training processes based on critical environmental education, with a focus on strengthening and valuing community organization.

2. Theoretical-methodological notes

The research was carried out over almost 5 years and, initially, is the result of data obtained from a project that has already been completed¹, developed by a

¹The *Women in Fishing* project: *Map of Socio-Environmental Conflicts in Municipalities in the North of Rio de Janeiro and the Coastal Lowlands* aimed to create and make available a map of the socio-environmental conflicts that women in fishing communities in seven municipalities that make up the mesoregions of the coastal lowlands and the north of the state of Rio de Janeiro experience on a daily basis: São Francisco de



multidisciplinary team to draw up a map of socio-environmental conflicts that directly affect women involved in artisanal fishing in the north of Rio de Janeiro and in the Baixadas Litorâneas. Between 2018 and 2019, the team visited 24 fishing communities in 7 municipalities in Rio de Janeiro and interviewed 141 women workers.

In 2019, intensive fieldwork was carried out directly in Farol de São Thomé, with visits to the shellfish gatherers' workplaces and their homes, when the recording of 30 semi-structured interviews mainly addressed the socio-environmental conflicts present in the local context, without neglecting the problems related to the community's infrastructure in the broader context of the municipality of Campos.

On these occasions, the interviewees reported on how they carry out their professional activities, experience the sexual division of productive and reproductive labor, and social relations based on gender stereotypes. They also described how they structure and organize the knowledge and practices surrounding the processing of fishing resources and how they face internal and external difficulties with the constitution and affirmation of their rights, especially those related to public closed season policies.

The struggle for resources from social programs was highlighted in all the narratives, which pointed to tensions with public agents over the standards established to categorize shellfish gatherers as fishing professionals. Undoubtedly, in addition to problems such as the scarcity of fish or the exclusion of fishing areas due to oil activities in BC², the main conflict experienced by women workers was (and still is) how the state naturalizes certain gender stereotypes, exacerbating women's invisibility and denying their rights.

The reflections presented here result from qualitative research aimed at studying everyday interactions (ALONSO, 2016) between shellfish gatherers and the municipal government through direct observation and the collection of reports. The work sought to record the women's perspective, considering that "[...] the interviewee's speech represents a self-description and a presentation of oneself" (LIMA, 2016, p. 27). In

Itabapoana, Campos dos Goytacazes, São João da Barra, Macaé, Quissamã, Cabo Frio and Arraial do Cabo. The results achieved include the scientific and technical work of surveying, descriptive characterization, georeferenced cartographic representation and electronic availability of data and information on the main socio-environmental conflicts involving the participation of women. Further information is available at <https://mulheresnapesca.uenf.br/projeto.php>

² Until 2016, the Bacia de Campos was the largest producer of oil and natural gas in Brazil, being overtaken by the Bacia de Santos as of 2017 (Agencia Nacional do Petróleo, Gás Natural e Biocombustíveis [ANP], 2017). In this new scenario, the amounts of royalties and special participations passed on to the municipalities involved changed, especially Campos dos Goytacazes, drastically affecting its public finances.



addition, the research analyzed official journals available on the Campos dos Goytacazes Transparency Portal and municipal legislation on the subject while also looking at the federal provisions that regulate artisanal fishing.

Between 2020 and 2021, face-to-face research was suspended due to the severe COVID-19 pandemic, so contact with shellfish gatherers was sometimes made by telephone, given the links established with the interviewees. In 2022, a focus group was held with four women in a remote format, and after the pandemic restrictions imposed by the government were relaxed, there was a meeting with one interlocutor.

Finally, it is important to note that although the interviewees authorized the publication of their accounts (including the production and editing of a short video documentary³ in 2019 in the context of a meeting between the shellfish gatherers and municipal agents), their anonymity was preserved in the direct quotations of excerpts from their interviews in the text, with only their initials being indicated.

Theoretically, the analysis is based on a critical legal-anthropological epistemology, with the gender approach as its argumentative axis. Therefore, research is committed to the values of social justice, which, based on the dimensions of redistribution, recognition, and participation, seeks to tackle the regulations of gender stereotypes that still directly or indirectly create discriminatory barriers for women.

Gender stereotypes are defined as a collectively shared belief in some physical, psychological, or moral attribute, characteristic, or trait attributed extensively to certain groups by combining one or more cut-off criteria (KRÜGER, 2004). These are the all-encompassing or prejudiced views of attributes and characteristics that certain groups or individuals possess or even that society expects them to possess. "In the field of gender, stereotyping is a political action of control over women's bodies" (DINIZ, 2011, p. 452). According to the *United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights - EACDH* (2013), gender stereotypes combined with other stereotypes have a disproportionately negative impact on certain groups of women and cause the violation of a wide range of rights, such as the right to health, education, work and freedom of expression. They violate various rights, such as health, education, work, and freedom of expression, including representation and political participation.

As for the critical legal-anthropological epistemology, the starting point is the understanding that the world of laws (or ought to be) is out of step with factual reality

³ Available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ysS7YRumEYw&t=10s>



and that certain public policies' unexpected (or perverse) effects merit reflection to be corrected. In this sense, discriminatory blockages based on stereotypes constituted in the sexual division of labor occur internally (in intersubjective relations) and externally (in relations with the state) and hinder or even exclude women from accessing and guaranteeing certain fundamental rights.

From an internal perspective, social judgments and pressures concrete restrictions on access to free time, income, and networks make up some of the moral and material obstacles that discriminate against women (BIROLI, 2016). On the other hand, there are institutional blockages constituted in the legal norms themselves, such as occupational health and safety, maternity protection, and social security systems (MARQUES, 2019), which perpetuate gender stereotypes in which care is seen as feminine while provision is projected as masculine. What's more, when it comes to women artisanal fishing workers, these blockages involve normative classifications that discriminate against them directly and indirectly in regulating artisanal fishing.

From this perspective, women in the fishing production chain face restrictions on accessing the Seguro Defeso (SD) program linked to Social Security. This policy came about due to the country's re-democratization and the social conquests contained in the Federal Constitution (CF/1988). It is defined by the confluence of social and environmental policies since it supports professionals who carry out their work in an artisanal way and who, at certain times of the year, are prevented from doing so to protect and preserve marine, river, and lake species in the reproduction phase (CAMPOS; CHAVES, 2014). The Defeso stipulates receiving a minimum wage each month for which fishing or extractive activities are interrupted.

As the text will show, the shellfish gatherers of Farol de São Thomé have been fighting for years against gender stereotypes that discriminate against them, restricting or even excluding their access to Defeso social policies. These restrictions and exclusions deepen the invisibility of their work and their professional identity and undoubtedly call for a more in-depth discussion on issues of redistribution, recognition, and participation, which will certainly not be exhausted within the limits of this article, but as a nod to the problems faced not only by shellfish gatherers but in different contexts and situations, by all women in the artisanal fishing production chain.



3. The shellfish gatherers of Farol de São Thomé

Whenever the boats arrive from the high seas with the fish caught by the men in the maritime waters, it's a sign that the women will have work on land in the Farol de São Thomé community.⁴ They peel shrimp and eviscerate fish on wooden benches, among equipment such as boxes, knives, plastic containers, and ice. A kilo of the fish resources benefited yields of around 2 to 4 reais. Each shellfish gatherer manages to clean, on average, between 10 kg and 20 kg of resources in a single day, which also depends on time, i.e., the organization of other daily household chores.

Of course, these are women whose lives have been marked by stories full of similarities, especially the work they started during childhood or youth, as well as their low level of schooling (LOPES; AMARAL; HUGUENIN; BELO; SOUZA, 2019). At a very young age, they experience marital union and motherhood. As adults, they face constant health problems such as allergies, mycoses, and repetitive strain injuries. This is repeated in fishing activities, which are seen as an opportunity to contribute to household expenses, although it is the household's only income in some cases.

Based on the native categories, it is important to note that the work is carried out mainly in the so-called "backyards", which can be thought of literally as backyards of houses or even sidewalks and adjacent areas. In addition, the "backyard" always has an "owner" who is the owner or resident of the space, responsible for summoning the workers, distributing the fishing resources, accounting for production, and packaging the clean product.

It is essential to consider that fishing environments go beyond catching sites, such as sea waters, rivers, lakes, and lagoons, and include vessels, ports, warehouses, markets, and social networks for organizing work, such as camaraderie. Thus, the "backyard"

⁴ According to Huguenin (2019), Farol de São Thomé is a district divided by the lowland districts of Santo Amaro and Mussurepe via the RJ 216 highway. It is the only beach in the municipality of Campos dos Goytacazes, with a length of 28 km between the southern limit, which borders the municipality of Quissamã, and the northern limit, which borders the municipality of São João da Barra. On the waterfront is the lighthouse of the same name, designed by the French engineer Gustavo Eiffel and inaugurated in 1882 with the aim of guiding navigation. Trawler-type boats are the most used on the region's coast for artisanal fishing, which produced around 996.1 tons of fish in 2018. Shrimp account for most of the production made by local fishermen and are also the main raw material for the work of the women involved in the fishing production chain, who peel the stocks caught, especially the "barba-ruça" and "sete-barbas" species, as well as cleaning and filleting fish. Between July and December 2017, the Fisheries Institute Foundation of the State of Rio de Janeiro (FIPERJ) recorded a catch of 694,735.5 kg of fish in Farol by artisanal fishing. The main category unloaded was seven-barb shrimp, accounting for 34.6% of total production in the period. Next, the "barba-ruça" shrimp and shrimp (shrimp from different species sold mixed together) accounted for 24.0% and 13.8%, respectively.



should not only be seen as the physical space where the shellfish gatherers carry out their activities but also refers to their management, as well as a generational network of sociability made up of members of the nuclear and extended family, as well as women from the neighborhood who make up the community.

The work of peeling the crustaceans or gutting, cleaning, and filleting the other species is always done together. What's more, the name or nickname of the "backyard " owner" identifies the physical place itself and qualifies the intersubjective ties that make up the organization of work. Therefore, working in a particular "backyard" indicates, in addition to spatial materiality, socio-affective ties of kinship, affinity or friendship.

Thus, packed in ice boxes, the fish or shoals are distributed among the shellfish gatherers by the owner of the goods, who may be a middleman or even a representative of the meatpacking companies⁵ in the Farol region. Each worker is responsible for processing the box, from which the total value of the work to be received will be calculated at the end. The yield is obtained by adding value from the "dirty" product to the "clean" product. The income is extremely low, the working day can be very long, and the working conditions do not meet the minimum safety requirements.

The shellfish gatherers generally stand in front of benches, sit on small improvised stools, or even stand. There are no ergonomic conditions. Both the workers and the products are exposed to the weather. There is a constant risk of accidents, such as cuts and punctures to the body, especially the hands and arms. What's more, it's very common for them to get fungal infections of the nails as a result of prolonged contact with moisture. In addition, the shellfish gatherers provide all the materials needed to carry out the activities, such as scissors, knives, gloves, caps, and aprons.

The length of the day is flexible, always depending on the quantity of fish and the availability of other household activities. The presence of children in the "backyard" is common, so productive and reproductive work are intertwined. There is also often a brief interruption in activities to carry out domestic work (FOUGEROLLAS-SCHWEBEL, 2009), such as preparing meals.

It is, therefore, necessary to position shellfish gatherers in terms of the sexual division of labor and social-gender relations (KERGOAT, 2009), considering that

⁵ Some slaughterhouses operate without legalization, i.e. without registration with the official health inspection services (SIF/SIE/SIM), which makes the fish considered "clandestine", because the handling and processing is carried out without supervision, in unsuitable locations and without proper hygiene.



there is not only a separation between productive and reproductive work but also a hierarchy of values between activities considered masculine and feminine.

The actions carried out in the backyard are based on a kind of association and mutual aid (especially in the case of childcare) in which working time does not only follow capitalist time but is also contingent on seasonality and the oscillating alternation of activities linked to the shellfish gatherers' families and the specific nature of artisanal fishing itself. The dichotomy between public and private space transcoded by the action of the sexual division of labor is at the basis of the bipolar classification of the social spaces in which each gender dominates. Thus, socially, women are held responsible for the private domain, which gives them the recognition of caregivers, and men, for acting in the public space, are seen as providers (CEZAR; THEIS, 2020, p. 8).

In this context, the social value applied to the separation between types of work and their prestige makes women's work invisible, so the income obtained in the "backyard" is often considered important but almost always complementary to the income of husbands and partners. Invisibility is, therefore, a kind of social marker since it presupposes "[...] indifference in the public or private sphere stemming from the prejudice of a different nature that deprives professionals in activities considered secondary or subordinate of status, adequate remuneration or even legal guarantees" (HUGUENIN; MARTINEZ, 2021, p. 651). In the case of shellfish gatherers' work, invisibility is nominally disguised as simple "help", an extremely common expression.

However, there is no need to talk about any formal types of employment relationship with the "backyard", or functional hierarchies in the production organization, such as the division of tasks or positions for their execution. This is precarious work, as it is informal, without labor regulations; intermittent, as it depends on the non-continuous supply of fishing resources; and insecure, as the activity is unregulated and uncertain, and risks such as accidents at work or even the unpredictability of income are borne by the shellfish gatherers themselves.

The "backyard", therefore, is representative of conceptions about the separation and hierarchization of work according to gender stereotypes, in which the male determines the public space, while the private space encompasses the female. These stereotypes, which can be defined as "[...] the set of beliefs about the personal attributes appropriate to men and women, whether these beliefs are individual or shared" (D'AMORIM, 1997, p. 122), enthrone roles and patterns not only of differentiation but also of direct and indirect discrimination.

It can be said that women's work in fishing is marked by precariousness as much



as invisibility and that, as discussed below, the naturalization of gender stereotypes by the state leads to problems of redistribution, recognition, and participation. Moreover, omissions relating to the perception that women, "[...] in different ways, play essential roles in maintaining their communities" (MARTINS; ALVIM, 2016, p. 382) by acting mainly (and not exclusively) as workers in stages before and after capture, reinforce gender inequalities by discrediting activities considered less heroic than those experienced at sea by men.

However, the perspective that sees women's work in the fishing production chain as complementary and auxiliary goes beyond the limits of the native perception itself and is also present in academic literature. For example, in her study on artisanal marine fishing, Ditty (2013, p. 27) states, without any critical analysis, that "[...] there are no reports of the presence of women among the marine fishermen of Farol de São Thomé today", which reinforces the understanding of fishing limited to catching, even in academic contexts of research and intellectual production.

Thus, according to Alencar (1993), much of the invisibility of women in fishing activities stems from the epistemological blindness of research. Furthermore, according to the 2012 and 2018 reports by the *Fisheries and Aquaculture Department* (FAO), official data on the presence of women in fishing is underreported, making around 90% of people working in so-called secondary activities, such as fish processing invisible.

In addition to prejudice within communities, the epistemological blindness of research and underreporting in official data, the invisibility of women's work is assimilated into public policies, as highlighted by Huguenin and Martinez's (2021) analysis of women workers' access to Defeso. The study argues that although the regulation of the Fisheries Law⁶ introduced, for the first time, reference to gender through the categories "fisherwoman" and "fisheries support worker",⁷ it did not fail to incur the problem of indirect discrimination against women. This is because the work considered "support," carried out by most women in the fishing chain, was not and still is not insured by the

⁶ Established by Law No. 11.959 of June 29, 2009. Provides for the National Policy for the Sustainable Development of Aquaculture and Fishing.

⁷ Defined in the now repealed art. 2, VIII, of Decree No. 8,425, of March 31, 2015, as "an individual who, autonomously or as a family member, with their own means of production or through a partnership contract, carries out work making and repairing fishing gear and tackle, repairing small fishing boats or processing artisanal fishing products". In the Brazilian Classification of Occupations (CBO 6314), fishing support workers "prepare fishing equipment, preserve fish and control urns and cooling chambers; make fishing equipment; assist crew in general services and load and unload vessels; carry out maintenance services on fishing vessels in shipyards".



Defeso social policy.

Although men are involved in the stages before and after the catch, the activities of beneficiation and processing, as well as handicrafts and repairing the gear, are mainly carried out by women. In this sense, by naturalizing the idea of "help", since then called "support", this legislation indirectly discriminates against the workers themselves. Discrimination consists of excluding those who exercise "support" from the right to professional identification through the Registro Geral da Atividade Pesqueira (RGP) and their access to Seguro Defeso.⁸

In short, in its practical dimension, the fishing legislation violates the principle of equality through indirect discrimination. Establishing the "fishing support" category promotes backward recognition of women's work. Instead of expanding rights, the Seguro Defeso is abolished for those who work in stages of the chain other than catching fish. In other words, through an impartial classificatory device - "support" - the state naturalizes "aid", indirectly discriminating against women (HUGUENIN; MARTINEZ, 2021, p. 654-655).

In this context, the shellfish gatherers of Farol are considered "fishing support workers" by the Federal Government since they process fish and do not catch it. And, according to federal legislation, they do not fall into the categories for registration in the RGP, nor are they eligible to receive Defeso. In the "game of invisibilities"⁹, men and other family members encompass women's professional identity, including under the normative sieve of the "family economy regime" in the social security sphere.¹⁰

Thus, reflecting on the situation of shellfish gatherers or even, in general, on the discrimination that curtails the rights of women in the artisanal fishing production chain implies considering redistribution and recognition as two overlapping lenses (FRASER, 2006) riddled with gender stereotypes that limit the options, ambitions and, above all,

⁸ The regulation of the Defeso Insurance Law (Law No. 10.779, of November 25, 2003), instituted by Decree No. 8.424, of March 31, 2015, excluded the granting of the benefit "to artisanal fishing support workers" (art. 8.424, of March 31, 2015). 1º, § 6º).

⁹ According to Motta-Maués (1999, p. 382), the game of invisibility, in the case of men, "exists from within, at the internal level of the hierarchy between the genders, but it also takes place from the outside in, affecting women in line with, or in a relationship of homology with, the internal hierarchical distinction that superimposes men on women."

¹⁰ According to Kravetz and Wurster (2020), under this system, the onus is on the worker to prove the time worked in social circumstances where women's work is widely devalued. In Law No. 8,213, of July 24, 1991, which provides for Social Security Benefit Plans, § 1, "a family economy regime is understood to be an activity in which the work of family members is indispensable to their own subsistence and to the socio-economic development of the family nucleus and is carried out under conditions of mutual dependence and collaboration, without the use of permanent employees." Artisanal fishermen or those similar to them are considered special Social Security insured persons. According to INSS/PRES Normative Instruction No. 85, of February 18, 2016, artisanal fishermen are those who support artisanal fishing by making and repairing fishing gear and small boats or processing artisanal fishing products.



the rights provided for professionals, as will be discussed below.

3. The Bolsa Cidadão Project or the "Municipal Closure"

The Bolsa Cidadão Project (PBC), created by Law No. 7,021 on December 28, 2000, aimed to reach "low-income families in a situation of social risk vulnerability due to the poverty in which they live" (art. 1). Its purpose was to "[...] assist fishermen during the fish closure period and residents of the towns in the municipality" (art. 3) with the delivery of "[...] basic food baskets and grants worth one minimum wage" (art. 4), to be carried out by the Social Promotion Department (art. 2), from now on referred to as the Municipal Department of Human and Social Development.

The Municipal above Law, whose wording was manifestly imprecise, targeted residents of fishing villages and fishermen, a proposition that showed that the social policy did not specifically target fishing workers, nor did it distinguish whether the latter were inland, continental, or territorial sea fishermen; whether or not they were registered with fishing colonies; and the type of activity they carried out, such as catching, processing or processing fish. Furthermore, there was no reference to gender as a policy aimed at women shellfish gatherers in the municipality. Likewise, the law did not specify the benefit's validity period, nor did it determine the species protected by the fishing ban.

However, in implementing the PBC, the main beneficiaries were those fishing sector professionals who did not fit the criteria stipulated by federal legislation for inclusion in the Defeso. It was a program that assisted those who did not have (and still do not have) the RGP and, therefore, did not receive (and still do not receive) the benefit from the Union. Therefore, the PBC became popularly known as the "Municipal Closure" and its main target audience was the shellfish gatherers of Farol.¹¹

In the fieldwork carried out in 2019, the reports said that, even when it was being implemented, the PBC was carried out through the creation of work fronts, when shellfish

¹¹ The PBC fell within the designated period for shrimp species, which occurs annually in the months of March, April and May. Normative Instruction No. 189, of September 23, 2008, established by the Instituto Brasileiro do Meio Ambiente e dos Recursos Naturais Renováveis (IBAMA), prohibits the "exercise of trawling with motorized traction for the capture of pink shrimp, seven-bearded shrimp, white, Santana or red shrimp and barba-ruça, annually, in the following areas and periods: I - in the marine area between parallels 21°18'04.00"S (border between the states of Espírito Santo and Rio de Janeiro) and 33°40'33.00"S (mouth of Arroio Chuí, state of Rio Grande do Sul), from March 1st to May 31st". Published in the Federal Official Gazette on September 24, 2008.



gatherers were asked to clean streets, schools, and other public places, even though the law did not provide for this. Furthermore, many records recounted constant episodes of discontinued receipt of the benefit throughout its 21 years of validity. According to the interviewees, the payment interruptions were mainly related to two factors: i) different criteria for being insured under the policy and ii) problems related to the (re)registration of beneficiaries.

As for the criteria, native categories such as "novice" and "fisherman's wife" appeared in the interviews as records of the rhetoric used by city hall agents to deny the benefit to shellfish gatherers who, respectively, were considered beginners in the activity or were wives and partners of fishermen. Regarding the term "rookie", working time was used to cast doubt on the worker's professional identity. The term "fisherman's wife", on the other hand, made women's work encompassed by men's work.

All the testimonies collected expressed disagreement with the criteria established over time, as in the following excerpts:

[...] Every year, I get a new arrival! I received it this year, [but] they decided that the husband gets the closed season, but the wife can't. [...] The federal closed season has nothing to do with the town hall. The social worker put a criterion in there, saying that the fisherman's wife whose husband receives federal benefits can't receive it. [...] So, they invent a criterion every year for what? Just to finish - R.A.M.

[...] I think that female fishing workers deserve to be recognized more, that there is no such recognition in the Lighthouse, you know? So, I think they should have more credibility. I think they should be valued more, and they aren't, knowing that all the meatpacking plants and backyards here depend on them. [...]. In this case, they added to the law, which has existed since 2000, that a federal fisherman is a federal fisherman, and a municipal fisherman's wife is a municipal fisherman. It has nothing to do with each other! - J.N.E.S.

[...] fishermen's wives can't get paid, and there's no such thing, [because] it's every man for himself. You have to work for yourself, everyone has to do their own thing, and if my husband gets paid, it's his right. I have my right! [...] You can't get paid for more than four years; newbies can't get paid yearly. We have to come here [City Hall] or set fire to it, demonstrate, [because] that's the only way we'll get an answer - K.F.C.

According to Dias Neto (2019), the ambiguity of the roles they play and the way they are called - "fisherwoman, fisherman, shellfish gatherer, crabber or fisherman's wife" - leave women more vulnerable to formal recognition of their profession, as well as the possibilities of acquiring rights.

In this context, the municipality's social policy can be problematized in various



aspects over its term , such as how it is implemented via work fronts. However, some criteria established between 2018 and 2019 seriously point to regulating gender stereotypes and discrimination against women.

In 2018, the criteria for receiving the "Saltwater Closure" were being a resident of the municipality for at least two years; being over 18 years old; not having an RGP; having fishing or fishing support activities as their main occupation in the 12 months before the payment of the Closure; not having other sources of income, as well as not being in receipt of any social security or welfare benefits of a continuing nature. In addition, the criteria provided for non-receipt in the event of non-compliance with the fishing ban and established a maximum period of 4 years for inclusion in the program.¹²

In 2019, the criteria above were maintained, but new requirements were added: passing an interview and technical assessment and submitting an updated report to the Cadastro Nacional de Informações Sociais (CNIS). In addition, the municipality now considers as ineligible for the benefit "anyone whose family includes a member who is a beneficiary of the Federal Closure, as well as the Municipal Closure", only "an artisanal fisherman or fishing support worker" from the same family.¹³

From a critical perspective, the following points need to be problematized: How was it possible to establish a maximum period of 4 years for inclusion in the PBC if the activities carried out by shellfish gatherers are continuous? What's more, if the women do their work for pay, even if their income is low and uncertain, how could they link their earnings to the earnings of other family members who may be beneficiaries of the Union's Defeso or even the PBC?

The possible answers to these questions presuppose that gender stereotypes can be used by public authorities to (in)directly and negatively discriminate against female workers. Thus, by setting a time limit of 4 years for inclusion in the PBC, women's invisibility was reinforced by the instability of professional recognition and, therefore, only temporary access to the program. Furthermore, by restricting the benefit to a single family member or limiting it, the municipal policy operationalized the invisibility of women, naturalizing the categorization of women's work as secondary and complementary.

¹² Campos dos Goytacazes. Official Gazette - Edition 032, of January 5, 2018.

¹³ Campos dos Goytacazes. Official Gazette - Edition 338, of April 29, 2019.



In other words, the temporal justification in the "newbie" category was used to destabilize and disconnect the professional identity of some female workers who benefited from the PBC. Furthermore, the essentialization of the man as the family breadwinner was formally instituted, taking the benefits received by husbands and partners as constitutive of the "fisherman's wife".

In addition to the problems relating to the criteria, the shellfish gatherers complained about implementing the PBC through annual (re)registrations. Their reports indicated that city hall agents distributed "tickets" directly to the "backyards" so the workers could provide information to the municipality's Social Assistance professionals. According to the interviewees, the assistants' questions generally referred to their type of work, where they did it, how long they had been working, and socio-economic information.

According to the narratives, the "passwords" did less to order the service than to produce internal and external tensions within the group. On the one hand, the shellfish gatherers complained that the distribution of the tool was not continuous and, given the intermittent nature of the work, it happened that the municipal agents went to the "backyards" on days when there was no production. On the other hand, some reports mentioned using "passwords" for favors when invisibility was also manipulated internally so that the professional categorization of shellfish gatherers could be relativized within the group and used to denounce fraud.¹⁴

In this sense, the testimonies identified the inadequacy of the (re)registrations in operational terms, so the imperfections in implementing "Defeso Municipal" compromised the coherence of the action.¹⁵ Thus, in addition to criticizing the criteria for selecting beneficiaries, the shellfish gatherers of Farol pointed out that the shortcomings of the process for achieving the objective defined in the policy also occurred in terms of execution, according to the report:

We receive the closed season through the town hall. But there's the hustle and bustle! They visit, and then some choose the people to give the password to receive the defense. There's a mafia in City Hall. Then, if they find

¹⁴ Although it is not the subject of this article, it should be noted that the municipality's social policies came under investigation by the Federal Police in 2016, due to the substantial increase in the number of beneficiaries. The "Operation Chequinho" investigations found that the benefits were being used for a vote-buying scheme involving city councillors.

¹⁵ The inconsistencies of the PBC can be seen in the numerical discontinuity of the beneficiaries. In 2017, of the 446 people eligible, 52 were men and 394 were women. In 2018, there was a drop to 133 candidates, of which 99 were men and only 34 women. And in 2019, out of a total of 257, 61 were men and 196 were women [https://transparencia.campos.rj.gov.br/ - access 23 Apr 2020].



someone working... sometimes the person who doesn't find them goes and puts them in, gives them the password, and registers them, and those who don't work end up getting paid, and those who do work end up being left out. This happened to me last year! You can only register if you have the password. But there's the mafia, right! The guy from Campos City Hall gives out the password. Then, once he's given the password, he's responsible for the shellfish gatherers. Then, after everyone gets paid, they'll see that they've been tricked by the town hall - R.S.A.

It is possible to say that the (re)registrations were operated through a network that made the owners or managers of the fishing resources and fishing environments the main intermediaries between the municipal agents and the shellfish gatherers. In this way, the public administration did not establish direct contact with the target public of social policy. Refrigerators, "backyard" fishmongers, and fishmongers acted as gateways to access the PBC, whose "passwords" were the passports for obtaining it.

Thus, being or not being a member of a certain family that traditionally carries out the activity, as well as participating in the activities of a certain "backyard," were (and still are) examples of reference to the moral scrutiny that makes up important (and exclusionary) classifications: "novice" or "fisherman's wife". In this sense, the invisibility of shellfish gatherers was updated in the operational, administrative structure set up, since in order to access the PBC, they had to be part of a network, which involves alliances and tensions, as well as endogenous conflicts over the very constitution of professional identity.

The "game of invisibility" was then played by the public administration itself, which, by operating the PBC rules in an inconsistent and discontinuous way, ended up making its reach more precarious, as in the passages highlighted:

The residents of Farol are practically all shellfish gatherers. Women have suffered a lot. [...] So it's precarious. Fishing here is precarious. Then you go to the city hall, the Defeso comes: what's your name? Whose backyard do you work in? From so-and-so! Ah, but I was there that day, and you weren't there. No one was working. But some days I work, some days I don't! Some days there's fish, and some days there isn't! - I.R.B.R.

Because what we have to work with is fish and shrimp in the fishing area. As well as being raised in the fishing industry, my mother brought us up and taught us the profession because I have it as a profession. I'm proud to be a fish and shrimp cleaner. I'm not ashamed. Because they said I was new and I raised my children here. My sisters created theirs, too. We work together, right! I registered, and they sent me there and called me for an interview. Come on, you've got no rights; you're a novice. I've always survived here. [...] They treat people badly, especially if they know they're shellfish gatherers. He thinks seafood is worse. It's not people! It's not being human. Got it? The social worker mistreated us. He called us animals [...] Most people here in



Farol were mistreated. I was very humiliated. I don't want to go through this anymore. I'm too old to be humiliated. And unfortunately, they put unprepared people to work. I've given up on becoming a shellfish gatherer - D. S. R.

According to the last story mentioned above, giving up on "becoming a shellfish gatherer" denounces the fraying of one's dignity. According to Domingues and Rosa (2014), the humiliated person experiences a traumatic situation of relegation that generates suffering and anguish due to the denial of their status as a subject. Furthermore, according to Gonçalves Filho (1998), social humiliation dehumanizes because it is both psychological and political. The humiliated person finds themselves in a situation where their humanity is impeded, which awakens a kind of anguish in them.

In the case of shellfish gatherers, the humiliation of the lack of professional recognition and redistribution of resources through social policy was and still is doubly experienced at the federal level by the legal exclusion of "fishing support workers" from access to the RGP and the Defeso; and at the municipal level, by the problems pointed out regarding the criteria and (re)registrations in relation to the PBC, now aggravated by the repeal of Law no. 7.021 with the publication of Law No. 9,109, of November 18, 2021,¹⁶ which extinguished the "Municipal Closed Season."

4. The shellfish gatherers' struggle for redistribution, recognition and participation

The case of the shellfish gatherers of Farol de São Thomé is emblematic of problematizing women's presence in the artisanal fishing production chain. According to Brito (2019) in his analysis of the Articulação Nacional das Pescadoras (ANP), the majority of

¹⁶ The new law regulates the granting of occasional, supplementary and provisional benefits, provided to citizens and families due to birth, death, situations of temporary vulnerability and public calamity (Art. 2º). It establishes that benefits can be granted in the form of money, goods or services (art. 2, § 1), with a view to meeting the basic human needs of families in situations of social vulnerability (art. 2º, § 2º), with the criterion of per capita income being equal to or less than 1/4 of the minimum wage (art. 5º), and the technical opinion of the Social Assistance Reference Centre - CRAS or Specialized Social Assistance Reference Centre - CREAS is mandatory (art. 5, § 3). Municipal Law No. 9.109/21, launched with the slogan Programa Mãe Coruja (PMC), for distributing layettes for babies whose mothers are in a situation of vulnerability, makes no mention of shellfish gatherers and, under the justification of compiling and regulating the granting of eventual benefits from the municipality's public social assistance policy, extinguished the PBC. Thus, in order to access one of the benefits available under the new program, shellfish gatherers or any other municipality must be in a situation of social vulnerability "resulting from or aggravated by contingencies that cause damage, loss and risk, unprotecting and weakening the maintenance and coexistence between people" (art. 2º, §1º).



fisherwomen are black or brown, poor, live in rural areas, have low levels of schooling, are subject to food insecurity, gender violence, and alcoholism. Although they play key roles in the production process and in caring for their families, they do not receive social protection from the state or recognition of their rights as workers in the sector.

Thus, the shellfish gatherers of Farol have taken a leading role in the struggle for the permanence of the PBC and in criticizing it. Every year, they organize protests with acts ranging from the closure of RJ 216, the main access road to the community, to the occupation of the town hall. In the demonstrations, they burn tires, produce posters, shout slogans, activate the local press, and ask for meetings with authorities; in short, they perform the right to claim and confirm that "[...] the levels of empowerment assumed by fishing women can be counted on many fronts" (MANESCHY; SIQUEIRA; ÁLVARES, 2012, p. 731), such as the defense of territories, representation in class and fisheries management organizations and also in the struggle for labor rights.

From the more theoretical angle of dilemmas relating to redistribution and recognition, the shellfish gatherers' struggle can be seen as a concrete case of overcoming contradictions and possible antagonisms between the right to equality and the right to difference. As a social group, shellfish gatherers are hybrid types who combine the characteristics of an exploited class with those of a despised sexuality. In this sense, they demand both redistribution and recognition as ambivalent but not contradictory facets.

Gender is, in short, a bivalent mode of collectivity. It has a political economy aspect, which places it in the context of redistribution. But it also has a cultural-valuable face, which simultaneously places it in the realm of recognition. Naturally, the two sides are not separated from each other. They intertwine to reinforce each other dialectically because sexist and androcentric cultural norms are institutionalized in the state, and the economy, and women's economic disadvantage restricts their "voice", preventing equal participation in shaping culture, public spheres, and everyday life. The result is a vicious circle of cultural and economic subordination (FRASER, 2006, p. 234)

Thus, the lack of professional recognition, both within the communities, as a result of the social discrediting of women's work, and in external propositions, i.e., academic studies and, above all, the problems of redistribution present in public policies that entail gender stereotypes in their construction and operation, constitute a perverse scenario in which they experience the invisibility of shellfish gatherers as a process of dehumanization.

We went in front of the town hall. We went here near the heliport and closed the gate, but none helped. A lot of people didn't get paid. [...] They took a



long time to get back to me. The girls came in, chatted, and left without an answer! He said there was no point, because only those people lived in poverty. He said that perhaps if it were possible, he would include us in the minimum income. But at the minimum income, you can't get a better television. If you can't have it, then what do we work for? To live in misery? Can't you buy anything? We work to get the things we dream of. Are we going to work here just to eat? We're not pigs to live on food alone. We have dreams, we want to have a different life, something nice in the house - C.S.L.

The reports collected in 2019 point to serious situations of social humiliation, in which the "game of invisibilities" at the same time refers not only to the work itself but is projected onto the subjects' dignity. So food is not enough - (sub)existence is. Some dreams perform existence, which can be materialized in "having nice things at home" or "having a different life".

The struggle of shellfish gatherers in the not-too-distant past for inclusion in the PBC and for maintaining the policy today demonstrates that recognition and redistribution are converging demands. Through the state, granting the benefit implies professional recognition for women who, despite not catching fish, depend on them to carry out their productive activities. However, the redistribution of income through social programs may or may not promote recognition. After all, according to the story quoted elsewhere, it is possible to give up "becoming a shellfish gatherer" depending on social humiliation in the struggle for resources.

Along this interpretative path, redistribution and recognition are complementary signs on the bumpy road to social justice. According to Fraser (2007), redistribution, related to the economic structure of society and the differentiations of economically defined classes, is the objective condition for overcoming social arrangements that structure deprivation, exploitation, precariousness, and great disparities in wealth, income, and free time. Recognition, on the other hand, is the intersubjective condition for breaking with the institutionalized patterns of cultural valuation that systematically belittle certain categories of people and the characteristics associated with them.

Both dimensions - redistribution and recognition - can promote participation, i.e., the possibility for all (adult) members of society to interact as partners. So, one aspect that deserved attention in the research concerns precisely the lack of participation of shellfish gatherers in the Z-19 Fishing Colony. The interviewees did not mention the professional body, and even when asked about the organization's role in a possible mediation with the city council or other state institutions, the answers were always indifferent.



One possible explanation for the lack of participation in the Colony was revealed in the interview conducted in 2019 with the then-president, Rodolfo Ribeiro.¹⁷ Although he recognized the presence of women in fishing, his speech updated the invisibility of women's work by using the term "help". What's more, under his management, it was not possible for workers who did not have the RGP to join the association:

[...] I only affiliate the person after they have been registered with the competent body, as the law says. It's in the Fisheries Law. After registering with the competent body, the interested party should look for the entity representing them in their federal base. So, when you come, if you have the card, I affiliate you according to the criteria in our statute. Whether he is [a fisherman] or not is his problem and that of whoever gave him the card. I only affiliate once I've registered.

Although the president of the Z-19 referred to the legislation, there is no express provision for the requirement of the RGP as a condition for membership of colonies in the Fisheries mentioned above Law, nor in Law 11.699/08, which "provides for the Colonies, Confederations and National Fishermen's Federation", article 4 of which states that "workers in the artisanal fishing sector are free to associate with their class body, with the interested parties proving their status at the time of admission". This evidence does not appear in the provision nominally related to the RGP, so the interpretation that the document is a requirement for associative practice seems to have been a personal directive from the president and yet another example of how gender stereotypes are institutionalized in fisheries management.

The struggle of the shellfish gatherers of Farol for redistribution, recognition, and participation is a particular case of the problems and demands that have historically affected most women's groups in artisanal fishing. Certainly, the legal and institutional blockages to rights such as Defeso and other social policies are related to invisibility, thought of as the result of discrimination, albeit indirect, reified by the state, which incurs processes of dehumanization and deepening inequalities.

After all, the work characteristics tend to exclude them from social security benefits, especially in countries where entitlement to these benefits requires regular financial contributions, minimum contribution time limits, or continuous exercise of the profession. This happens when social citizenship, i.e., the enjoyment of social rights, is dependent on being a worker, defined in a restricted or universal way. Universality that denies gender differences. As a result, it is not easy to find women in fields such as fishing and agriculture, not to mention unpaid work (MANESCHY; SIQUEIRA; ÁLVARES, 2012, p. 725).

¹⁷ The identification of the president of Colony Z-19 is justified by his occupation of a representative position.



Overcoming discrimination against women requires an extensive, comprehensive, and inclusive interpretation of the concept of fishing,¹⁸ in which women's work is seen as a fundamental activity in the production chain, in the social ties of communities, and in the food security of families. According to Cezar and Theis (2020), the professional identity of shellfish gatherer and the native category "backyard" have been used as a semantic shield of defense against the pressures and contingencies suffered in the development of their work, ensuring some degree of autonomy and circulation, even though women's activities are associated with the domestic sphere and the hegemonic patterns of the sexual division of labor and social gender relations.

From this political point of view, it is necessary to enforce the constitutional principles of equality so that there is no separation or discriminatory hierarchy based on gender, nor that fundamental rights are suppressed by the lack of redistribution, non-recognition, or limitations on women's participation in the management of artisanal fisheries. In this context, the shellfish gatherers' struggle against invisibility has been persistent, according to the most recent reports gathered in 2022 during a focus group.

The current [mayor] who came in promised that if elected, he would pay the shellfish gatherers in 2020. And there we are to this day, and women are all stuck without being able to work, having a hard time, and if you even pick up a shrimp to peel or clean, you run the risk of being arrested, you know? And how is a person who survives on fishing during this period without working going to survive if many are paying rent and don't even own their own home? It's very sad, very painful, and women not being recognized as fishing workers has been going on for over 50 years, since my mother's time. Not having a document to be recognized as a working woman - M.C.

It's not easy! It's always like this: you have to demonstrate every year because otherwise you won't get paid. As if we were asking for something... we don't receive what is rightfully ours. We weren't asking anyone for a favor. It was our right to receive it, but to receive it every year, we had to go and set fire to the tires to draw attention to ourselves because otherwise, we wouldn't receive it. Unfortunately, that's how we feel: humiliated a lot of the time. Because if we had the right, we wouldn't need to protest for anything - R.R.

Removing gender inequalities in the fishing industry is still a challenge that will be difficult to overcome without the organization of movements, political mobilizations, and demonstrations for visibility. In Hellebrandt's (2017) analysis, the vertical structuring of fishing colonies, the socio-cultural taboos in the communities, and the multiple productive and reproductive working hours justify women's absence in decision-making

¹⁸ In the National Policy for the Sustainable Development of Aquaculture and Fishing (Law No. 11.959/09), fishing is defined, according to art. 2, such as the extraction, collection and capture of fishery resources.



spaces. Furthermore, as has been reiterated, fisheries management and legislation favor catches over other stages in the production chain, thus increasing women's invisibility in public policies.

Thus, although the Brazilian Constitution of 1988 declares equality between men and women regarding rights and obligations, a critical analysis of both the legislation and the policies aimed at artisanal fishing indicates that roadblocks are erected by gender stereotypes against women workers that need to be overcome. Social justice, under the terms of Article 170 of the Magna Carta¹⁹ and, above all, the sole paragraph of Article 193,²⁰ requires that the public agenda be able to operate from a pluralistic perspective that does not antagonize the dimensions of women's dignified existence, i.e., the right to redistribution of resources, professional recognition and political participation in management mechanisms.

5. Final considerations

The article sought to analyze the social invisibility of the shellfish gatherers of Farol de São Thomé based on the naturalization of gender stereotypes in the Defeso public policy instituted by the municipality of Campos dos Goytacazes. There is no doubt that this social program generated tensions by discriminating against women through the manipulation of the native categories "novice" and "fisherman's wife". In addition, (re)registration through the use of "passwords" was a factor in conflicts that shook the workers' internal relations through moral scrutiny of the shellfish gatherers and antagonizing them with the municipal agents.

However, instead of being improved, the PBC was simply extinguished after 21 years of implementation, and the problem of social (in)justice persists and exacerbates the precarious situation of women workers. In this context, from federal legislation, which has denied women the right to the RGP, including Unemployment Insurance paid by the

¹⁹ "The economic order, based on the valorization of human work and free enterprise, aims to ensure a dignified existence for all, in accordance with the dictates of social justice [...]" (CF, 1988).

²⁰ "The social order is based on the primacy of work and its objective is social welfare and justice. Sole paragraph. The state will exercise the function of planning social policies, ensuring, in the form of the law, the participation of society in the processes of formulating, monitoring, controlling and evaluating these policies" (CF, 1988).



Federal Government, to the case of the shellfish gatherers of Farol over the problems of access to the "Municipal Closure", the Brazilian state has made women's activities in fishing invisible, given that the instrumentalization of stereotypes - work as "help" or "support" - are operationalized as an (in)direct policy of discrimination.

Thus, the struggle for material resources, professional prestige, and representation in the public arena goes through converging paths, so redistribution, recognition, and participation can be considered complementary dimensions in which the right to material equality does not antagonize the right to difference. In other words, if receiving the Union's Defeso requires the legal identification of shellfish gatherers as workers, registration in the RGP, a document that recognizes them in their particularities, is also the criterion for access to the benefit.

In this sense, it's important to remember that women's professional identities in fishing have been historically fractured so that men are thought of as constant explorers of the waters in activities that are as dangerous as they are heroic, from which, of course, they build their image as fishermen, masters of the arts and family providers. On the other hand, women have to reconcile the productive work they do in fishing with domestic and reproductive work. The separation and hierarchization of male activities from female activities confers devaluation, precariousness, invisibility, and, above all, restrictions on the rights of female workers.

However, it is essential to understand that categories such as shellfish gatherer, fisherwoman, cleaner, and, indeed, "novice" and "fisherman's wife" have gained new meanings, which demonstrate not only sociolinguistic distinctions for the terms but also their polysemic characteristics and, above all, their semantic shift towards social engagement and female empowerment. In this context, PEA Pescarte aims to promote social mobilization and encourage participation in educational processes aimed at involving artisanal fishing communities in the democratic construction and implementation of Work and Income Generation Projects (GTR), articulating knowledge and skills for the solidarity economy so that, it is hoped, there will also be some impact on re-signifying gender stereotypes and contributing to the fight against discriminatory blockages.



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