



The Convergence between Modern Slavery and Environmental Degradation in the Brazilian Amazon Rainforest: Exploring the Social-Environmental Victimization Nexus

La Convergencia entre la Esclavitud Moderna y la Degradación Medioambiental en la Selva Amazónica Brasileña: Explorando el Nexo entre la Victimización Social y Medioambiental

JOÃO VICTOR GIANECCHINI¹

Abstract

This essay explores the convergence between modern slavery and environmental degradation in the Brazilian Amazon, positioning them as interconnected sources of social and environmental victimisation. Through historical and contemporary analysis, it demonstrates how abusive labour exploitation—notably debt bondage—has facilitated illegal deforestation, cattle ranching, and mining, contributing to the Amazon's ecological degradation. Drawing from criminological and victimological theories, the research reveals how modern slavery perpetuates severe social harm while functioning as a mechanism for reproducing environmental injustice, with far-reaching consequences for climate change. By investigating this nexus, the paper promotes a deeper understanding of labour victimisation as a central factor in environmental harm and advocates for a victim-centred policy framework to address both social and ecological injustices in the Amazon and beyond.

Keywords: Modern slavery; Amazon Rainforest; State-corporate harm; Victimization.

Resumen

Este ensayo explora la convergencia entre la esclavitud moderna y la degradación ambiental en la Amazonía brasileña, posicionándolas como fuentes interconectadas de victimización social y ambiental. A través de un análisis histórico y contemporáneo, se demuestra cómo la explotación laboral abusiva—en particular la servidumbre por deudas—ha facilitado la deforestación ilegal, la ganadería extensiva y la minería ilegal, contribuyendo a la degradación ecológica de la Amazonía. Desde perspectivas criminológicas y victimológicas, la investigación revela cómo la esclavitud moderna perpetúa graves daños sociales al tiempo que funciona como mecanismo de reproducción de

¹ Goethe University, Frankfurt am Main (joaovictorgianecchini@usp.br). ORCID: 0000-0002-0150-8506. My gratitude goes to Eduardo Saad-Diniz, Finn-Lauritz Schmidt, Caroline Plötz, and Giulia Gianecchini, as well as to two anonymous reviewers, for their critical comments on earlier versions of this essay. The author acknowledges the support provided by the Goethe Research Experience Program (GREP) and Center for Artificial Intelligence (CIAAM/USP), and funding by Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung.

Article received on January 6th, 2025, and accepted for publication on November 11th, 2025. Translated by Daniela Pavez.

How to cite this article:

GIANECCHINI, Joao Victor (2026). "The Convergence between Modern Slavery and Environmental Degradation in the Brazilian Amazon Rainforest: Exploring the Social-Environmental Victimization Nexus", *Latin American Legal Studies*, Vol. 14 N° 1, pp. 414-452.

injusticias ambientales, con consecuencias de largo alcance para el cambio climático. Al investigar este nexo, el artículo promueve una comprensión más profunda de la victimización laboral como factor central del daño ambiental y aboga por un marco de políticas centrado en las víctimas para abordar las injusticias sociales y ecológicas en la Amazonía y más allá.

Palabras-clave: Esclavitud moderna; Amazonía; Daño estatal corporativo; Victimización.

INTRODUCTION: CONTEXTUALIZING THE PROBLEM OF MODERN SLAVERY EXPLOITATION IN THE AMAZON RAINFOREST

The exploitation of modern slavery all over the world has shown an increasing pattern of victimisation. Representing the most abusive forms of exploitation of the workforce, modern slavery refers to “situations of exploitation that a person cannot refuse or cannot leave because of threats, violence, deception, abuse of power or other forms of coercion” and amount to almost 50 million victims worldwide.¹ According to recent metrics, modern slavery is being exploited by different actors in a range of different economic sectors, mainly taking part in supply chain dynamics which connect the production in “developing countries”—where lax regulatory regimes and high social and economic inequalities prevail—to its commercialization by multinational corporations in nations from the Global North.² Furthermore, the exploitation of modern slavery is also known as a “hidden practice” which makes it difficult for law enforcement to detect the abuse and promote accountability for those responsible for its exploitation. For this reason, the imposition of servitude is being deployed to facilitate illegal environmental exploitation of which the Amazon Rainforest is one of the greatest examples.³

Although that is the case, modern slavery has been conceived as a human rights violation related to the infringement of the personal liberty of the victims, which means the violation of one’s self-determination in the context of labour exploitation.⁴ Even though the legal framework captures the extent to the victims are affected by the abusive labour exploitation, criminologically, the criminal offense is intrinsically related to complex dynamics of harm causation and victimization, which in this text will be developed, under the victimological framework, as a source of environmental injustice.

Particularly in the Brazilian Amazon Rainforest scenario, the exploitation of modern slavery began during the military dictatorship government in Brazil (1964-1985) and its campaign for the colonization of the Amazon region.⁵ Under the saying “integrate not to lose it” (*integrar para não entregar*) the military campaign for the economic exploitation of the Amazon involved government subsidies and granted access to land for entrepreneurs to exploit the region economically. Moreover, in the absence of a workforce, local businessmen started hiring labour recruiters (popularly known in the Brazilian scenario as *gatos*) to recruit labourers, mainly from the Northeastern part of Brazil, known as the poorest region of the country, where people suffer from intense droughts and the lack of state support to develop social and economic standards in the region.⁶ Although the military dictatorship ended in 1985, the exploitation of modern slavery in the region continued to

¹ ILO *et al.* (2022).

² ILO (2019).

³ FIGUEIRA (2004); BALES (2016); HOBBS (2024).

⁴ SPITZER (2018), pp. 126-127. See also SAAD-DINIZ & GIANECCHINI (2020), p. 244.

⁵ ACKER (2017); BRETON (2002).

⁶ FIGUEIRA (2004).

prevail and according to data disclosed by the *Comissão Pastoral da Terra (CPT)*, more than 29 thousand people were rescued from slave-like conditions from 1995 to 2021.

Given this scenario, this paper intends to investigate the interplay between modern slavery exploitation and environmental degradation in the Brazilian Amazon Rainforest. Drawing on a secondary data analysis and literature review, the paper will highlight which are the main economic sectors involved in the abusive exploitation of the workforce, which is the victim profile and what are the environmentally harmful practices in which modern slavery victims are being exploited. The primary data have already been collected by *CPT*, a Brazilian non-governmental organization which has developed several initiatives on land conflict and labour victimization since 1995, and *Instituto Igarapé*, whose database on “Ecocrime” has been investigating the “Ecosystem of Crimes”⁷ being committed in the Amazon Basin. Precisely this convergence between social and environmental victimization is what the paper intends to investigate as the modern slavery-environmental degradation nexus, which highlights the co-occurrence of the exploitation of servitude for the promotion of deforestation, cattle ranching, illegal mining and illegal land grabbing in the Amazon, reproducing and deepening patterns of social and environmental injustice.⁸ Deriving from the empirical background, whose objective is to show how modern slavery and environmental degradation coincide for the exploitation of the Amazon Rainforest, the paper aims to develop its theoretical dimension, whose thesis lies on the exploitation of modern slavery as not just socially but also environmentally harmful behaviour.

Therefore, the objective of this study is to show the centrality of labour victimization in the promotion of environmental injustice, which in the Amazon Rainforest can be empirically verified by the intensification of the “savannization” process in the region, which is responsible for transforming the tropical rainforest into a “savanna”, and to the transformation process according to which the Amazon Rainforest is being responsible for emitting more carbon than it is being able to absorb, therefore contributing to the intensification of climate change.⁹

Finally, through the investigation of the modern slavery-environmental victimization nexus, this paper aims to contribute not just to understanding the convergence of social and environmental harm in the Amazon, but also to advocate for the development of the victimological agenda into the interplay of severe labour exploitation, as it is the case of the exploitation of modern slavery, in order to understand the centrality of the exploitation of labour in the promotion of environmental injustice. This approach could then be responsible for informing policy-driven strategies aimed at addressing social and ecological injustice in the Amazon Rainforest and analogous scenarios.

I. MODERN SLAVERY IN THE AMAZON RAINFOREST: CONTEXTUALIZING CURRENT SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL VICTIMIZATION

The exploitation of modern slavery in the Amazon Rainforest represents a complex intersection of historical policy decisions, economic development strategies, and ongoing environmental degradation. This section examines how labour exploitation has evolved from a systematic government-backed initiative during Brazil's military dictatorship into a contemporary phenomenon deeply embedded within organized environmental crime networks.

⁷ IGARAPÉ (2024).

⁸ CPT (2024); WAISBICH *et al.* (2022).

⁹ GATTI *et al.* (2021).

The analysis begins by tracing the historical roots of modern slavery in the Amazon, exploring how the Brazilian government's 1964 economic development program—spearheaded by SUDAM under the slogan “integrate it not to lose it”—fundamentally transformed the region. This transformation displaced traditional communities and small farmers, replacing subsistence-based production with an agribusiness model dependent on environmental destruction and the systematic exploitation of vulnerable migrant workers through debt bondage mechanisms. The section contextualizes how deliberate policy choices, including tax incentives and credit schemes that concentrated land ownership while excluding workers from land access, created structural conditions that enabled and perpetuated slavery.

Building upon this historical foundation, the analysis then demonstrates how modern slavery has not only persisted beyond the military dictatorship's end in 1985 but has become increasingly integrated into broader patterns of criminal convergence. Contemporary data reveals that labour exploitation now spans multiple economic activities—from illegal logging and mining to cattle ranching and land grabbing—forming part of organized environmental crime networks that simultaneously generate social and environmental harm. This dual examination illustrates modern slavery's central role as both a historical legacy and an ongoing driver of Amazon degradation, sustained by globalized supply chains that connect exploitative production sites with distant consumer markets.

1.1. Descriptive and normative analysis of the exploitation of modern slavery in the Amazon: from the historical to the present

The exploitation of modern slavery in the Amazon Rainforest needs to be understood in the context of the Brazilian government's initiatives towards the economic development of the country.¹⁰ In 1964, the year in which the Brazilian military dictatorship started, the government launched the program towards the economic development of the Amazon Rainforest in the context of the creation of the *Superintendência do Desenvolvimento da Amazônia* (Superintendence for the Development of the Amazon, SUDAM), whose slogan *integrar para não entregar* (integrate it not to lose it) created the justification for the occupation of the rainforest based on the menace of losing it to the international community.¹¹

In this context, the Amazon which was basically inhabited by small local communities (*ribeirinhos*), indigenous peoples and small farmers¹² would face a brutal change not just in the occupation of the territory but also through the harmful consequences derived from its insertion into the Brazilian classic system of production, which is both historically and contemporarily carried out by the so-called Brazilian agribusiness. Historically characterized by the exploitation for subsistence and for an intrinsic relationship shared between local communities and the preservation of the forest upon which they depended, the modes of production in the Amazon Rainforest would then face a structural change,

¹⁰ There were two other milestones characterized by the exploitation of modern slavery in the Amazon (servitude), which are known as the “rubber cycle” and the exploitation of “*drogas do sertão*”. This paper prescinds from its analysis for two reasons: *i.* because it is not related to environmental degradation, they were considered as sustainable practices and thus do not fall into the object of study of this text, which is focused on the social-environmental harm nexus; and *ii.* The exploitation of *drogas do sertão* and the rubber cycle are temporarily limited and do not express the continuum between the past and present exploitation of modern slavery in the Amazon Rainforest. For details, see TEIXEIRA (2009).

¹¹ FIGUEIRA (2024).

¹² LOUREIRO & PINTO (2005).

whose development model would then be based on environmental degradation through the abusive exploitation of slavery to produce commodities.¹³

Based on the initiative of occupying the Amazon, the Brazilian government offered a series of tax incentives, subventions, loans and credit for businessmen to start their own businesses in the Amazon basin, which attracted not just Brazilian investors, mainly from the Southeastern part of Brazil, but also investment from foreign companies, such as the case of *Fazenda Rio Cristalino*, a cattle ranch farm owned by the German company *Volkswagen*.¹⁴ The main economic activities developed in the region surrounded practices from the agribusiness sector, which involved deforestation to clean pasture for cattle ranching activities. Another characteristic of the policies destined to promote the economic development of the Amazon is the financial incentives towards attracting (agri-)businessmen to the region that occurred amid excluding access to land for workers which reinforced the land concentration in the hands of a dozen businessmen, a process that deepened social and economic inequalities and perpetuated exclusion,¹⁵ creating and reinforcing the opportunities for the exploitation of modern slavery.¹⁶

Amid the absence of a workforce and to promote the economic development of the Amazon Rainforest, the government and businessmen involved in the exploitation of the Amazon launched joint initiatives to incentivize migration of workers from other Brazilian regions, mainly from the Northeastern part of Brazil, a region in which vulnerable poor workers are abundant because of the poor living standards.¹⁷ They do not just share the lowest levels of social and economic standards in Brazil according to the Human Development Index, but also must face the intense droughts that impact the development of modes of subsistence in the region.¹⁸

In this context, the promise of good salaries and decent working and living conditions seems the right solution for a complex problem. The recruiting of the workforce is then based on an organized criminal network system responsible for subcontracting local entrepreneurs by the landowners, who functioned as intermediaries and are popularly known as *gatos*.¹⁹ The transport of the workforce to the worksite in the Pará state—which is largely covered by the Amazon Rainforest accompanied with high rates of modern slavery exploitation²⁰—involved an intricate and organized procedure, involving recruiters and sub-recruiters, and the cooperation of drivers, corrupt police officers and boarding house owners.²¹

The exploitation of the workers in this setting involved a series of control mechanisms. To begin with, the promise of good and decent work conditions would soon be over and assume a form of exploitation of modern slavery known as *debt bondage*, criminalized under art. 149 of the Brazilian Criminal Code.²² Arriving at the worksite, the recruiters

¹³ For the history of the Brazilian political economy and its roots based on environmental exploitation through the exploitation of slavery for the export of commodities, see DE HOLANDA (1995); FREYRE (2003). The perpetuation of the same political economy model can be seen in PRADO (1977). From the explanation of the roots of the Brazilian capitalist system of production to the present of slave labour exploitation, see CAVALCANTI & RODRIGUES (2023).

¹⁴ ACKER (2017); CAMPOS & BRAGA (2024). The company has been recently found liable for slave labour exploitation according to a Brazilian Labour Court (Tribunal Regional do Trabalho da 8ª Região). See more information available at: MDHC (2025).

¹⁵ FIGUEIRA (2024); HOBBS (2024).

¹⁶ SOUZA COSTA & DE FREITAS PEREIRA (2022).

¹⁷ FIGUEIRA (2004).

¹⁸ SOUZA COSTA & DE FREITAS PEREIRA (2022).

¹⁹ BRETON (2002).

²⁰ ACKER (2017); CDVDH/CB & CPT (2017).

²¹ FIGUEIRA (2024).

²² With further citations, see GIANECCHINI (2023).

(*gatos*) would inform the soon-to-be victims that the costs involving the transport, food, medicines and work instruments should all be borne by the workers. In this form of exploitation of work analogous to slavery, the worker is indebted to the recruiter or agent (*gato*) for transportation costs, as well as to the employer, who sells him goods at generally overpriced prices and exorbitant interest rates, creating a moral debt between exploiter and worker, responsible for keeping him in conditions of abusive exploitation of labour.²³ This form of exploitation manifests itself as the imposition of a restriction on the freedom of self-determination of the worker subjected to abusive exploitation. The relation of domination expressed by the interaction of employer and worker is characterized by the creation of fictitious and fraudulent debts, often driven by the great distance between the place where the workforce is exploited and urban centres where workers can buy basic subsistence products, in an arrangement known as truck systems (*barracão*).²⁴

The expression of the relationship of domination, in which the “boss” subjugates his subordinates to the power he wields through the manipulation of debts at exorbitant interest rates, ends up facilitating or providing social techniques that facilitate or create the conditions for the emergence of dynamics of extortion of the workforce. The coercion expressed in the work arrangement is linked to the pressure for increased productivity of the results of work, in which the worker's freedom of self-determination is hampered by coercion to pay and the bonds of domination that are created and reproduced as a result. In this context of exploitation, the worker is not selling their labour power, which is characteristic of the capitalist production system, but their “working body”.²⁵

In these circumstances, the worker takes on a moral responsibility to pay the employer, as well as being physically prevented from leaving the workplace until the debt is settled. The debts are usually started by charging for work materials, personal protective equipment (PPE), transportation costs, food, or other items that are essential for the worker to carry out the task or even to survive. The employer sets the price arbitrarily and abusively, deducting it from the worker's salary, who always owes the employer and is prevented from leaving work until he has paid his supposed debt.²⁶ Through this complex system, mediated by relations of domination and control, workers are subjected to modern slavery for the production and reproduction of environmental harm, which during the military dictatorship assumed the form of cleaning of pasture for cattle ranching.²⁷

As the next topics show, the exploitation of modern slavery in the Amazon Rainforest and harm caused against the environment is not spatially and temporarily limited to the military dictatorship period in Brazil. The reproduction of the exploitation expresses a continuum of the abusive exploitation of workers which are now subjected not just to the cleaning of pasture, but to other economic activities, which will be analysed as the protagonism of modern slavery exploitation in the convergence of crimes in the Amazon Rainforest.

1.2. Convergence of crimes: the protagonism of the exploitation of modern slavery in the environmental degradation of the Amazon Rainforest

Although the military dictatorship ended in Brazil in 1985, the degradation of the rainforest has never stopped and has been manifesting the deepening of social and environmental harm in the Amazon Basin. The exploitation of modern slavery perpetuates social and environmental harm and now expresses the dynamization of associated practices. While

²³ KARA (2017).

²⁴ TEIXEIRA (2009); HADDAD *et al.* (2020).

²⁵ MARTINS (2023).

²⁶ FIGUEIRA (2004); ISSA (2017).

²⁷ FIGUEIRA (2024).

before debt bondage was used for the cleaning of pasture, nowadays the convergence of crimes²⁸ has been showing multiple patterns. According to data collected by the *Comissão Pastoral da Terra* (CPT) the connection between environmental degradation and abusive labour exploitation, in the period involving 1995 to 2021, can be traced to deforestation, the exploitation of cattle ranching, forest management, plant extraction, sugar cane, permanent crops, coal, mining and other agricultural practices.²⁹

Not just data collected by CPT has shown the interplay between social and environmental degradation. Research conducted by the Igarapé Institute, which has been investigating environmental crime in the Amazon Rainforest over the last decade, has strongly demonstrated that socially and environmentally harmful behaviour reproduced in the Amazon Rainforest. The complex dynamics of crime causation and harm reproduction has turned out to assume the form of organized environmental crime, from which criminal networks and the convergence of crimes play a central role.³⁰ From the studies published by the Igarapé Institute, which use data from public Brazilian enforcement agencies, a series of connected environmental and non-environmental crimes have been impacting in the reproduction of social and environmental harm in the region. The economic sectors involved in this network of crimes entail land grabbing, illegal logging, illegal gold mining and cattle ranching with illegal deforestation practices. The study also shows that environmental crime does not happen in isolation. It is part of the gears of environmentally harmful behaviour that involves other crimes, such as fraud (identified in 30% of actions), corruption (21%), money laundering (20%), illegal possession of firearms, ammunition and explosives (18%), violent crimes (5%) and human trafficking (5%).³¹ The exploitation of modern slavery is comprehended in this last category.

More specifically, the exploitation of the Amazon Rainforest is considered to be one of the gears of environmental victimization,³² which are ultimately caused by practices such as 1) land grabbing, 2) illegal logging, 3) illegal mining and 4) farming and cattle raising with illegal environmental liabilities, such as deforestation, as well as charcoal.³³ These production chains contaminated with environmental and non-environmental illegalities are important vectors of deforestation and environmental degradation in the Amazon³⁴ and benefit from the exploitation of modern slavery as a means for, on the one hand, increasing profits, and on the other, avoiding enforcement. The latter is particularly problematic since detecting modern slavery is a hard practice, not just because of the geographical isolation of victims, but also because of the lack of resources shared by law enforcement agencies.³⁵

Although it seems like modern slavery and human trafficking do not play an important role according to the data disclosed by the Igarapé Institute, research has already shown that those are hidden practices which are hardly detected and therefore assume the form of a “dark figure”.³⁶ Recent literature has been showing the connections between modern slavery and environmental degradation, from which the Amazon Basin is considered a strong

²⁸ In the criminological literature, the convergence of crimes and organized environmental crime, involving environmental degradation and abusive labour exploitation was intensively investigated by VAN UHM (2023).

²⁹ CPT (2024).

³⁰ IGARAPÉ (2024).

³¹ WAISBICH *et al.* (2022).

³² SAAD-DINIZ & GIANECCHINI (2021).

³³ DE BRITO FILHO & GARCIA (2019).

³⁴ WAISBICH *et al.* (2022).

³⁵ The difficulties in monitoring and enforcement of modern slavery are better explored in item 3.

³⁶ See among others LEBARON *et al.* (2018). For the concept of dark figure in criminology, see ADLER *et al.* (2018).

case,³⁷ showing the *continuum* of exploitation³⁸ initially carried out during the SUDAM campaign towards the economic development of the Amazon.³⁹ The dynamics of exploitation are nowadays pushed and facilitated through the globalization of supply chains, which connect huge consumer markets with production sites, where lax regulatory regimes and poor enforcement practices prevail.

II. CRIMINOLOGICAL ASPECTS OF THE EXPLOITATION OF MODERN SLAVERY IN THE AMAZON RAINFOREST

Since the classic studies of Edwin H. Sutherland,⁴⁰ criminology has been known as the field of study responsible for studying crime as a social phenomenon, including under its scope the study of the processes of lawmaking, its violation and the reaction developed by “political society”, which acquires the forms of punishment, intervention and prevention against deviant behaviour and which integrates the systematics of social interactions, which, not by chance, constitute the object of scientific investigation of criminology. Over the years, the classic definition of the American criminologist has remained the fundamental and structuring paradigm of the field of study and is still disseminated and used to support contemporary scientific research, including regarding the method of criminological investigation.⁴¹

Based on the definition of the object of study, the present topic aims to use criminological theory to analyse the exploitation of modern slavery in the Amazon Rainforest.⁴² Through the criminological lens, the objective is to provide means for the explanation of how and why modern slavery is still being exploited and what are the structures of opportunity in which its exploitation is still possible. In the subsequent item the convergences between criminological and victimological theory will be addressed as a means for comprehending the connections between modern slavery and environmental degradation.

2.1. State-corporate crime and the SUDAM initiative: the construction of the social-environmental harm nexus

According to Kramer, Michalowski and Kauzlarich, the criminological concept of “state-corporate crime” can be understood as “criminal acts that occur when one or more institutions of political governance pursue a goal in direct cooperation with one or more institutions of economic production and distribution”.⁴³ This means that the intersection between states and corporate interests can be understood as a form of crime causation and harm reproduction rooted in conditions posed by the political economy of a certain context. In this context, states create “regimes of permission”⁴⁴ or act as facilitators⁴⁵ for the production and reproduction of corporate harm, which in this case, as the next paragraphs will show, are based on the political economy developed by the Brazilian government in

³⁷ HOBBS (2024).

³⁸ CAVALCANTI & RODRIGUES (2023).

³⁹ The continuum of exploitation can also be seen through the condemnation of Brazil in the Interamerican Court of Human Rights in the case of *Trabalhadores da Fazenda Brasil Verde vs. Brasil*. ICHR (2016).

⁴⁰ SUTHERLAND *et al.* (1992).

⁴¹ ADLER *et al.* (2018).

⁴² A legal discussion of the individual and corporate legal liability for modern slavery exploitation, mainly through a doctrinal approach has been developed elsewhere by this author and, therefore, will not be reproduced here. For this analysis see GIANECCHINI (2023).

⁴³ KRAMER *et al.* (2002), p. 263.

⁴⁴ WHYTE (2014).

⁴⁵ In the context of modern slavery, the interaction of states and corporations as a form of promotion of the exploitation of modern slavery can be seen in MARMO & BANDIERA (2022) and PAGANINI & MEDEIROS (2023).

the Brazilian dictatorship as a means for promoting occupation of the Brazilian Amazon territory at the expense of social and environmental harm.

The SUDAM initiative shows how the Brazilian State initiatives, such as the policy towards the economic development and occupation of the Amazon, intersect with the private sector's interests to produce social and environmental harm (as described in the second topic). In the Brazilian scenario, the exploitation of modern slavery fits the classical economic system of production inherited by colonial practices. The absence of transitional policies aimed at promoting the emancipation of former slaves and its proper insertion into the society, promoting not just formal, but material access to citizen's rights, shows not just an omission of the Brazilian state, but its complicity with the exploitation of slavery in its contemporary forms. The continuity of the same colonial roots of social and economic exploitation found in the Amazon the perfect opportunity for the perpetuation of environmental harm through immense social costs, borne by the victims of modern slavery and local communities (indigenous and *ribeirinhos*) which were affected by the expansion of agribusiness practices in the Amazon Rainforest.

Through the alignment of corporate interests and State policies towards the development of the Amazon, state enforcement authorities such as the prosecutors (*Ministério Público*) and the police were unable to carry out monitoring of the human rights violations that occurred in these contexts and proper investigations for its punishment. State law enforcement was in fact coopted by the general policy involving the development of the Amazon, whose consequence is that although labour rights and the criminal offense of art. 149, CP (reduction to a condition analogous to that of a slave) were already in force, they were not or were rarely enforced, leaving the opportunities for the reproduction of social and environmental harm.⁴⁶

2.2. Moral neutralization and the protagonism of supply chains

Historically defined as the suppression of freedom of movement due to the performance of one's labour activity, nowadays the transnational economic praxis and the new forms of exploitation of an individual by another (or organization in the case of corporations) require the development of new scientific investigations around the delimitation of the profile of perpetrators, victims, dynamics of harm causation and victimisation levels, its causes and the contexts in which the new phenomenon of labour force abuse is carried out.⁴⁷ As for the case of the exploitation of modern slavery in the Amazon Rainforest, its occurrence is concentrated in the private sector,⁴⁸ so that companies, here represented by the Brazilian agribusiness, play an important role in the development of contemporary human servitude. Likewise, as Bales puts it, the main author responsible for the development of modern slavery is the businessman.⁴⁹

From this new dynamic of labour exploitation and after the apparent exhaustion of the paradigm related to the criminalization of slavery-like conducts, new demands are marked by the use of forced and degrading labour in the activities of global value chains.⁵⁰ In the corporate context, the diffusion of responsibility and the difficulties in the individualisation of the conducts inherent to the opacity of the corporate supply chains are responsible for building the opportunities for the exploitation of forced labour, as they act as criminogenic

⁴⁶ FIGUEIRA (2024).

⁴⁷ CRANE (2013).

⁴⁸ ILO (2019).

⁴⁹ BALES *et al.* (2011).

⁵⁰ CARUANA *et al.* (2021).

dynamics.⁵¹ In the same way, the presence of intermediary labour force suppliers (as it is the case of the *gatos* as labour recruiters), a characteristic present in outsourcing and subcontracting regimes, constitutes a propitious environment for the exploitation of forced labour and labour in degrading conditions and reproduces the difficulties in the promotion of accountability regarding serious human rights violations and abusive labour exploitation.⁵²

In contrast to the shackles of Brazil's slave-owning past, the “new slavery”⁵³ can manifest itself through different modalities of labour activity.⁵⁴ The main manifestations of contemporary slavery are the exploitation in the clothing and construction industries promoted in large urban centres, the contracting of workers for agricultural work, the imposition of abusive labour situations to promote deforestation in the Amazon Rainforest and the service of production linked to agribusiness,⁵⁵ and even the development of forced labour and degrading conditions through sex trafficking.⁵⁶

The exploitation of modern slavery reveals the logic of the market that demands high-quality products at ever-lower costs.⁵⁷ This ever-growing need for capital accumulation is often associated with the covering up of practices analogous to slavery amidst the activities developed in the corporate supply chains, whose purpose is to avoid punishment by resorting to the difficulties in the attribution of responsibility,⁵⁸ as well as the regulatory and legislative fragility and the disarticulation of the action of the authorities responsible for the law enforcement of socially harmful corporate practices.⁵⁹ In the context of the exploitation of modern servitude, Bales highlights the process of constructing the “moral economy of slavery”, which is responsible for providing instruments for rationalizing conduct and creating justifications that allow abuse, often based on issues of ethnic-racial and gender discrimination. In the business context, the denial of the harm and, therefore, of the reprehensibility of the conduct and the individual's guilt for the conduct practiced is more easily justified, given the perpetuated common sense that the company “does more good than harm”.⁶⁰

The practices developed within production chains, therefore, constitute a space for the violation of human rights on a large scale, mainly through the development and maintenance of business models in which the opportunity structures for the exploitation of forms of indecent work, and especially forced labour, are able to prosper. This context is marked by the violation of workers' and victims' rights, especially in underdeveloped and developing countries, which are the headquarters of the production of goods for export.⁶¹

Still, in the organizational context, Christoph Burchard analyses that the corporate structure is responsible for promoting four main characteristics: (i) the large size of corporations and the impersonal nature of the conducts developed in the corporate context make it difficult to exercise corporate governance, to hinder the success of initiatives to control the company concerning the activities of its agents. This scenario is responsible for increasing the possibilities of a loosening of moral agency and the commission of crimes and human rights

⁵¹ AMBOS (2018).

⁵² CAMPOS *et al.* (2015).

⁵³ BALES (2012).

⁵⁴ NOLAN & BOERSMA (2019).

⁵⁵ JACKSON & SPARKS (2020); HOBBS (2024).

⁵⁶ KARA (2009).

⁵⁷ CARUANA *et al.* (2021).

⁵⁸ FISSE & BRAITHWAITE (2010).

⁵⁹ RAUSCHER & WILLERT (2020).

⁶⁰ BALES (2012).

⁶¹ LEBARON (2020).

violations in the organizational context; (ii) secondly, large corporations due to their large structure and fragmentation of the activity of their agents end up facilitating the generation of informational asymmetry through the excessive division of labour, facilitating the development of alienation processes of corporate agents toward the consequences of the acts they perform and (iii) the transformation of companies into a “black box”. Finally, (iv) large corporate structures end up hindering accountability and enabling the impunity of agents and irresponsibility for promoting socially harmful behavior in the corporate context.⁶²

According to this institutionalist approach, corporate severe human rights violations have as their main characteristic the development of moral neutralization by their offenders (corporate agents) through the process of dehumanization of their victims. At this point, corporate culture exerts special preponderance, since it influences offending agents by appealing to the generation of profit, wealth and shareholder value, as well as to the political interests of the institution they represent, to the detriment of respect for the norms and social structures of the countries of which they are part. In this context, the development of true normative orders by corporations is preponderant for the interpretation of the conduct responsible for the commission of transnational human rights violations, since the culture reproduced at the internal level of the corporation, which is intertwined with the development of a mythology of the superiority of corporate interests, is responsible for the annulment of the social structures and norms in force in their national realities and, consequently, develops the context favourable to the systematic violation of human rights.⁶³

The contemporary prevalence of the maintenance of forced labour cases within corporate production chains is not revealed as mere chance. LeBaron argues that the exploitation of modern slavery as a business dynamic represents a structural phenomenon that results from the intersection of systemic dynamics responsible for creating a supply of highly exploitable workers and its coupling with a high demand for labour exploitation.⁶⁴ On the one hand, there are overlapping economic-political conditions that are responsible for exposing workers to the vulnerability to forced labour. On the other, there are socio-economic pressures responsible for maintaining the supply of workers, which must be explained through the perpetuation of root causes of forced labour exploitation, which are expressed through poverty and low levels of education, responsible for subjecting workers to the informal market where labour exploitation practices are concentrated; identity and discrimination issues (based on characteristics such as gender, race or ethnicity, caste or migratory status); limited protection to labour practice and restricted mobility regimes, in addition to the absence of social assistance programs and of income transfer or credit supply to workers in situations of extreme vulnerability, mainly due to circumstances involving extreme poverty conditions.⁶⁵

In the Brazilian Amazon, structural conditions related to the history of the national development model reflect systemic inequalities that materialize in the difficulties of access to land for production (land concentration)⁶⁶ and domestic sustenance, especially in states where exploitation predominates, as well as in the victims’ places of origin, mostly in the North and Northeast regions.⁶⁷ The excessive concentration of land has repercussions as a structural condition for the perpetuation of exploitation, to the extent that in these regions,

⁶² BURCHARD (2010).

⁶³ KARSTEDT (2015).

⁶⁴ LEBARON (2020).

⁶⁵ CRANE (2013).

⁶⁶ AGAPITO (2022); HOBBS (2024).

⁶⁷ PHILLIPS & SAKAMOTO (2012).

agriculture and livestock are the instruments responsible for providing conditions for individual and family subsistence. The lack of access to land, therefore, restricts the possibilities of workers in these contexts, relegating them to a single option: selling their labour power in dynamics marked by precariousness and abusive exploitation, a factor that acts as a driver of vulnerability to the exploitation of debt bondage. In the national context, the maintenance and deepening of regional inequalities is also particularly prevalent, which translates into forced migration and the loosening of social cohesion, leading to vulnerability to recruitment by agents, the *gatos*. In addition, ethnic-racial discrimination continues to represent a structural or systemic cause for maintaining the vulnerability of victims to the exploitation of forced labour, insofar as individuals belonging to the black and brown ethnic groups continue to be over-represented in the dynamics of victimization by the exploitation of modern slavery, largely due to unequal access to education and their maintenance in conditions of poverty.⁶⁸

III. TOWARDS A VICTIMOLOGY OF THE EXPLOITATION OF MODERN SLAVERY IN THE AMAZON RAINFOREST

Having established the historical trajectory and contemporary manifestations of modern slavery in the Amazon, this section shifts the focus towards understanding the multiple dimensions of harm experienced by those affected by abusive labour exploitation. Moving beyond the mechanics of how modern slavery operates, this analysis applies a victimological framework to systematically examine who suffers from these practices, how victimization unfolds across different levels, and why recognizing these patterns of harm is essential for developing adequate responses.

3.1. From harm causation to the recognition of victim's needs: understanding victimology

After showing the dynamics in which modern slavery happens and reproduces social and environmental harm, this part of the paper aims to focus on the development of the levels of victimization caused by the exploitation of modern slavery in the Amazon Rainforest with a focus on the interconnections between modern slavery and environmental degradation. It examines the relationship between the reproduction of socially harmful behaviour and its impact on direct and indirect victims.

As a means to show how social and environmental harm are connected, the primary goal of this analysis is to identify and systematize the harm caused by the reproduction of abusive labour exploitation, specifically by analysing the levels of victimization caused by the exploitation of modern slavery. As developed by Walklate,⁶⁹ the field of victimology acknowledges three levels of victimization: 1) primary victimization (the relationship between the individual and the harmful act); 2) secondary victimization (the relationship between the individual and the state); and 3) tertiary victimization (the relationship between individuals, family, social groups, and the impacted environment). For the purposes of this investigation, the latter is of special preponderance and will be further investigated in the next paragraphs.

In order to contextualize the object of investigation, the study of victimization processes and levels derives from theoretical advancements within the field of victimology. The research agenda developed following moral outrage at how the criminal justice system has traditionally acted as an instrument to neutralize the victim within the law and criminal procedure, disregarding their needs after experiencing socially harmful behaviour. As Nils

⁶⁸ BAPTISTA *et al.* (2018).

⁶⁹ WALKLATE (2017).

Christie argues, the monopolization of punitive power by the state results in the expropriation of the “victim’s conflict”, which in the “golden age” belonged to the victim, but has since become the “property” of the state through the instrumentalization of the criminal justice system.⁷⁰

Initially, victimological research focused on the victim’s involvement in the conflict, which led to victim-blaming. However, current research aims to reframe discussions around the legitimacy of criminal intervention, focusing on criteria that prioritize the satisfaction of victims’ interests and needs. Ezzat Fattah highlights that the current stage of victimological thought seeks to move beyond traditional criminal policies centred on prevention and retribution, advocating for a “victim policy” that places the needs of victims at the centre and legitimizes state intervention by addressing these needs.⁷¹

Sandra Walklate, a leading scholar in victimology, reflects on the patterns of selectivity in constructing the notion of a victim and which social groups are more vulnerable to victimization. Drawing on Christie’s concept of the “ideal victim”, Walklate explores the difficulty in recognizing victimization based on socioeconomic factors, which significantly affects the responses of the criminal justice system, as well as societal reactions and the interaction between offender and victim.⁷² As developed by Saad-Diniz and Marin, crime, victim conflict, and the resulting victimization process stem from deeply rooted power structures. This means that the victim’s social and structural context influences both the occurrence and nature of the socially harmful behaviour.⁷³

A new dimension of victimology has emerged through Saad-Diniz’s development of “corporate victimology”, based on William S. Laufer’s ideas.⁷⁴ Beyond the penal selectivity focused on street crime and the lack of moral outrage toward socially harmful corporate behaviour, Saad-Diniz advocates for expanding scientific inquiry into the harm caused by corporate activities. This would recognize the individuals affected and reorient corporate criminal responsibility to address victims’ rights and needs.⁷⁵ At least in theory, this approach provides a better understanding of how broad corporate freedoms negatively impact personal freedoms, particularly in vulnerable contexts where corporate exploitation undermines social cohesion.

In contrast, the failure to recognize and systematize harm, coupled with the criminal justice system’s disregard for such harm, perpetuates spaces of injustice. This leads to a lack of identification of criminal behaviour and the alienation of victims and their needs, reproducing the absence of legitimate responses within the criminal justice system.⁷⁶

In the context of victimization through modern slavery, pre-existing patterns of vulnerability are exacerbated by the expansion of capital and corporate freedom in the pursuit of profit, leading to the victimization of marginalized individuals. As Fattah’s analytical category of “structural/cultural proneness” suggests, victims of abusive labour exploitation find themselves in environments marked by inequality, poverty, and a lack of access to formal employment opportunities.⁷⁷ These dynamics are further compounded by ethnic, racial,

⁷⁰ CHRISTIE (1977).

⁷¹ FATTAH (1997).

⁷² WALKLATE (2017).

⁷³ SAAD-DINIZ & DE CARVALHO MARIN (2017).

⁷⁴ LAUFER (2017).

⁷⁵ SAAD-DINIZ (2019).

⁷⁶ SAAD-DINIZ (2019); LAUFER (2017); DE SOUSA & LAUFER (2022).

⁷⁷ FATTAH (2000).

and gender discrimination, which increase the risk of victimization and perpetuate abusive labour practices.

Furthermore, the instrumentalization of victimization within transnational corporate supply chains—where powerful multinational corporations exert significant influence—makes it difficult to implement social controls that would bring visibility to victims' needs and promote accountability for socially harmful corporate behavior.

3.2. Towards a victimological approach of the exploitation of modern slavery in the Amazon Rainforest

This last section thus aims to analyse the third level of victimization and the consequences of socially harmful behaviour on direct and indirect victims of abusive labour exploitation. Through the development of a victimological perspective, the approach followed on this investigation aims to resort to the victimological framework as a source for providing recognition⁷⁸ to the interconnections between the exploitation of modern slavery (direct victimization) and the subsequent promotion of environmental degradation (indirect victimization) as a means for promoting environmental injustice. The reproduction of (indirect) tertiary victimization in contexts of modern slavery refers to impacted subjects who, while not directly affected by socially harmful behaviours, are nevertheless indirectly impacted, often in diffuse or collective ways. As defined by Saad-Diniz, this form of victimization “transcends individual harm, reverberating its effects throughout communities, public order, social harmony, public administration, or government, among others”.⁷⁹

Through this framework, the paper aims to shed light on the needs of victims, which could provide room for new research on the mechanisms of reparation and conflict restoration. While these are not the primary focus of this research, they may inform future investigations into strategies for reducing victimization and restoring conflict, as well as the structuring of public policies aimed at preventing, detecting and providing solutions to the current scenario. In relation to modern slavery, distinct levels of victimization can be observed through: (i) the impact on the physical and psychological health of victimized workers; (ii) the lack of mechanisms for reparation and overcoming vulnerabilities, which results in re-victimization; and (iii) indirect victimization, which extends to environmental degradation.

The connections between the exploitation of modern slavery and environmental degradation can be seen through the protagonism that the abusive labour exploitation has in promoting environmentally harmful practices, such as addressed in the second topic of this paper. The presence of modern slavery as a gear of environmental harm causation through deforestation, pesticide use, illegal mining, and other activities is responsible for harming air quality, soil, and access to clean water,⁸⁰ which fosters environmental injustice.⁸¹ The latter is linked to two main interconnected factors. The first one is the transformation of the Amazon into a carbon source—and not as a carbon sink—which is directly related to the intensification of climate change.⁸² The second, which is connected to the first one, is the intensification of the savannization process, which is a tipping point already being achieved in the Amazon and is responsible for turning the rainforest into a savanna.⁸³

⁷⁸ The focusing on victims' perspectives towards harm derived from crime is developed in GÜNTHER (2013).

⁷⁹ SAAD-DINIZ (2019).

⁸⁰ LEÃO *et al.* (2021).

⁸¹ BALES (2016).

⁸² GATTI *et al.* (2021).

⁸³ BOTTINO *et al.* (2024).

The current milestone characterized by the social-environmental victimization nexus has thus two important consequences. The first one is the changing of sociability processes in the territory, which are responsible for harming local communities, fauna and flora.⁸⁴ The second one should be expressed through the planetary consequences that this scenario poses through the intensification of climate injustice, which can have its consequences on a global scale.⁸⁵

IV. CONCLUSION

This essay has traced how modern slavery and environmental degradation in the Brazilian Amazon are not merely co-occurring phenomena but mutually reinforcing processes within an integrated social-environmental victimization nexus. Historically anchored in state development policies during the military dictatorship and contemporarily reproduced through globalized supply chains and criminal networks, abusive labour exploitation—especially debt bondage—has operated as both a driver and an enabler of environmentally harmful behavior. Bringing criminology into dialogue with victimology, the analysis reframed modern slavery from a discrete human-rights violation into a central gear in the machinery of environmental injustice and climate disruption.

Three core contributions emerge. First, the paper advances a historical-structural account of modern slavery in the Amazon, showing how SUDAM-era incentives, land concentration, and organized recruitment (*gatos*) institutionalized labour exploitation as a technique of territorial occupation and resource extraction. Second, it maps the contemporary convergence of crimes—deforestation, illegal logging and mining, cattle ranching, fraud, corruption, money laundering, and firearms offenses—demonstrating how modern slavery functions within coordinated networks that monetize environmental harm while evading detection and sanction. Third, it extends victimological analysis beyond primary harms to workers to illuminate secondary and tertiary victimization: the systematic failures of state protection and the diffuse, collective harms borne by communities, Indigenous and *ribeirinho* populations, and the planetary climate system as the Amazon shifts from carbon sink to carbon source and approaches savannisation tipping points.

The state-corporate crime lens helps to explain the durability of these harms. When public authorities set permissive regimes or fail to enforce existing norms, and when corporate actors diffuse responsibility across opaque supply chains, modern slavery becomes a rationalized management practice: a means to cut costs, expand frontiers, and externalize risks onto vulnerable bodies and fragile ecosystems. In such settings, moral neutralization and informational asymmetries within corporate structures mask victimization and frustrate accountability, while global consumption patterns create steady demand for commodities tainted by severe human rights violations and environmental harm. The result is a criminogenic political economy in which labour victimization is structurally coupled to environmental destruction.

In sum, the Amazon's social-environmental crisis is not a collection of discrete problems but a coupled system of harms. Treating modern slavery as a central mechanism of environmental victimization aligns criminological diagnosis with victimological remedy: it locates prevention in the restructuring of opportunity and power, centres the needs and agency of those most affected, and binds labour governance to environmental justice.

⁸⁴ LEÃO *et al.* (2021).

⁸⁵ For the planetary commons perspective deriving from the planetary harms and the connection between diverse biophysical systems, see ROCKSTRÖM *et al.* (2024). For the criminal law perspective deriving from that and framed into the perspective of climate criminal law from the planetary climate societies (Klimastrafrecht von den planetaren Klimagesellschaften), see BURCHARD & SCHMIDT (2024).

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- ACKER, A. (2017). *Volkswagen in the Amazon: the tragedy of global development in modern Brazil*, Cambridge University Press.
- ADLER, F.; MUELLER, G.O.W. & LAUFER, W.S. (2018). *Criminology*, McGraw-Hill Education.
- AGAPITO, L.S. (2022). *As cadeias de produção agrárias e a colonialidade: uma análise da regulação da escravidão na produção de café em Brasil e Colômbia a partir dos projetos de modernização no campo entre 1850 e 2020*, Doctoral dissertation, Universidade de São Paulo.
- AMBOS, K. (2018). *Wirtschaftsvölkerstrafrecht*, Duncker & Humblot.
- BAPTISTA, R.M.; BANDEIRA, M.L. & SOUZA, M.T.S.D. (2018). "The invisibility of the black population in modern slavery: evidence based on conditions of social vulnerability", in *Organizações & Sociedade*, Vol. 25, No. 87, pp. 676-703.
- BALES, K. (2012). *Disposable people: New slavery in the global economy*, University of California Press.
- BALES, K. (2016). *Blood and earth: Modern slavery, ecocide, and the secret to saving the world*, Random House.
- BALES, K. & SOODALTER, R. (2010). *The slave next door: Human trafficking and slavery in America today*, University of California Press.
- BALES, K.; TRODD, Z. & WILLIAMSON, A. K. (2011). *Modern slavery: A beginner's guide*, Simon and Schuster.
- BOTTINO, M.J.; NOBRE, P.; GIAROLLA, E.; BAPTISTA DA SILVA JR., M.; BUSCIOLI CAPISTRANO, V.; MALAGUTTI, M.; NOBORU TAMAOKI, J.; ALVES DE OLIVEIRA, B.F. & NOBRE, C.A. (2024). "Amazon savannization and climate change are projected to increase dry season length and temperature extremes over Brazil", in *Scientific Reports*, Vol. 14, No. 1, pp. 1-11.
- BRETON, B.L. (2002). *Vidas roubadas. A escravidão moderna na Amazônia brasileira*, Edições Loyola.
- BURCHARD, C. (2010). "Ancillary and Neutral Business Contributions to 'Corporate-Political Core Crime': Initial Enquiries Concerning the Rome Statute", in *Journal of International Criminal Justice*, Vol. 8, No. 3, pp. 919-946.
- BURCHARD, C. & SCHMIDT, F.L. (2024). "*Kritik des Klimastrafrechts*", in SATZGER, H. & VON MALTITZ, N. (eds.), *Klimastrafrecht*, Nomos Verlagsgesellschaft mbH & Co. KG, pp. 83-110.
- CAMPOS, A.; VAN HUIJSTEE, M. & THEUWS, M. (2015). *From moral responsibility to legal liability*, Repóter Brasil & SOMO.
- CAMPOS, P.H.P. & BRAGA, M.M.M. (2024). "A fazenda Volkswagen: responsabilidade empresarial de um projeto custeado por recursos públicos e que usou trabalho escravo na Amazônia durante a ditadura (1973-1986)", in *Topoi*, Vol. 25, pp. 1-26.
- CARUANA, R.; CRANE, A.; GOLD, S. & LEBARON, G. (2021). "Modern slavery in business: The sad and sorry state of a non-field", in *Business & Society*, Vol. 60, No. 2, pp. 251-287.
- CAVALCANTI, T.M. (2021). *Sub-humanos: o capitalismo e a metamorfose da escravidão*, Boitempo Editorial.
- CAVALCANTI, T.M. & RODRIGUES, R.G. (2023). "Trabalho escravo contemporâneo: hoje, o mesmo de ontem", in *Veredas do Direito*, Vol. 20, pp. 1-18.
- CENTRO DE DEFESA DA VIDA E DOS DIREITOS HUMANOS CARMEN BASCARÁN (CDVDH/CB) & COMISSÃO PASTORAL DA TERRA (CPT) (2017). *Por debaixo da floresta: Amazônia paraense saqueada com trabalho escravo*, Urutu-Branco.

- CHRISTIE, N. (1977). "Conflicts as property", in *The British Journal of Criminology*, Vol. 17, No. 1, pp. 1-15.
- COMISSÃO PASTORAL DA TERRA (CPT) (2024). *Síntese dos Dados de Trabalho Escravo no Brasil (1995-2020)*. Available at: <<https://www.cptnacional.org.br>>.
- CRANE, A. (2013). "Modern slavery as a management practice: Exploring the conditions and capabilities for human exploitation", in *Academy of Management Review*, Vol. 38, No. 1, pp. 49-69.
- DE BRITO FILHO, J.C.M., & GARCIA, A.M.M. (2019). "Trabalho escravo na Amazônia paraense: faces da exploração do trabalhador", in *Revista Eletrônica do Curso de Direito do Centro Universitário UniOpet*, Vol. XII, No. 21, pp. 1-15.
- DE HOLANDA, S.B. (1995). *Raízes do Brasil*, Companhia das Letras.
- DE SOUSA, S.A. & LAUFER, W.S. (2022). "The State's Responsibility for Corporate Criminal Justice", in *The Journal of Corporation Law*, Vol. 47, pp. 1109-1125.
- FATTAH, E.A. (1997). "From crime policy to victim policy: The need for a fundamental policy change", in MC SHANE, M. & WILLIAMS III, F.P. (eds.), *Victims of Crime and the Victimization Process*, Routledge.
- FATTAH, E.A. (2000). "Victimology: Past, present and future", in *Criminologie*, Vol. 33, No. 1, pp. 17-46.
- FIGUEIRA, R.R. (2004). *Pisando fora da própria sombra: a escravidão por dívida no Brasil contemporâneo*, Civilização Brasileira.
- FIGUEIRA, R.R. (2024). "O caucho e a pecuária: A escravidão na Amazônia", in *Metaxy Revista Brasileira de Cultura e Políticas Públicas em Direitos Humanos*, Vol. 5, No. 5, pp. 198-215.
- FISSE, B. & BRAITHWAITE, J. (2010). *Corporations, crime and accountability*, Cambridge University Press.
- FREYRE, G. (2003). *A integração do negro na sociedade de classes*, Editora Contracorrente.
- GATTI, L.V., BASSO, L.S.; MILLER, J.B.; GLOOR, M.; GATTI DOMINGUES, L.; CASSOL, H.L.G.; TEJADA, G.; ARAGÃO, L.E.O.C.; NOBRE, C.; PETERS, W.; MARANI, L.; ARAI, E.; SANCHES, A.H.; CORRÊA, S.M.; ANDERSON, L.; VON RANDOW, C.; CORREIA, C.S.C.; CRISPIM S.P. & NEVES, R.A.L. (2021). "Amazonia as a carbon source linked to deforestation and climate change", in *Nature*, Vol. 595, pp. 388-393.
- GIANECCHINI, J.V. (2023). "Modern slavery, individual accountability and corporate complicity: the Brazilian case", in MAZZACUVA, F.; GURRUTXAGA, M.O.; RECCHIA, N. & SANTANGELO, A. (eds.), *Criminal Justice in the Prism of Human Rights (X AIDP International Symposium for Young Penalists, Bologna, Italy, 27-28 October 2022)*, Revue Internationale de Droit Penale, pp. 201-224.
- GÜNTHER, K. (2013). "Ein Modell legitimen Scheiterns", in HONNETH, A.; LINDEMANN, O. & VOSWINKEL, S., *Strukturwandel der Anerkennung: Paradoxien sozialer integration in der Gegenwart*, Campus Verlag, pp. 185-247.
- HADDAD, C.H.B.; MIRAGLIA, L. & SILVA, B. (2020). *Trabalho Escravo na Balança da Justiça*, Amazon Digital Services.
- HOBBS, S. (2024). "From chains to chainsaws: Modern slavery and deforestation in the Brazilian Amazon", in *Nature and Space*, Vol. 07, No. 02, pp. 834-861.
- IGARAPÉ (2024). *Dinámicas del ecosistema de los crímenes ambientales en la Amazonia Legal*, Instituto Igarapé.
- INTERAMERICAN COURT OF HUMAN RIGHTS (2016). Caso Trabalhadores da Fazenda Brasil Verde vs Brasil. Sentença de 20 de outubro de 2016.
- INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANIZATION (ILO) (2019). *Ending child labour, forced labour and human trafficking in global supply chains*, *International Labour*

- Organization, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, International Organization for Migration and United Nations Children's Fund.*
- INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANIZATION (ILO); WALK FREE & INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR MIGRATION (IOM) (2022). *Global Estimates of Modern Slavery: Forced Labour and Forced Marriage*.
- ISSA, D. (2017). "Reification and the human commodity: theorizing modern slavery in Brazil", in *Latin American Perspectives*, Vol. 44, No. 06, pp. 90-106.
- JACKSON, B. & SPARKS, J.L.D. (2020). "Ending slavery by decarbonisation? Exploring the nexus of modern slavery, deforestation, and climate change action via REDD+", in *Energy Research & Social Science*, Vol. 69, No. 05, pp. 1-7.
- KARA, S. (2009). *Sex trafficking: Inside the business of modern slavery*, Columbia University Press.
- KARA, S. (2014). *Bonded labor: Tackling the system of slavery in South Asia*, Columbia University Press.
- KARA, S. (2017). *Modern slavery: A global perspective*, Columbia University Press.
- KARSTEDT, S. (2015). "Transnationale Unternehmen und Völkerstrafrecht: Kriminologische Perspektiven", in JEßBERGER, F.; KALECK, W. & SINGELNSTEIN, T. (eds.), *Wirtschaftsvölkerstrafrecht: Ursprünge, Begriff, Praxis, Perspektiven*, Nomos Verlagsgesellschaft mbH & Co. KG., pp. 159-192.
- KRAMER, R. C.; MICHALOWSKI, R. J. & KAUZLARICH, D. (2002). "The origins and development of the concept and theory of state-corporate crime", in *Crime & delinquency*, Vol. 48, N. 02, pp. 263-282.
- LAUFER, W.S. (2017). "A very special regulatory milestone", in *University of Pennsylvania Journal of Business Law*, Vol. 20, pp. 392-428.
- LEÃO, L.H.D.C.; SIEBERT, P.; TRAUTRIMS, A.; ZANIN, V. & BALES, K. (2021). "A erradicação do trabalho escravo até 2030 e os desafios da vigilância em saúde do trabalhador", in *Ciência & Saúde Coletiva*, Vol. 26, pp. 5883-5895.
- LEBARON, G. (2020). *Combatting modern slavery: Why labour governance is failing and what we can do about it*, John Wiley & Sons.
- LEBARON, G.; HOWARD, N. & THIBOS, C. (2018). *Confronting root causes: forced labour in global supply chains*, Beyond Trafficking and Slavery & Open Democracy.
- LOUREIRO, V.R. & PINTO, J.N.A. (2005). "A questão fundiária na Amazônia", in *Estudos avançados*, Vol. 19, pp. 77-98.
- MARMO, M. & BANDIERA, R. (2022). "Modern slavery as the new moral asset for the production and reproduction of state-corporate harm", in *Journal of White Collar and Corporate Crime*, Vol. 3, No. 2, pp. 64-75.
- MARTINS, J.D.S. (2023). *Capitalismo e escravidão na sociedade pós-escravista*, Editora Unesp.
- MINISTÉRIO DOS DIREITOS HUMANOS E DA CIDADANIA (MDHC) (2025). *Condenação histórica reforça combate ao trabalho escravo com participação do MDHC*, 4th September 2025. Available online: <[https://www.gov.br/mdh/pt-br/assuntos/noticias/2025/setembro/condenacao-historica-reforca-combate-ao-trabalho-escravo-com-participacao-do-mdhc#:~:text=A%20Justi%C3%A7a%20do%20Trabalho%20condenou,militar%20\(1964%2D1985](https://www.gov.br/mdh/pt-br/assuntos/noticias/2025/setembro/condenacao-historica-reforca-combate-ao-trabalho-escravo-com-participacao-do-mdhc#:~:text=A%20Justi%C3%A7a%20do%20Trabalho%20condenou,militar%20(1964%2D1985)> [Accessed 1st October 2025].
- NOLAN, J. & BOERSMA, M. (2019). *Addressing modern slavery*, UNSW Press.
- PAGANINI, P. & MEDEIROS, C.R.D.O. (2023). "State-Business Relations and Arenas as a Legitimate Space for State-Corporate Crimes: The Case of Modern Slavery in Brazil", in *Brazilian Business Review*, Vol. 20, No. 6, pp. 646-663.

- PHILLIPS, N. & SAKAMOTO, L. (2012). "Global production networks, chronic poverty and 'slave labour' in Brazil. Studies", in *Comparative International Development*, Vol. 47, pp. 287-315.
- PRADO Jr, C. (2011). *Formação do Brasil contemporâneo*, Editora Companhia das Letras.
- RAUSCHER, M. & WILLERT, B. (2020). "Modern slavery, corruption, and hysteresis", in *European Journal of Political Economy*, Vol. 64.
- ROCKSTRÖM, J.; KOTZÉ, L.; MILUTINOVIĆ, S.; BIERMANN, F.; BROVKIN, V.; DONGES, J.; EBBESSON J.; FRENCH, D.; GUPTA, J.; KIM, R.; LENTON, T.; LENZI, D.; NAKICENOVIC, N.; NEUMANN, B.; SCHUPPERT F.; WINKELMANN, R.; BOSSELMANN, K.; FOLKE, C.; LUCHT, W.; SCHLOSBERG, D.; RICHARDSON, K. & STEFFEN, W. (2024). "The planetary commons: A new paradigm for safeguarding Earth-regulating systems in the Anthropocene", in *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, Vol. 121, No. 5, pp. 1-10. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.2301531121>.
- SAAD-DINIZ, E. (2019). *Vitimologia corporativa*, Tirant lo Blanch.
- SAAD-DINIZ, E. & DE CARVALHO MARIN, G. (2017). "Imputação moral orientada à vítima como problema de imputação objetiva", in *Revista de Informação Legislativa*, Vol. 54, No. 213, pp. 113-133.
- SAAD-DINIZ, E. & GIANECCHINI, J.V. (2020). Redução à condição análoga à de escravo no Brasil (art. 149, CP) e a escravidão moderna, in Reale Jr., M.; Moura, M.T. (eds.), *Revista dos Tribunais*.
- SAAD-DINIZ, E. & GIANECCHINI, J.V. (2021). "Regulatory Rollbacks in the Amazon Rainforest: A Nuanced Look into the Effects of Environmental Victimization", in *State Crime Journal*, Vol. 10, No. 2, pp. 257-283.
- SOUZA COSTA, B. & DE FREITAS PEREIRA, C. (2022). "O trabalho escravo contemporâneo na Região Amazônica brasileira", in *Revista Brasileira de Políticas Públicas*, Vol. 12, No. 2, pp. 17-34.
- SPITZER, A.L. (2018). *Strafbarkeit des Menschenhandels zur Ausbeutung der Arbeitskraft*, Springer.
- SUTHERLAND, E.H.; CRESSEY, D.R. & LUCKENBILL, D.F. (1992). *Principles of criminology*, Altamira Press.
- TEIXEIRA, C.C. (2009). *Servidão humana na selva: o aviamento e o barracão nos seringais da Amazônia*, Valer Editora.
- VAN UHM, D. (2023). *Organized environmental crime: Black markets in gold, wildlife, and timber*, Bloomsbury Publishing USA.
- WAISBICH, L.; RISSO, M.; HUSEK, T. & BRASIL, L. (2022). *The Ecosystem of Environmental Crime in the Amazon: An Analysis of Illicit Rainforest Economies in Brazil*, Igarapé Institute.
- WALK FREE (2022). *Global Estimates of Modern Slavery: Forced Labour and Forced Marriage*, Walk Free Foundation.
- WALKLATE, S. (2017). *Defining victims and victimization*, in DAVIES, P.; FRANCIS, P. & GREER, C. (eds.), *Victims, Crime & Society*, Sage, pp. 30-47.
- WHYTE, D. (2014). "Regimes of permission and state-corporate crime", in *State Crime Journal*, Vol. 3, pp. 237-246.