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PEASANT WOMEN IN AGROECOLOGICAL TRANSITIONS: PATHWAYS AND CHALLENGES TOWARD AUTONOMY

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Agroecology has been consolidating, especially in Brazil, as an important agrarian countermovement in response to the hegemony of the agroindustrial model, articulating productive practices, local knowledge, and political projects of social transformation. In recent decades, the protagonism of women within this field has gained increasing visibility, highlighting agroecology as a space for the construction of autonomy, identity affirmation, and the confrontation of gender inequalities in rural areas. This relationship, however, does not emerge in a linear or immediate way, but rather from a critical reflection on gender relations and the sexual division of labor within family farming, as well as from the growing political commitment of rural social movements to confronting inequalities and gender-based violence in the countryside.

This paper draws on the empirical data and analyses developed during a master's research project (2019–2022), conducted in family farming contexts in the state of Pernambuco, which revealed both the advances and the limits of agroecology in reshaping gender roles and family labor organization. Building on

these findings, the study proposes an analytical redirection aimed at deepening, within a new research context, the understanding of women's everyday experiences in agroecological practices. The research is theoretically grounded in contributions from authors such as Maria Ignez Paulilo, Emma Siliprandi, Henry Bernstein, Josefa Salete Cavalcanti, Cristine Dabat, Eduardo Sevilla Guzmán, Manoel Costa, and Joan Scott, among others.

The main objective is to analyze how peasant women construct struggles, resistances, and strategies in their daily lives—across production, collective organization, and community relations—reconfiguring identities, family dynamics, and forms of political participation. The research focuses on the Zona da Mata region of Pernambuco, privileging women farmers' narratives and practices within associations, unions, and rural social movements, and conceiving agroecology as a territory of dispute, meaning-making, and the reinvention of life in the countryside.

Palavras-chave: women; agroecology; family work; gender relations; agriculture.