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SURPLUS AS STRATEGY: VALUATION AND TERRITORIAL MARKETS IN QUILOMBOLA AGRICULTURE

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This study analyzes how the strategic use of agricultural surplus in the quilombola community of Sítio Pêga, located in the semi-arid region of Rio Grande do Norte, expresses a productive rationality oriented toward subsistence and social reproduction. Methodologically, the research is grounded in a qualitative approach, employing oral history and content analysis as proposed by Bardin. Interviews were conducted with five community members, in compliance with the ethical procedures required by the Research Ethics Committee. The analysis shows that the circulation of surplus takes place through short, informal, and territorially situated circuits, in which the value of products is defined less by market prices and more by their capacity to ensure survival, strengthen community ties, and maintain the balance of the family-

based productive system. Products such as cassava, flour, beans, maize, eggs, poultry, and small livestock reveal multiple forms of valuation, which vary according to land availability, the intensity of drought, access to buyers, and input costs. Starting from the understanding that local agricultural production is not organized according to capitalist market logic, but rather based on immediate needs related to food provision, family care, and adaptation to territorial, climatic, and structural conditions, surplus does not assume centrality as a source of profit. Instead, it functions as a flexible resource mobilized in specific situations, such as income supplementation, exchange, donation, productive reinvestment, or coping with periods of scarcity. It is also observed that historical practices of exchange and reciprocity remain as symbolic and practical references, reinforcing a productive ethic grounded in sufficiency and adaptation. The results indicate that agricultural surplus, rather than merely a commodity, constitutes a strategic element in the management of life, revealing specific forms of territorial valuation that challenge hegemonic conceptions of market and productivity.

Palavras-chave: quilombola agriculture; agricultural surplus; subsistence; territorial markets; social reproduction.